



## SFI IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE PLAYBOOK: FIRE RESILIENCE AND AWARENESS

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### INTRODUCTION TO SIC PLAYBOOKS

The requirements of the [2022 SFI Standards](#) for Forest Management and Fiber Sourcing introduce new opportunities for engagement and collaboration via the SFI Implementation Committees (SICs). These opportunities focus on new or enhanced elements of the SFI 2022 Standards including Climate Smart Forestry, Fire Resilience and Awareness, and Conservation of Biodiversity (Forests of Exceptional Conservation Value - FECVs). In a recent survey conducted by SFI, an overwhelming majority of SFI-certified organizations indicated interest in collaboration via the SICs on these requirements.

In response, SFI has developed a set of *SIC Playbooks* that provide resources and actionable tips for SICs. The SIC Playbooks draw from and build on the resources and information provided in the [SFI Standard Guidance](#) but go further in outlining specific steps and resources that could be mobilized by SICs. In addition to this Playbook on Fire Resilience and Awareness (2022 Forest Management, Objective 10), Playbooks are also available for Climate Smart Forestry (2022 Forest Management, Objective 9) and for Biodiversity in Fiber Sourcing (2022 SFI Fiber Sourcing, Objective 1) – these can be found at <https://forests.org/sic/>. Others may also be developed in response to needs and requests of SICs.

#### **An Iterative Tool: Please Send Us Your Feedback + Suggestions**

In response to growing interest, this SIC Playbook is released as a resource that SICs can begin using immediately. However, it is a tool that may be refined over time as it gets utilized by SICs with their tips and feedback. SICs and SFI-certified organizations are encouraged to let the SFI team know what is working and what could be improved. We are also seeking suggestions for the best regional and state/provincial resources, as well as ideas and best practices that your SIC has identified in implementing this SIC Playbook in your region, state or province. Please provide feedback and suggestions to Nadine Block, SFI Senior VP, Community and Government Relations, at [nadine.block@forests.org](mailto:nadine.block@forests.org).

SICs offer a venue in which SFI-certified organizations can collaboratively undertake high leverage activities to meet SFI certification requirements in a cost efficient, expeditious and mutually beneficial way.

Activities conducive to such collaboration are the focal areas within the SIC Playbooks and tend to focus on shared resources, tools and services that can be modified and/or deployed in the context of an SFI-certified organization’s specific operations. Activities that lend themselves to such collaboration may include but are not limited to:

- Gathering and analyzing best scientific information: Includes biological and other datasets; legislation, policy, and planning documents; academic research; etc.
- Engagement in or support of research: Research can have benefit for the collaborating SFI-certified organizations in a “pre-competitive” fashion.
- Identifying best practices: SICs can draw on the experiences and knowledge of SFI-certified organizations to identify and mutually share best practices that can be implemented in the context of SFI-certified operations.
- Development and presentation of educational and informational materials: Audiences may include wood producers, loggers, foresters and others.

#### **ASSESSING THE TRADEOFFS: WHERE SHOULD AN SIC FOCUS?**

Many SICs support a range of important ongoing functions. With the introduction of the SFI 2022 Standards and new opportunities for collaboration on Climate Smart Forestry, Biodiversity/FECVs, and Fire Resilience/Awareness, SICs are encouraged to review their existing activities, along with new opportunities for collaboration, to assess tradeoffs and identify priorities for the SIC over a given timeframe.

Often, relatively modest investments by individual SFI-certified organizations to SIC-coordinated activities can yield outsized, high yield returns. SICs are encouraged to consider in their decision-making where, through their collaborative efforts, greatest impact can be achieved.

#### **FIRE RESILIENCE AND AWARENESS: AN SIC PLAYBOOK**

Managing forests to limit their susceptibility to fire has been a core part of program plans for SFI-certified organizations for many years. Working in collaboration to raise awareness of the roles of fire in forests, both positive and negative, is also an activity that many SFI-certified organizations have actively undertaken. In 2021, SFI released the Project Learning Tree® Activity Collection *Nature of Fire* as a resource to support youth and community education. Objective 10 in the 2022 SFI Forest Management standard recognizes the growing importance of promoting fire resilience in forests, especially in the context of climate change, and formalizes the opportunities for collaborative efforts that many SFI-certified organizations have made as part of their multifaceted forest management programs.



