

## **ATFS Program and AFF Standards of Sustainability Interpretations and Guidance**

### **Eligibility Guidance: Acreage Exclusion for Wilderness Inoperability or Conservation Easement**

**Date:** Issued by the AFF Certification & National Standards Interpretation Committee electronically September 24, 2012

**Question:** May a landowner exclude from ATFS certification acres of a contiguous parcel that are designated wilderness, held under easement by another entity or are deemed to be inoperable due to elevation or slope?

**Eligibility Guidance Language:** *The ATFS Standards of Sustainability for Certification encompass a broad range of management objectives, considerations and strategies, including management for biodiversity conservation, high conservation value forests, special sites and aesthetics, among others. Acres of contiguous forest parcels that are held under non-regulatory wilderness designation or conservation easement or are mechanically inoperable due to slope or elevation may not be excluded or deducted from certified acreage.*

### **Eligibility Guidance: Long-term Leasing of Timber or Mineral Rights**

**Date:** Issued by the AFF Certification & National Standards Interpretation Committee electronically September 24, 2012

**Question A:** If a landowner is leasing timber rights to a third party, (1) is the property eligible for ATFS certification? (2) If so, which party is responsible for conformance with the Standards?

**Eligibility Guidance Language:** *If a landowner retains control and decision-making authority over the forest management, in accordance with their objectives, as reflected in their management plan, the land may be certified to that landowner. Lessees may not certify leased lands to the ATFS Standard.*

**Question B:** May a landowner certify an otherwise eligible parcel where oil and gas leases may impact (1) sustainability of the forest resources or (2) the ability of the landowners to implement a forest management plan to achieve their own management objectives?

**Eligibility Guidance Language:** *Forests eligible for ATFS that have mining/subsurface leases in place on the property may be certified. However, if disturbance and/or change in land use renders the land no longer in conformance with the ATFS Standards of Sustainability, upon activation of the lease, the property must be decertified.*