

## RESRFP25-1 Exhibit 4 to Appendix 2. In-Field Verification

<b>Desktop Analysis</b>	
1.	Calculate what percentage of the Facility Area is sited on Forest Land <sup>1</sup> via desktop analysis. <sup>2</sup>
2.	Standard protocols require a Qualified Professional (QP) review recent aerial imagery and appropriate data layers of the Facility Area prior to conducting the in-field investigation.
<b>In-Field Verification</b>	
3.	Have an in-field investigation (as described below) of the Facility Area evaluated by a Qualified Professional. <sup>3</sup> Have the QP fill out and sign the in-field verification checklist and certification.
4.	During the in-field investigation, verify that the Forest Land identified during desktop analysis is in fact Forest Land. Identify if any land is forested that wasn't identified as forested during the desktop analysis (i.e., such as being mis-identified as <u>Class #52 'Shrub-Scrub'</u> on NLCD). Evaluate and document the current condition of the Forest Land within the Facility Area. An ocular assessment by QP to determine the Forested Land will be adequate. QP will determine if the Forest Land is currently declining or in a static growth condition, is in a young but vigorously growing condition, or is in a biologically mature yet stable condition.
5.	Identify if trees were harvested from the Facility Area within the past 5 years while under the site control of the developer that converted an area of the site from Forest Land.
6.	During the in-field investigation, identify if any portion of the Facility Area contains Agroforestry activities that was not already identified in the desktop analysis for the <b>Part 1 – Agriculture Avoidance Flow Chart</b> . <sup>4</sup>
<b>Post-Field Calculations &amp; Map Deliverables</b>	
7.	<p>If required, re-calculate what percentage of the Facility Area is sited on Forest Land as confirmed by in-field verification visit. The results should be used to calculate Box B1 on the <b>Part 1 – Forested Lands Avoidance Flow Chart</b>.</p> <p>Forest Land Calculation Directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subtract any acreage misidentified as Forest Land via the desktop review that doesn't meet the definition of Forest Land,</li> <li>• Add any acreage misidentified as non-Forest Land via the desktop review,</li> <li>• Add any acreage of Forest Land identified via the desktop review that has been harvested of trees thus converting the site from Forest Land. If the Proposer can demonstrate that such harvesting occurred when the site was NOT under the site control of the developer, then the acreage does NOT get added as Forest Land.</li> <li>• Enter the number of acres of Forest Land in cell C#14 in the Workbook.</li> </ul>
8.	Create and provide the maps and associated GIS files as stated in #8 below.
9.	<p>If required, re-calculate what percentage of the Facility Area includes Active Agricultural Production as confirmed by in-field verification visit. The results should be used to calculate Boxes A3 and A4 on the <b>Part 1 – Agriculture Avoidance Flow Chart</b>.</p> <p>Active Agricultural Production Calculation Directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add any acreage of land dedicated to Agroforestry to acres of Active Agricultural Production identified via the desktop review.</li> <li>• Enter the number of acres of Agroforestry in cell C#13 in the Workbook.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> **Forest Land** = Areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover.

<sup>2</sup> To determine the acreage of Forest Land, Proposers must first conduct a desktop analysis using the two most recent available updates to the National Land Cover Database (NLCD) datasets (Data Source 2019 & 2021 NLCD, Relevant Data Layer: 2019 & 2021 Map Deciduous Forest, Evergreen Forest, and Mixed Forest). If the 2021 Data Source shows a decrease in Forest Land and the clearing occurred while under the site control of the developer, then the 2019 Data Source should be used to calculate the Forest Land. USGS NLCD data can be accessed at: [https://www.usgs.gov/centers/eros/science/national-land-cover-database?qt-science\\_center\\_objects=0#qt-science\\_center\\_objects](https://www.usgs.gov/centers/eros/science/national-land-cover-database?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects).

<sup>3</sup> **Qualified Professional** = A forester, environmental scientist, or biologist who is familiar with identifying land cover types via desktop review, and capable of identifying land cover types during in-field investigations. The Qualified Professional should be familiar with how to identify signs of 1) Forest Farming activities, and 2) forest harvesting activities that have occurred within the past 5 years (such as clear cutting or selective logging).