Ultimately, the SFI-certified organization is responsible for demonstrating conformance. However, SICs are positioned to support coordinated, strategic, and streamlined implementation of these requirements, which will lead to greater impact through the SFI Standards. This SIC Playbook is designed to give SICs a set of resources and functional steps to operationalize the Fire Resilience requirements in their states and provinces.

### **WHO CAN USE THE SIC PLAYBOOK?**

The playbook was developed with an aim of identifying the steps that could be implemented through coordinated engagement within the SIC. However, these guidelines may also provide insights to SFI-certified organizations.

### **IS USING THE SIC PLAYBOOK REQUIRED?**

No. The SIC Playbook draws from and builds on the resources and information provided for Forest Management, Objective 10 in the [SFI Standard Guidance](#) to provide a system for practical and collaborative implementation. As such it is important to note:

- Use of the SIC Playbook is NOT required by SFI or by certification bodies
- The SIC Playbook is NOT considered normative

### **HOW DOES THE FIRE RESILIENCE AND AWARENESS SIC PLAYBOOK WORK?**

The Fire Resilience and Awareness requirements of Objective 10 have two parts:

Performance Measure 1. Evaluating risks associated with wildfire and developing a program to address them on SFI-certified lands

SICs can be a resource to develop and share best practices and to support collaboration efforts with nearby landowners. Follow steps 1, 2, 3, and 4 for work on this Performance Measure. While demonstration of conformance ultimately lies with individual SFI-certified organizations, SICs can play an instrumental, supportive role. The SIC Playbook is designed to identify activities that may be undertaken in collaboration at the SIC level and provide a basis for action by SFI-certified organizations.

Performance Measure 2. Individually or through cooperative efforts, engaging others to raise awareness and encourage action to minimize the undesirable impacts of wildfire

This second performance measure clearly identifies a pathway for cooperation, given the similarities in forest types within a region and that SFI-certified organizations face common risks associated with fires. Collaboration on the first performance measure may offer opportunities to leverage resources and drive greater impact through collaboration as well. Follow steps 1, 2, 5, and 6.

## 1. GET ORGANIZED (PM 10.1 & 10.2)

To promote efficiency, review the SIC Playbook steps, get organized, and develop a plan for how to tackle it.

Big picture: Review the SIC's existing activities, as well as emerging opportunities associated with the 2022 SFI requirements related to Climate Smart Forestry, Fire Resilience, and Conservation of Biodiversity/FECVs. Identify top priorities and an overall timeline to address them.

Calendar + teams: Review your SIC's calendar for critical dates and your existing schedule of meetings. This will help the SIC and subcommittees create a timeline for each step. Some of the steps may be best suited to a smaller group that brings back information for consideration and decisions at the larger group level. Determine which activities may need a subcommittee and which are full SIC activities.

Tips:

- Hold an initial SIC call/meeting to review the Fire Resilience and Awareness SIC Playbook as a group to plan out the timing and dependencies of each step.
- Ask: Will additional meetings or calls be needed? When should we hold them?

Regional collaboration: Consider potential and options for collaboration with SICs in neighboring states and provinces that share similar forest types, management regimes and fire patterns.

Tips:

- Some SFI-certified organizations have representatives participating in SICs in several states and could help support coordination.

Support: Utilize national SFI staff for help as you develop your plan and to learn about activities of other SICs.

## 2. REVIEW THE 2022 STANDARDS AND STATE OF CURRENT EFFORTS, AS WELL AS ONGOING TRADITIONAL SIC ACTIVITIES (PM 10.1 & 10.2)

Orient to the Fire Resilience and Awareness requirements and linkages to other parts of the 2022 SFI Forest Management Standard.

Review: Objective 10 Fire Resilience and Awareness requirements (see Appendix A) and [guidance](#).

Connection Points: Because fire is a crosscutting issue, efforts undertaken elsewhere in the standard may support or address the Fire Resilience and Awareness requirements as well. It may be beneficial to review the 2022 Standards overall and flag these important intersection points, where SICs may already be involved.

