

Verification Report

Year 4

Fox River Bluffs Planting Project

City Forest Credits Project Number 019

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Table of Contents

- 1 INTRODUCTION 3
 - 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND 3
 - 1.2 CONTACT INFORMATION 3
 - 1.3 OBJECTIVE 4
- 2 VERIFICATION CRITERIA 4
 - 2.1 GENERAL 4
 - 2.2 PROTOCOL 4
 - 2.3 LEVEL OF ASSURANCE 4
- 3 SCOPE OF VERIFICATION 4
- 4 VERIFICATION PROCESS 5
 - 4.1 VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES 5
 - 4.2 CITY FOREST CREDITS TREE PLANTING PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS AT YEAR 4 5
- 5 VERIFICATION FINDINGS 6
- 6 VERIFICATION RESULTS AND CONCLUSION 6

1 INTRODUCTION

Dan Hintz (a Validation and Verification Body (VVB) acting as a third-party verifier) was engaged to verify the Fox River Bluffs Planting Project (Project) in Yorkville, IL, for the issuance of credits at the Year 4 interval based on the applicable protocol. The goal of the Year 4 verification is to ensure that the GHG assertion is materially correct, and that the sampling process and carbon quantification by the project are well documented and appropriate.

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Kendall County Forest Preserve District (District) planted trees as part of this carbon project on 40-acres of the Fox River Bluffs Forest Preserve (Preserve) in Yorkville, IL. The District acquired the 166-acre Preserve in 2015 with a goal to restore 99 acres of the former farmland to prairie and a reforested natural area.

The District and community volunteers planted native trees and shrubs in April of 2020. For this carbon project, 23,917 trees were planted including six Oak species, Shagbark hickory, American Plum, and Black walnut. This project used the “Area Reforestation” method for the 40 acres being credited.

In Year 4, plot sampling was used to assess tree establishment across the 40 acre project area. Sixty 452.4 sq. ft.-plots (approximately 1/100 of an acre) were randomly selected within the project area. Within each plot, all trees belonging to a species planted by the District in 2020 were tallied.

Based on the plot sampling conducted on October 7, 2023, the 40-acre project area met the minimum required stocking threshold of 400 trees per acre needed to create full canopy cover after 25 years. Therefore, at this point there are no changes in the credit estimates determined in Year 1 after initial planting.

1.2 CONTACT INFORMATION

Project Operator

Kendall County Forest Preserve District
110 West Madison Street
Yorkville, Illinois 60560

Contacts: David Guritz (executive director), dguritz@co.kendall.il.us, 630-538-6303
Stefanie Wiencke (special projects manager), swiencke@co.kendall.il.us, 630-229-4828

Verifier

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1.3 OBJECTIVE

The goal of this GHG emission removal verification at Year 4 is to ensure that the GHG assertion made by the Project is materially correct, that the sampling process and data used in the offset calculations are appropriate, that the offset calculations conform to the City Forest Credits (CFC) Protocol, and that the Project is in compliance with all CFC requirements relating to eligibility, accounting, and documentation.

2 VERIFICATION CRITERIA

2.1 GENERAL

The Registry will accredit VVBs to act as third-party verifiers who meet the Registry's qualifications and complete training. Those accredited VVBs can then act to verify compliance with this Tree Planting Protocol per International Standards Organization 14064-3. Specifically, the Registry adopts and utilizes the following standards from ISO 14064-3:

- Upon receiving a Year 4 Project Design Document Amendment with sampling data, quantification of carbon and co-benefits, and a request for credits, the Registry will conduct a validation. If it validates the project at that stage, the Registry will retain a VVB to act as third-party verifier to verify compliance with this Protocol.
- The Registry requires a reasonable level of assurance in the accuracy of the asserted GHG removals to a reasonable level.
- The verification items identified in Tables 1 and 2 are all material elements, and any asserted GHG removals must be free of errors, misstatements, or omissions regarding those elements.
- The Registry will record, store, and track all quantification and verification data and either display it for public review or make it available for public review upon request.

2.2 PROTOCOL

The verification was conducted to the City Forest Credits Tree Planting Protocol, version 9, February 7, 2021.

2.3 LEVEL OF ASSURANCE

This verification was conducted to a reasonable level of assurance. The Verification Report accurately reflects the documentation contained in the Project Design Document and supporting documents.

3 SCOPE OF VERIFICATION

- The Project is located in Yorkville, Illinois, specifically described in the Project Design Document.

