

# **Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative CO<sub>2</sub> Budget Trading Program**

## **Verification Report Template U.S. Forest Projects**

**Prepared by:**

**[Verification Body Staff]**

**Project Sponsor:**

**Forest Owner:**

**Technical Consultant:**

**Protocol Version:**

**Verification Body:**

**Lead Verifier:**

**Reporting Period:**

**Date of Issue:**

## Contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
1.1	Project Background and Site Description .....	3
1.2	Verification Objectives.....	3
1.3	Verification Team .....	3
1.4	Verification Standards and Criteria .....	3
1.5	Scope of Verification .....	3
1.6	Verification Level of Assurance.....	3
1.7	Verification Materiality Threshold .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.	Verification Process .....	3
3.	Conformance with Verification Criteria .....	4
3.1	Project Definition .....	4
3.1.1	Broadcast Fertilization - Explicitly state that it was confirmed that the project does not utilize broadcast fertilization .....	4
3.2	Forest/Project Ownership.....	4
3.3	Eligibility Requirements.....	4
3.3.1	Project Location.....	4
3.3.2	Additionality .....	4
3.3.3	Offset Project Commencement and Crediting Period .....	5
3.3.4	Regulatory Compliance .....	5
3.3.5	Permanence and use of Qualified Conservation Easements (if applicable).....	5
3.4	Sustainable Harvesting and Natural Forest Management Practices .....	5
3.5	Modeling Baseline Onsite Carbon Stocks.....	5
3.6	Determination of Actual Onsite Carbon Stocks.....	6
3.7	Quantification of Net GHG Reductions and Removals .....	6
4.	Verification Results .....	6
5.	Verification Statement/Conclusion.....	6

## 1. Introduction

**REQUIRED:** Provide a general introduction for the project. Explain the parties involved in the carbon project, the purpose of the verification, the program being used, the standards to which the project is being verified, etc.

### 1.1 Project Background and Site Description

**REQUIRED:** Explain the project activities in relation to how the land was being utilized in the baseline scenario.

### 1.2 Verification Objectives

**REQUIRED:** Explain the purpose of the verification.

### 1.3 Verification Team

**REQUIRED:** Verification Body contact information, roles & responsibilities of each team member.

### 1.4 Verification Standards and Criteria

**REQUIRED:** List the documents that the verification body is using as the criteria to perform the verification.

- Model Rule CO<sub>2</sub> Budget Trading Program
- Offset Handbook for Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) Model Rule
- Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Offset Protocol U.S. Forest Projects, July 13, 2013
- Applicable RGGI State regulatory/statutory authorities
- ANSI/ISO Accreditation

### 1.5 Scope of Verification

**REQUIRED:** Describe the scope of the project in which the verification will cover including:

- Baseline scenario
- Activities/technologies/processes
- GHG Assessment Boundary (sources/sinks/reservoirs)
- GHG type(s)
- Temporal scope (reporting period)
- Project physical boundary

### 1.6 Verification Level of Assurance

**REQUIRED:** The level of assurance was used to determine the depth of detail that the verifier placed in the verification plan to determine if there were any errors, omissions, or misrepresentations

## 2. Verification Process

**REQUIRED:** Provide a description of the process taken to perform the verification. Please explain the following:

- Planning/preparation
- Verification team selection
- Conflict of interest evaluation
- Desktop assessment/document Review
- Site visit
- Meetings
- Interviews

### 3. Conformance with Verification Criteria

#### 3.1 Project Definition

**REQUIRED:** Provide an explanation of what was verified to confirm the project meets the definition of a forest project and meets the criteria of Reforestation, Improved Forest Management, or Avoided Conversion.

**3.1.1 Broadcast Fertilization** - Explicitly state how it was confirmed that the project does not utilize broadcast fertilization.

#### 3.2 Forest/Project Ownership

**REQUIRED:** Describe the information that was reviewed that demonstrates that the Forest Owner has the explicit right to be issued any and all carbon credits that may flow from the forest project. The Forest Owner should be the entity with the ability to effectuate change with respect to the carbon stocks.