<sup>4</sup> **Agroforestry** = The intentional integration of trees and shrubs into crop and animal farming systems as further defined by the USDA, however for the purposes of the Scorecard, it is to be limited to such systems that are actively producing “crops, livestock and livestock products”, as that phrase is defined by New York State Agriculture and Markets Law (AML) § 301(2).

## RESRFP25-1 Exhibit 4 to Appendix 2. In-Field Verification

### In-Field Verification Checklist and Certification:

#### Desktop Review

1. Prepare a desktop map of the Facility Area which depicts the areas presumed to be Forest Land for use in the in-field investigation. What acreage of the Facility Area is sited on Forest Land as identified by desktop review?  
\_\_\_\_\_ acres
2. Does a review of historical aerial imagery of the Facility Area show a conversion of Forest Land to non-Forest Land in the last 5 years? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
  - a. If yes, what acreage of the Facility Area has been converted from Forest Land in the last 5 years?  
\_\_\_\_\_ acres

#### In-Field Verification

3. Is any portion of the Facility Area identified as Forest Land during the Desktop Review misidentified as Forest Land? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
  - a. If yes, what acreage of the Facility Area is misidentified as Forest Land?  
\_\_\_\_\_ acres
4. Is any portion of the Facility Area identified as non-Forest Land (such as shrub-scrub on NLCD) during the Desktop Review that is actually Forest Land? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
  - a. If yes, what acreage of the Facility Area is misidentified as non-Forest Land that should be considered Forest Land? \_\_\_\_\_ acres
5. What is the current, overall condition of the Forest Land identified within the Facility Area?

Growing Forested Land	Growing Forested Land	Static/Declining Forest Land	Static/Declining Forested Land
Young/Early successional to Mid-life/ vigorous growth	Mid-life to Biologically Mature	Late-successional/Stable, steady growth	Over mature/static to declining growth
Mostly saplings, with some pole sized stems, regeneration present, limited interfering vegetation	Mostly pole sized stems to sawlog quality trees, some regeneration present with limited interfering vegetation	Mostly sawlog quality trees, limited decay and symptoms of decline, limited interfering vegetation, low levels of regeneration	Limited desirable species, occasional saplings pole sized trees, and mature trees with signs of decreasing health, lots of interfering vegetation, limited desirable regen species
%	%	%	%
Mix of saplings, mostly pole sized stems, regeneration present with limited interfering vegetation	Some pole-sized stems, mostly healthy sawlogs quality trees, some regeneration present, with limited interfering vegetation	Mostly sawlog quality trees but signs of poor health/decay, interfering vegetation present, low levels of regeneration	Sawlogs with little to no crown, lots of signs of decay, lots of interfering vegetation and limited desirable regen species
%	%	%	%

6. Has any portion of the Facility Area been harvested of trees within the last 5 years to convert the site from Forest Land and not identified on the Desktop Review? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
  - a. If yes, what acreage of the Facility Area has been converted from Forest Land in the last 5 years?  
\_\_\_\_\_ acres
7. Does any portion of the Facility Area contain Agroforestry activities? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
  - a. If yes, what acreage of the Facility Area is dedicated to Agroforestry?

---

## RESRFP25-1 Exhibit 4 to Appendix 2. In-Field Verification

---

\_\_\_\_\_ acres

### Post-Field Calculations & Map Deliverables

8. What acreage of the Facility Area is sited on Forest Land as confirmed by in-field verification visit?

\_\_\_\_ #1 - \_\_\_\_ #3a + \_\_\_\_ #4a + \_\_\_\_ #6a = \_\_\_\_\_ Acres of the Facility Area sited on Forest Land

9. Attach a copy of the map in this submission to NYSERDA in the form of a pdf and GIS shapefiles. The shapefiles should contain polygons of the Forest Land and Agroforestry areas in the Facility Area boundary. Please also include a shapefile of the Facility Area boundary and clearly identify any areas via polygons found to be misidentified during the desktop review both on the map and as a shapefile.

### Certification

I, \_\_\_\_\_, certify that the above information is estimated to the best of my knowledge based on my in-field verification site visit of the Facility Area that occurred on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Qualified Professional

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date