- The verification is for the issuance of credits at the Year 4 interval.
- The verification includes review of documents, data, imagery, and other evidence provided by the Project Operator; independent checking of selected data; checking of calculations for accuracy and conformance with the Protocol.

4 VERIFICATION PROCESS

4.1 VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES

The verification process consisted of the following activities:

- Verifier checked that the date (October 7, 2023) when trees were sampled was subsequent to the Request for Credit Issuance date of April 9, 2023.
- Verifier checked all requirements in the Protocol, confirmed that documentation satisfies the requirements of the Protocol, and that values extracted from the documents and conclusions drawn from the document are accurate and appropriate.
- Verifier checked mapping (which included aerial images and a GIS layer for the project area), sampling protocols, locations of sampling plots, sampling data table for all 60 plots, photos, and attestations. Verifier reviewed the accuracy of process for sampling and data collection, including: sample size calculations, randomization and distribution of sample plots, calculations, integrity of spreadsheet, accuracy of canopy assessment, and project area boundary.
- Verifier reviewed the accuracy of the carbon quantification and City Forest Carbon Forward Removal Credit calculations. Verifier reviewed the Project Operator's assertion that the Project results in total GHG emissions mitigation of 5,062 tons CO₂e over the 26-year Project Duration. Verifier reviewed the Project Operator's assertion that per Protocol guidelines, 40% of Project GHG emissions mitigation is issued at Year 4, or 2,025 tons CO₂e.
- Verifier submitted to City Forest Credits and the Project Operator request for clarifications on the approved sampling methodology (e.g. size of plots and overall sample size of the project area), why there were no tree canopy area measurements, and expectations on tree mortality during the remainder of the project.

4.2 CITY FOREST CREDITS TREE PLANTING PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS AT YEAR 4

Verifier reviewed the Project against all CFC Tree Planting Protocol requirements and confirmed the following:

- Project Design Document (Section 3): Verifier reviewed and confirmed Project Design Document is complete and accurate.
- Project Documentation (Section 3 and Appendix A): Verifier confirmed all required project documentation present.
- Additionality (Section 4): Verifier reviewed for additionality as follows:
 - Verifier reviewed the completed and signed Attestation of Additionality.
- Quantification (Section 10 and Appendix A):
 - Verifier confirmed Project Operator utilized the Area Reforestation CFC quantification methodology described in Appendix A.
 - Verifier reviewed the accuracy of the data collection process and the data integrity for the Year 4 sampling and quantification methodology.
 - Verifier reviewed spreadsheets with data from all sixty sample plots for carbon quantification, as well as mapping data, data sheets, and Area Reforestation carbon quantification calculator.
- Co-Benefits (Appendix A): Verifier confirmed the calculation of ecosystem co-benefits as set forth in the City Forest Credits quantification tool.

5 VERIFICATION FINDINGS

All issues raised by Verifier were clarified or corrected by the Project Operator and all issues were closed by appropriate responses by City Forest Credits and Kendall County Forest Preserve District staff.

Verifier confirmed that the Project at Year 4 meets the minimum required stocking threshold of 400 trees per acre needed to create full canopy cover after 25 years. Therefore, the Verifier confirmed that no changes are required to the credit issuance schedule.

6 VERIFICATION RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

This verification of the Fox River Bluffs Planting Project for the Year 4 issuance was completed in a manner consistent with ISO 14064-3 and in conformance with relevant CFC standards and guidelines.

The table below is a summary of the verified GHG emissions removals for the Project for Year 4 credit issuance. These City Forest Carbon Forward Removal Credits are ex-ante credits based on forecasted removals and subject to multiple safeguards, including sampling, and which convert to ex-post at Year 26.

Table 1. Project GHG Removals

Project Name	GHG Removals Attributed to the Project (mtCO₂e)	GHG Removals After Deductions for Reversal Pool Account (5%) (mtCO₂e)	City Forest Carbon Forward Removal Credits to be Issued to Project at Year 4 (mtCO₂e)
Fox River Bluffs Planting Project – Year 4	5,328	5,062	2,025

Table 2. Ecosystem Co-Benefits Per Year After 25 Years

<i>Ecosystem Services</i>	<i>Resource Units</i>	<i>Value</i>
Rainfall Interception (m ³ /yr)	10,820.4	\$77,472.17
Air Quality (t/yr)	0.4529	\$681.87
Cooling – Electricity (kWh/yr)	85,177	\$6,464.96
Heating – Natural Gas (kBtu/yr)	1,592,668	\$15,504.27
Grand Total (\$/yr)		\$100,123.27

Verifier Signature



Daniel J Hintz