#### 3.3 Project Area

**REQUIRED:** Describe how the project boundaries were verified, through on-site observation as well as review of supplemental documentation including but not limited to maps and ownership documentation.

#### 3.4 Eligibility Requirements

##### 3.4.1 Project Location

**REQUIRED:** Confirm that the project lands are located within the United States. Projects located on public and tribal lands have additional requirements which need to be checked for conformance with the protocol.

##### 3.4.2 Additionality

**REQUIRED:** Confirm that the project exceeds any GHG reductions or removals otherwise required by law or regulation, or any GHG reduction or removal that would otherwise occur in a conservative business-as-usual Scenario.

**3.4.2.1 Legal Requirements** - Indicate that any reforestation, improved forest management, or avoided conversion efforts are not legally required as of the project's start date, as well as describing any legal review or supporting evidence for this statement.

**3.4.2.2 Performance Standard** – confirm how the project has met the performance standard requirements applicable to the appropriate project type.

### **3.4.3 Offset Project Commencement and Crediting Period**

**REQUIRED:** Provide an explanation of and justification for the Project Commencement Date, according to Section 3.2 of the Protocol. Describe the verification team’s review of the supporting documentation and evidence supporting the action designating the date as a Project Commencement Date. Please also state that the crediting period as required by the protocol is 25 years.

### **3.4.4 Regulatory Compliance**

**REQUIRED:** Confirm that all applicable local, regional and national requirements on environment impact assessments and any other local, regional, and national requirements were adhered to during the reporting period.

Confirm that the Project Sponsor has attested that the project lands are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. The Project Sponsor is required to disclose in writing any and all instances of non-compliance associated with the project lands with any legal requirement. Explain any instances of non-compliance with any environmental law or regulation, in which case CO<sub>2</sub> Offset Allowances may not be awarded GHG reductions or GHG removal enhancements that occurred during any reporting period of non-compliance.

### **3.4.5 Permanence and use of Qualified Conservation Easements (if applicable)**

**REQUIRED:** If a project is using a Qualified Conservation Easement, it must be confirmed that it:

- Is granted by the owner of the fee to a qualified holder of a conservation easement in accordance with the conservation easement enabling statute of the state in which the project is located
- Is perpetual in duration;
- Expressly acknowledges that the Participating State is a third party beneficiary of the conservation easement with the right to enforce all obligations under the easement and all other rights and remedies conveyed to the holder of the easement. These rights include standing as an interested party in any proceeding affecting the easement.

## **3.5 Sustainable Harvesting and Natural Forest Management Practices**

**REQUIRED:** Describe in detail how the project meets the following protocol requirements, and how these requirements were verified:

- Native species
- Composition of native species
- Distribution of age classes
- Structural elements

## **3.6 Modeling Baseline Onsite Carbon Stocks**

**REQUIRED:** The baseline analysis must include:

- A description of the inventory of onsite carbon stocks

- Baseline carbon stock modeling
- A comparison of initial above-ground standing live carbon stocks in order to determine the minimum baseline level
- A description of legal and financial constraints
- An evaluation of the LMU (if applicable)

### **3.7 Determination of Actual Onsite Carbon Stocks**

**REQUIRED:** A description of the verification methodology used to determine whether the Project Sponsor's assertion of the actual carbon stocks is accurate. This must include:

- Verification methodology (sequential sampling)
- Verification of Project Sponsor's stratification rules (if applicable), compared with verifier's consideration of on-site observations and supplementary documentation
- Modeling software
- Backgrowth of Inventory (if applicable)

### **3.8 Quantification of Net GHG Reductions and Removals**

**REQUIRED:** Evaluation of the Project Sponsors calculation of Net GHG Reductions and Removals as a result of the project activity. Include discussion on the following:

- Harvested wood products
- Secondary effects
- Leakage assessment

## **4. Verification Results**

**REQUIRED:** Confirm all verification activities including objectives, scope and criteria, level of assurance, are complete and in adherence to the Model Rule and RGGI protocol as documented in this report without any qualifications or limiting conditions.

## **5. Verification Statement/Conclusion**

**REQUIRED:** State the total number of GHG reductions and removals achieved by the project and certify that the information contained in the verification report is complete, accurate, and true.