These may include:

- Objective 1: Forest Management Planning
- Objective 2: Forest Health and Productivity
- Objective 4: Conservation of Biological Diversity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Objective 8: Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples’ Rights</li> <li>- Objective 9: Climate Smart Forestry (see below for more detail)</li> <li>- Objective 11: Legal and Regulatory Requirements</li> <li>- Objective 12: Forestry Research, Science and Technology</li> <li>- Objective 13: Training and Education</li> <li>- Objective 14: Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach</li> </ul> <p>Tips: These intersection points and programs may be places to tweak or add emphasis related to fire resilience and awareness to promote conformance and program impacts.</p> <p>Example: An SIC develops and implements a logger training program that addresses SFI-required elements including water quality Best Management Practices and techniques to protect and enhance biodiversity including Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (FECVs). The SIC identifies an opportunity to also include elements that will elevate training in techniques that promote resilience (support of 10.1.2).</p>
	<p>Link to Climate Smart Forestry: The SFI Guidance notes the well-documented link between wildfire and climate. As such, there may be strong continuity between SIC efforts to address Climate Smart Forestry requirements in Objective 9 and those related to Fire Resilience (PM 10.1) in Objective 10. Leveraging these resources may streamline efforts and drive greater collective impacts on the forest lands managed to the SFI standard, as well as the wider forested landscape.</p> <p>Tip: Look specifically at prioritized climate change risks that may contribute to wildfire incidents (such as rising temperatures, variable precipitation regimes and others) and the strategies or best practices identified to address them. See the SIC Climate Smart Forestry Playbook and specifically review outcomes associated with Steps 4, 5 and 6. Indeed, the process undertaken in support Climate Smart Forestry requirements may well provide the needed inputs to meet Steps 3 and 4 in this Fire Resilience Playbook, below.</p>

### 3. IDENTIFY RESOURCES (PM 10.1)

Gather resources to support collaborative fire resilience program development. This step will enable SICs to help their members support their company's conformance with the requirements by identifying supportive resources and best practices already in place.

Sustainable forest management can reduce the risk of these undesirable impacts of wildfire within the context of fire ecology and fire regime. There are many resources available to support understanding of the undesirable impacts of wildfire (10.1.1), as well as stand and landscape level techniques, actions and policies to promote resilience (10.1.2, 10.1.3).

SICs may draw on a wide array of resources including:

- Regional/Provincial/State risk assessments
- Local experts and academics
- Written publications

Draw on other experts and resources: Reach out to partners at local universities and government agencies to gather the latest publications on wildfire risk and management options and request expert engagement in the SIC's work.

Tip: Consider asking regional/state/provincial experts to be a resource as your SIC reviews materials to field any questions and/or join an SIC meeting. Many state and provincial agencies have communications officers or fire behavior experts that work with their outreach teams that specialize in this issue. These professionals can bring a wealth of knowledge and advice, as well as resources and tool that are "ready to roll" that the SIC can take and run with.

There is a wealth of resources available to support understanding of wildfire risks and management to boost resilience.

National Resources and Risk Assessments:

- [Canadian Wildland Fire Information System](#)
- [USFS Operational Risk Management Guide](#)
- [Southern Wildfire Risk: Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal](#)
- [US Fire Science Consortia](#)

Regional Resources:

- [Wildland Fire in the Southeast](#)
- [Wildfire in the West](#)
- [Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists](#)
- [Northeast Region Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy](#)
- [Ontario Wildland Fire Management Strategy](#)

	<p><u>Restoration Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">After the Flames: Resources for post-fire treatments</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">British Columbia Wildfire Recovery</a></li> </ul> <p>SIC's Climate Smart Forestry Outcomes: As noted in #3 above, the SIC's actions related to Objective 9, Climate Smart Forestry, likely addresses many facets of Fire Resilience and Awareness.</p>
<p><b>4. DEVELOP A COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM FOR EVALUATING AND ADDRESSING RISK (PM 10.1)</b></p> <p>This is a place where SICs can add value by developing a collaborative program that may be implemented by any SFI-certified organization on the lands that they manage. This offers opportunity for companies to think strategically together about fire related threats and opportunities, to support both collaborative and individual action. This SIC level coordination could enable an outsized impact in the region and meaningfully contribute to broader landscape objectives.</p>	
	<p>Evaluate: If appropriate, using the resources gathered in Step #3 above, evaluate the risks of undesirable impacts of wildfire and the role of fire on the forests in the state/province/region (10.1.1).</p> <p>Identify: As appropriate, identify “best practices” – techniques, actions and policies to promote forest health and resilience, and to mitigate the likelihood of undesirable impacts of wildfire or promote resilience. These include but are not limited to prescribed burning, restorative thinning treatments (commercial and non-commercial), cultural practices, hazardous fuels reductions and ecosystem restoration.</p> <p>SFI-certified organizations can take this set of “best practices” and apply them, as appropriate, to the lands they manage.</p> <p>Consider: In developing “best practices” that could be implemented by SFI-certified organizations, consider options from several perspectives:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Scale: Consider and develop treatments for stand and landscape scales, as well as the interaction between the two levels.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Economic viability: Recognize that techniques will vary based on region and forest type. Not all treatments are appropriate or feasible for all regions and forest types.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Pre- and post-fire stages: Consider that forests within a state region or province may be in different stages relative to fires. Some may be vulnerable to fire, where forest health measures are a focus. Others may be in the in stages following a fire where salvage and restoration efforts are critical.</p> <p>Example: Sharing GIS layers to identify high risk areas of neighboring landowners</p>

