

EDITORIAL

Journal of Cave and Karst Studies Use of FSC-Certified and Recycled Paper

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Beginning with this issue, the *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies* now includes the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) logo on the inside cover. According to the FSC web site (<http://www.fsc.org/about-fsc.html>) “FSC is an independent, non-governmental, not for profit organization that was established to promote the responsible management of the world’s forests. It provides standard setting, trademark assurance and accreditation services for companies and organizations interested in responsible forestry. Products carrying the FSC label are independently certified to assure consumers that they come from forests that are managed to meet the social, economic and ecological needs of present and future generations.”

FSC certification allows consumers to identify products that provide assurance of social and environmental responsibility on the part of the producer. This is accomplished by requiring that all materials be tracked from the certified source. The path taken by the raw materials harvested from an FSC-certified source are tracked using a chain-of-custody through processing, manufacturing, distribution, and printing until it is an end product and ready for distribution.

The FSC logo is applicable and allowed only for FSC-Certified and Recycled Paper use. By having selected an FSC-certified paper for printing the *Journal*, we are provided the right to use the FSC logo. Approved use of the seal ensures that the paper and processes that we use for the *Journal* are being produced in compliance with strict guidelines protecting the environment, wildlife, workers and local communities.

Interestingly, the *Journal* has actually been conforming to FSC standards for more than a year, which reflects the conservation mindset of the members of the National Speleological Society. As is known to many of you, conservation is a major part of the National Speleological Society, although we are more focused on the more limited concept of cave and karst conservation (<http://www.caves.org/committee/conservation/>). However, by using FSC-certified paper we are directly supporting forest conservation and may be indirectly supporting cave and karst conservation, depending on where the paper is being harvested. This is something that the National Speleological Society can be proud of and it reflects well on our members’ commitment to being conservation minded.