The following document summarizes the input received during and immediately following the 2018 Controlled Wood Regional Meetings and provides rationale for the resulting mitigation options for Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS), along with definition of any identified gaps in the final set of options.

**Please note that any of the proposed mitigation options may be done individually or in collaboration with other certificate holders, or other entities that have similar desired outcomes. Collaboration is encouraged to scale up potential mitigation impact, and FSC US will seek to assist with that collaboration when feasible.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Mapping**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Option  (#1) Develop a really good map of high-value NLPS so that they can be more easily maintained/enhanced | Topline Input   * Recognition that a good map is helpful for understanding conservation need and risk * Lots of questions regarding ‘who’ would do the work and ‘how’ * Significant concerns regarding unintended consequences (maps promoting harvest) * Not something that most companies can do, but could partner with organizations that can do it * Some suggestion that this already exists * Need better criteria for what’s mapped than ‘high value’ * Suggest it should not be a fine-scale map |

*Consultation Insights: There was across the board support for mapping as an option, but recognition that the ‘what’ to be mapped needs to be defined differently, as ‘high value’ for one perspective may not be the same for another. Scale was also the focus of a number of comments, recognizing that there is a desire to have an output that improves conservation of NLPS, but that doesn’t instigate harvests by landowners that don’t want to have potential habitat for endangered species, or that feel compelled to harvest for other reasons. The Longleaf Alliance and others have done some mapping, but there was a sense expressed that there was additional opportunity to augment what has been done. Emphasis that this is not something that most Organizations could do on their own, but that they certainly can help to support those who can do it. Input associated with other risk issues has also suggested that research or mapping on its own will not mitigate the identified risk (the risk of sourcing materials from places where the HCV is threatened by the forest management activities) – something else is needed in addition.*

**Proposed Revised Mitigation Option**

**The following is offered as a two-part option for ‘High Impact’ organizations:**

1. **Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to an organization or alliance that is working to augment current maps of existing and restorable Native Longleaf Pine Systems in areas that overlap with the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area, using remote sensing or other techniques that do not require landowner declarations regarding their ownerships; and**
2. **Use the results of the mapping work to improve implementation of another mitigation option.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Implement Management Activities**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Options  (#2) Provide monetary or in-kind support to the Longleaf Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, National Wild Turkey Federation, The Conservation Fund or equivalent organizations for projects on public or private lands to maintain/enhance NLPS and/or promote working land easements  (#5) Work collaboratively to secure Native Longleaf Pine habitat for Longleaf-dependent species that are candidates for federal endangered species listing, working to preclude the need for listing and ensure that the forest areas secured will not be threatened by incompatible forest management activities. Through a multi-species Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances? Something like the Gopher Tortoise Initiative, but with the broader NLPS as focus? | Topline Input   * Focus on supporting organizations that are already working to implement management * Group similar ideas/options * Must include options other than monetary * Should include restoration in addition to maintain and enhance * Needs to be auditable – link this to specific goals or types of programs/projects needed * Focus on HCVs within the supply area * Facilitating use of fire as a management tool is critical and should be incorporated * Emphasize understory condition over dominant trees, including impacts from changes to hydrology * Little support for a specific focus on rare species habitat protection |

*Consultation Insights: Both of these original actions are about supporting active, on the ground, conservation of NLPS through collaborative efforts, so merging them makes sense. Comments recognized that there is a greater chance for effectiveness by working with organizations that have established track-records. There was an interest in focusing on improving or increasing specific management activities across the landscape that are identified as important to restore, maintain, or enhance existing NLPS. Comments consistently emphasized the need to ensure flexibility in how an Organization can ‘support’ these efforts, that it shouldn’t be limited to monetary donations.*

**Proposed Revised Mitigation Option**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to conservation organizations or similar entities (as described below) that are facilitating active, on the ground implementation of management activities (as described below) to restore, maintain or enhance existing examples of Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS), with a goal of long-term conservation of this system, within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area.**

* **Conservation Entities: These may include: non-governmental organizations that have active programs/projects to conserve NLPS; federal, state and/or local agencies with natural resource conservation responsibilities; and/or organizations that have active programs/projects focused on habitat conservation for species dependent upon NLPS.**
* **Management Activities: These may focus on any of the sub-categories of NLPS and should include efforts to: increase and improve the use of existing Best Management Practices for NLPS; increase the use of fire as a management tool; restore and maintain native understory communities; and restore and maintain essential hydrology.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Landowner Incentives**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Options  (#3) Work with potential suppliers/landowners (particularly the larger ones) to get them to agree that they will manage for NLPS  (#6) Through the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation or the Longleaf Alliance, develop a fund that will help to fill the gap created when there are more landowners willing to plant and manage NLPS than cost share dollars available. | Topline Input   * Focus on incentives to restore & maintain * “Develop or augment” landowner incentives * “Support and promote” existing incentives * A number of different ways this could be done * Not just large landowners * “Get them to agree” is vague and un-auditable * Money should not be the only option; but if it is, clarify how much is enough * May not be possible for individual Organizations to do this * Support organizations already doing it * Don’t focus on specific funds |