## 5. DISCOVER & EVALUATE CURRENT TOOLS AND RESOURCES (10.2)

Discover What is Out There: Review the range of existing programs, tools, and initiatives dedicated to raising awareness of benefits of fire management and minimization of undesirable impacts of wildfire. Examples include:

- Project Learning Tree (an initiative of SFI)
  - o [Nature of Fire Activity Collection](#)
  - o [Hot Topic in Forest Literacy Framework](#)
- Federal agencies and initiatives
  - o [Firewise USA](#)
  - o [FireSmart™ Canada](#)
  - o [Smokey Bear](#)
- State or Provincial Agencies
  - o [Alberta's FireSmart Guidebook for Community Protection](#)
  - o [Wisconsin's Fire Management Initiative](#)
- Indigenous community programs (See Indigenous Ecological Knowledge below)
  - o [US Bureau of Indian Affairs \(BIA\) Prevention Handbook and Guides](#)
  - o [Yurok Cultural Fire Management Council](#)
  - o [Indigenous Peoples Burning Network](#)
- Nongovernmental Organizations
  - o [Fire Adapted Communities Network](#)
  - o [The Nature Conservancy's Fire and Landscapes](#)
- Existing SIC landowner outreach publications

Evaluate: In the review of existing programs and resources, evaluate the degree to which these resources address the various dimensions of SFI Performance Measure 10.2 including:

- Fire management and prevention programs
- Programs that promote the benefits of fire management and awareness about the environmental, economic, and social risks of undesirable impacts of wildfire to values such as carbon emissions, water quality and quantity, air quality, species habitat, public safety, and human health

Consider Audiences: In review of the current programs and resources, consider which audiences may be currently targeted and those that may not be reached by current efforts. Are there any gaps that could be filled?

Tip: See further audience considerations in Step 6 below.



## 6. COLLABORATE TO RAISE AWARENESS (PM 10.2)

This is an area where SICs bring local knowledge and positioning to amplify existing programs/resources or develop new resources to promote fire awareness in local communities.

Find a Path: Drawing on your review of the range of existing programs and resources in the step above, SICs can determine if it makes sense to:

- Leverage existing resources and programs: It may be possible that SIC and SFI-certified organization member can offer a platform to advance or amplify the great work done by others.

And/or

- Develop new resources and actions: SICs may be positioned and well suited to develop new tools, resources and programs to reach new audiences or advance awareness related to wildfire.

Bring Unique Assets to the Table: Consider the unique resources and assets that SICs and SFI-certified organizations can bring to the table. This might include:

- Land base: SFI-certified organizations have something that is often missing, a forest setting in which to demonstrate the benefits of active management for fire prevention and resilience on the ground. As such, SICs and their members are well positioned to provide a venue for learning and awareness building.
- Central relationships: As a group of landowners, the SIC may be positioned to influence the wider landscape and adjacent lands.

Tip: Host Field Tours

As noted above, SICs and member companies have a sustainably managed forest land base to provide powerful real-world illustrations of management, as well fire histories, on the ground for a wide array of audiences. These are opportunities to talk about specific management techniques, fire impacts, issues of adjacency, opportunities for coordination, and to present and disseminate educational resources. See more below under “Consider Audiences”.

Connect: Project Learning Tree (PLT)

The PLT Network is rich with knowledgeable professionals focused on environmental education for both formal educators and community members, including professional development and youth programming. While the resources and set-up vary by state or region, this network of education leaders and community partners can be a resource for the SIC.

