



Rediscovered Wood Program Description

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INTRODUCTION

Rediscovered Wood certification is a program of SmartWood. The Rediscovered Wood Program was designed to acknowledge good practices for the recovery, recycling, and reuse of wood products through credible independent certification of the wood recovery practices as well as tracking of the products. Wood recovery is a new and growing industry that is developing due to rising timber prices, diminishing space in landfills, and specialty markets for antique woods. With the world's current demand for forest products, deforestation and forest degradation pressures are ever increasing. It is important to develop and encourage the use of already-existing wood products that would otherwise go to landfills, thereby displacing the need to harvest virgin woods. For instance, an old warehouse with one million board feet of reusable lumber can offset the need to harvest one thousand acres of forest.

CATEGORIES OF REDISCOVERED WOOD

Following are the categories that have been identified by SmartWood to qualify for Rediscovered Wood certification. SmartWood is open to additional categories of recovered wood as they are presented. The current categories include:

- wood by-products from secondary manufacturers (by-products from primary manufacturers do not qualify);
- post-consumer recycled wood and wood fiber (e.g., used pallets);
- dead, fallen, diseased, or nuisance trees from (sub)urban private and government properties;
- orchards where unproductive trees are cut for replacement;
- deconstruction projects for antiquated buildings, railroads, etc.;
- wood recovered from demolition landfills; and
- logs and trees recovered from rivers, lakes, and reservoirs (e.g., underwater salvage).

GUIDELINES

Different types of Rediscovered Wood Operations (RWOs) have unique environmental and social impacts. The challenge is to evaluate the practices and potential impacts of RWOs in a clear and consistent manner, based on a combination of scientific research and practical experience. SmartWood has developed an underlying set of Rediscovered Wood guidelines that all RWOs are evaluated against with an additional set of principles and criteria to use for environmentally sensitive recovery sources (see below). The underlying guidelines include evaluation of recovery source information, environmental impact criteria, chain-of-custody procedures to follow the recovered wood through to the final product, and compliance with SmartWood policies. The additional principles and criteria provide a unique set of guidelines against which

environmentally sensitive recovery sources can be objectively evaluated. RWOs that meet the applicable guidelines will qualify to use the Rediscovered Wood label on their product, indicating to consumers that their wood has been recovered with procedures that meet the highest environmental and social criteria.

Currently, SmartWood uses the additional principles and criteria for evaluation of wood recovered from water sources. Depending on the type of deconstruction project, some of these recovery types may be assessed against the additional principles and criteria as well.

RWOs can be certified whether they are involved in the recovery process or not. RWOs that are not directly involved but only buy from a supplier are requested to provide information on the recovery source and company responsible for the recovery. It is then decided by SmartWood to what extent the source is evaluated for recovery procedures during the initial assessment and following annual audits.

Relevance of the Rediscovered Wood Program to FSC-Accredited Certification

In late 2000 and early 2001, SmartWood conducted a full review of the Rediscovered Wood Program to ensure that all RWO sources, at a minimum, meet the complete intentions of the FSC “Neutral Category B” requirements (see below). These requirements are defined in the May 2000 “FSC Policy on Percentage Based Claims”. In addition, SmartWood has submitted the Rediscovered Wood guidelines for review to the FSC. Although the Rediscovered Wood Program is not an FSC-endorsed certification program (it is considered to not be within the FSC mandate), SmartWood can approve the use of certified Rediscovered Wood in FSC certified products, as a neutral component in a percentage-based claim. In this situation, neutral materials are combined with FSC certified wood and the company must be FSC chain-of-custody certified in order to make FSC claims on their products.

FSC “Neutral Category B” materials include:

- a) “pre-consumer recycled wood and wood fibre or industrial by-products, including mixed waste paper, but not including mill broke or sawmill co-products,
- b) post-consumer recycled wood and wood fibre, e.g. pallets, demolition timber, post-consumer recycled paper,
- c) non-wood plant fibre, e.g. cotton, rags, flax, straw bagasse,
- d) drift wood, and
- e) urban wood (as defined in this policy)”.