*Consultation Insights: Due to the higher return-on-investment for loblolly pine over longleaf pine, there’s a perceived need for incentives to help get landowners engaged in managing for NLPS. One of the originally proposed options was seen as not specific enough (‘get them to agree to’), while the other was considered too specific (focusing on only one incentive potential) – commenters are looking for something in the middle. But regardless, the input consistently emphasized the need to focus on the desired outcome of NLPS conservation. However, it also emphasized the need for some flexibility in how Organizations do this – that it can’t be limited to monetary donations.*

**Proposed Revised Mitigation Options**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to conservation organizations or similar entities that are supporting or promoting programs or projects to develop new or augment existing incentive programs for landowner who restore, maintain or enhance existing examples of Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS) within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area, or organizations that work to connect landowners with incentives provided by other entities within the same area. These entities may include: non-governmental organizations that have active programs/projects to conserve NLPS; federal, state and/or local governmental organizations; and/or organizations that have active programs/ projects to conserve habitat for species dependent upon NLPS. If the incentive involves a working forest easement, the easement language should include requirements for use of compatible forest management practices that will restore, maintain or enhance the NLPS.**

**The following is offered as an option for Organizations that have direct contact with the landowners that supply their materials:**

**Provide an incentive(s) to the landowner for conserving existing high quality or near high quality occurrences of Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS); or facilitate the landowner’s access to incentives provided by other entities that will conserve the existing high quality or near high quality occurrences of NLPS.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Value-Added Forest Management**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Option  (#4) Promote value-added supply chains for longleaf pine wood products to incentivize longer rotations and ecological forestry. | Topline Input   * Mixed response received during the meeting, with more negative comments in the written materials * General support for healthy markets that promote NLPS management, but questions as to how an Organization could have an impact |

*Consultation Insights: While strong markets for Longleaf Pine materials would be very welcome, there were many concerns expressed regarding the feasibility of an Organization being able to have an impact on the economics of the market and therefore being able to affect conservation of NLPS or address threats to NLPS through this pathway. Due to the potential for lack of effectiveness, this option is not included in the revised set of mitigation options*

**CENTRAL THEME: Education & Outreach**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Options  None | Topline Input   * Really strong support for an education option to promote awareness of functions and benefits, and to encourage more/better management of NLPS * Multiple messages to be communicated * Multiple pathways to get information to individuals who make decisions about on-the-ground management * Focus on long-term conservation of NLPS through restoration, maintenance and enhancement of existing NLPS |

*Consultation Insights: While there was not an original option proposed related to education and outreach, there was strong support from many perspectives for this addition. However, there was also recognition in the input that the option needs to be flexible enough to allow the Organization to communicate with the most appropriate audiences. The comments identified a number of messages to be communicated, including information about functions and benefits, management needed for restoration and maintenance, the importance of the understory and fire, and information about wildlife associated with the system. Overall, input emphasized the need for a focus on long-term conservation of the system.*

**Proposed Mitigation Options**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Using materials (as described below), and with a desired outcome of engaging landowners within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area in conservation of Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS), communicate to audiences (as described below) the social benefits and values of NLPS, threats from forest management (and related loss of values), and management practices for restoration and maintenance, including the importance of the understory and fire.**

* **Materials: Developed by, or developed in cooperation with, organizations/individuals with expertise in NLPS conservation, or FSC US, and delivered in a manner that will be the most effective in achieving the desired outcome of engaging landowners in conservation of NLPS, while reflecting the specific context and characteristics of the Organization.**
* **Audiences: Audiences will reflect the specific context and characteristics of the Organization, but communications should be directed toward those audiences where the communications will be most effective in helping to achieve the desired outcome of engaging landowners within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area in conservation of NLPS. Depending upon the Organization’s location in the supply chain, communications may be directly with landowners, or through intermediaries such as community members, forest managers, suppliers, forestry associations, landowner associations, or in collaboration with organizations/individuals already working for conservation of NLPS.**

**The following is offered as an option for Organizations with suppliers that are land managers or that purchase directly from the source forest:**

**Develop/adapt a procurement policy that reflects the above communications themes and clearly states the expectation that suppliers will promote conservation of NLPS and will not provide materials from forests where these HCV were threatened as a result of the forest management activities that produced the forest materials. This will require providing a description of the forest type (as it occurs in the supply area), potential threats from forest management activities, and the kinds of activities that would maintain or enhance NLPS forest in the supply area.**

**NOTE: Actions to demonstrate policy enforcement and communicate policies on sourcing to suppliers should be audited under the Due Diligence system requirements within the 40-005V3-1 standard section 1.1**

**CENTRAL THEME: Public Land Planning**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Options  None | Topline Input   * Multiple suggestions for a mitigation option associated with this central theme * Involvement in land planning to encourage management for NLPS * Encourage expansion and restoration |

*Consultation Insights: While there was not an original option proposed related to land planning, there were a number of different suggestions for an associated option. Some of the input was not specific to any particular level of government, but one specified national or state forests. Generally, the message was that there should be an option for Organizations to get involved in a way that would allow them to encourage management for and restoration and expansion of NLPS on public lands.*

**Proposed Mitigation Option**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Engage in public land (Federal, state and/or local) conservation planning processes and the implementation of plans that include, or could potentially include, goals, objectives and/or actions that are intended to achieve conservation of existing Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS) within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area. This may include: general natural resource planning and plans; planning and plans for specific forests, natural areas, or other managed areas; planning and plans for NLPS-dependent species; and/or regional planning and plans directly for NLPS itself.**