- Request a PLT training: PLT can provide professional development training for SFI-certified organizations to increase confidence and ability to bring learning outdoors and increase forest literacy. In many regions, PLT training can be focused on relevant issues such as fire and climate change.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support a PLT training: Provide financial support to deliver a PLT training in your community for educators, community members, or natural resource professionals, and increase the community’s ability to communicate about the importance of forest management in supporting fire resilience.</li> <li>- Learn about communication tools: PLT has developed a range of tools, tailored for different audiences that can be available for use or adaptation by the SIC. Learn more at <a href="http://www.plt.org">www.plt.org</a>.</li> </ul>
	<p>Incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Explore connections and options to bring traditional ecological knowledge of local Indigenous or expatriated Indigenous communities into fire awareness activities. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Co-presenting or codeveloping materials with local Indigenous representatives</li> <li>- Reviewing and including fire histories and narratives developed by Indigenous communities</li> <li>- Capturing history of low-intensity burns by Indigenous communities</li> </ul>
	<p>Consider Audiences: When considering hosting an event or field tour, be sure to consider the various audiences and the potential impact of the engagement. These might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elected or government officials at various levels including federal or state/provincial legislators, county commissioners, and Indigenous leaders.</li> <li>- Community or municipal employees: As those working on issues of zoning and resource allocations, these audiences may benefit from greater understanding and exposure to issues related to fire.</li> <li>- Local community, recreational or environmental groups: Many local groups may be organized around interests in nature but not have much exposure to the issues behind wildfire in the news.</li> <li>- Students and teachers: Fire awareness may be a part of curriculum already, but the opportunity to “see” management action and its effect may add powerful new setting for this programming, as well as an opportunity to present and share PLT resources to bring back to the classroom.</li> <li>- Different cultural communities: People and communities have different experiences and associations with forests, nature, and fire. Consider outreach to communities that have not traditionally been represented in the forest sector or targeted in outreach efforts, like women, people of color, low-income communities and others. Approach the engagement with recognition these communities bring their own knowledge, experiences and understandings to these topics too. As such, it can be a shared learning experience.</li> <li>- Influencers: Within each of these communities/audiences, also consider the “influencers” or those that may carry the messages around fire and resilience to others, because of their position or role in their community. This may include business leaders or others that are provide bridges between different communities.</li> </ul>
	<p>Think Big Picture: SIC action in the context of federal or state/provincial wildfire policies and strategies. Because fire is such a prominent issue, the actions that SICs or their members implement can add value and advance broader initiatives to move the needle in promoting resilience on the landscape. Think about how the SIC’s actions fit into the bigger picture and where to leverage the most “bang for the buck.”</p>

## APPENDIX A – FIRE RESILIENCE AND AWARENESS, 2022 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD, OBJECTIVE 10

### Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness

To limit susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of fire benefits, risks, and minimization measures.

#### Performance Measure 10.1

On the forests they own or manage, Certified Organizations shall limit susceptibility to undesirable impacts of wildfire, promote healthy and resilient forest conditions through management techniques, actions and/or policies, and support restoration of forests following wildfire damage.

##### Indicators:

1. Program to evaluate the risk of undesirable impacts of wildfire and the role of fire on the forests they own or manage.
2. Use of stand and landscape level management techniques, actions and/or policies to promote forest health and resilience, and to mitigate the likelihood of undesirable impacts of wildfire, such as, prescribed fire, cultural burning, thinning, or hazardous fuel reduction where appropriate based on risk.
3. Use of management techniques to address wildfire damage, mitigate negative impacts to water and soils, and to promote forest restoration and future forest resilience.

#### Performance Measure 10.2

Certified Organizations shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving government agencies, SFI Implementation Committees, Project Learning Tree, or other partners, engage in efforts to raise awareness of and take action towards benefits of fire management and minimization of undesirable impacts of wildfire.

##### Indicators:

1. Participation in, or support of, local, state, provincial, federal, or Indigenous fire management and prevention programs.
2. Participation in, or support of, programs to promote benefits of fire management, and raise awareness about the environmental, economic, and social risks of undesirable impacts of wildfire to values such as carbon emissions, water quality and quantity, air quality, species habitat, public safety, and human health.