



FSC Certified Wood



Wood has the potential of being an environmentally superior building material: it is created by solar power, improves local air quality, reduces global warming by sequestering carbon, creates habitat, and requires minimal energy to process. However, current industrial logging practices run roughshod over forests, creating erosion problems, damaging natural habitat and biodiversity, and reducing air and water quality. These practices make it very difficult to categorize wood as an ideal green building material.



Fortunately, you can support sustainable forestry practices by purchasing FSC-certified wood. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has established standards in sustainable forest management and created a mechanism—third party certification—that ensures that they are followed. In addition to addressing its environmental impact, the FSC considers the impact of logging on local communities and indigenous peoples and supports their interests. There are other wood certification programs, notably the industry-created Sustainable Forestry Initiative; however, only the FSC has required annual third-party inspections, complete chain-of-custody tracking and inspections, and high enough standards to be endorsed by the World Wildlife Foundation, the Wilderness Society, the Natural Resource Defense Council, the Rainforest Alliance, the World Resources Institute, and the US Green Building Council.

The number of products that are certified or using certified wood is always growing but includes most sizes of solid lumber, plywood, engineered wood products, domestic and tropical hardwoods, siding, flooring, doors, millwork, and furniture.

PRODUCT COMPARISONS

FSC-certified Forestry

- Enhances biodiversity & wildlife habitat
- Requires monitoring of forest health
- Respects Indigenous People's Rights
- Supports Community Relations and Worker's Rights

Non-FSC-certified Forestry

- Degrades habitat
- Leads to monoculture
- Permits massive clear-cuts
- Allows widespread pesticide use

LEED CREDITS

Using this material potentially contributes to obtaining these credits in the US Green Building Council's LEED certification program:

Materials & Resources

MR Credit 7 Certified Wood



LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. To find out more about it, visit www.leedbuilding.org.

ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES

Energy Performance

Using FSC-certified lumber does not affect energy use at the point of use.

Resource Impacts

According to the Forest Stewardship Council, forest stewardship is defined “in a set of global Principles and Criteria. These Principles and Criteria, which apply to all forests worldwide, ensure that FSC-endorsed forests are managed in an ecologically sound, socially responsible and economically viable manner.” Specific standards are set regionally, and they can vary widely depending on the type of forest and the decisions of the regional body. Plantations, which yield vast quantities of lower-grade wood fiber for engineered wood applications, are allowed in some areas provided there is no conversion of forestlands. In other regions, trees are logged with little or no road building.

Despite the variety, all of the FSC standards are significantly less damaging than the vast majority of contemporary logging operations. In order to be certified, landowners must devise explicit management plans for maintaining ecological balance and log only within the limits of the forests' ability to grow back. Certifying agencies conduct annual inspections and audits of timber shipments to ensure that these businesses honor the guidelines.

Health Considerations

Negligible difference compared to non-certified counterparts.

FUNCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cost

FSC-certified wood products are typically 0-15% more expensive than non-certified counterparts. Bear in mind that the cost of lumber for any project is generally much less than 10% of the total project cost, so specifying certified lumber is likely to add only a fraction of 1% to the total project cost. Because the market for FSC lumber fluctuates even more than conventional lumber markets, it is prudent to give as much lead time in ordering it as possible.

Installation

No difference compared to non-certified counterparts.

Maintenance

No difference compared to non-certified counterparts.

Other Data / Comments

As a consumer, you need to communicate that you are in support of forestry practices that protect habitat. When shopping for wood, simply look for the FSC logo (a check mark with a tree) stamped on the end of the lumber to be assured that the wood you select comes from forests managed in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. The larger the market is for FSC-certified wood, the more likely





the industry-created Sustainable Forestry Initiative will raise its standards.

RESOURCES

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

FSC is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization that promotes responsible forestry by accrediting and monitoring third-party certifiers to ensure compliance with FSC requirements. Their website, www.fscus.org, contains a directory of all FSC chain-of-custody businesses, a product database, and many other resources.

Suppliers

Many lumber yards carry FSC-certified redwood decking, and FSC-certified millwork can be found at many home improvement stores. Call ahead to confirm availability of specific products. For up-to-date retailer listings, search the Green Materials Database, www.builditgreen.org/guide.

Beronio Lumber

2525 Marin Street
San Francisco, CA
(415) 824-4300
www.beronio.com

Big Creek Lumber Company

3564 Highway 1
Davenport, CA
(800) 464-2770
www.big-creek.com

DLD Lumber

1755 Egbert Ave
San Francisco, CA 94124
(415) 467-6832
www.geocities.com/dldconst2000

EcoTimber

1611 Fourth Street
San Rafael, CA
(888) 801-0855
www.ecotimber.com

Earthsource

(a division of Plywood & Lumber Sales, Inc.)
1618 28th Street
Oakland, CA
(510) 208-7257
www.earthsourcewood.com

Golden State Flooring

6805C Sierra Court
Dublin, CA 94568
(925) 551-4750

Golden State Lumber

38801 Cherry Street
Newark, CA 94560
(510) 818-1000
www.goldenstatelumber.com

Golden State Lumber

1100 Anderson Drive
San Rafael, CA 94901
(415) 454-2532
www.goldenstatelumber.com

Golden State Lumber

3033 South Airport
Stockton, CA 95206
(209) 234-7700
www.goldenstatelumber.com

Sierra Point Lumber

(a division of Golden State Lumber)
601 Tunnel Avenue
Brisbane, CA 94005
(415) 468-1000
www.goldenstatelumber.com

Hayward Lumber

429 Front Street
Salinas, CA 93901
(831) 755-8800
www.haywardlumber.com

Home Depot

Bay Area- Wide
(800) 553-3199
www.homedepot.com



www.goldenstateflooring.com

Golden State Flooring

680 8th Street, Suite #169B
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 522-5120

www.goldenstateflooring.com

Golden State Flooring

1060 Commercial Street, Suite #101
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 392-0801

www.goldenstateflooring.com

Golden State Flooring

240 Littlefield Ave.
So. San Francisco, CA 94080
(650) 872-2163

www.goldenstateflooring.com

Lowe's Home Improvement Center

Bay Area- Wide
(800) 44-LOWES (445-6937)

www.lowes.com

Plywood and Lumber Sales

4050 Horton Street
Emeryville, CA
(510) 547-7257

www.pals4wood.com

Standard Structures

340 Standard Avenue
Windsor, CA 95492
(800) 862-4936

www.standardstructures.com

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