



**SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE**

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## **Backgrounder**

### **SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program**

Through its Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program has made an initial investment of \$675,000 – \$307,500 in 2010 alone – to support cooperative projects that deliver tangible, on-the-ground benefits to forests. Through the involvement of partners, the projects will leverage additional resources and achieve a total value of almost \$2.7 million.

In its request for proposals, SFI Inc. invited applications for projects that support partnerships between organizations interested in improving forest management in the United States and Canada, supporting responsible procurement globally. Proposals were also requested to demonstrate how the project complements existing government initiatives in North America and which involves collaboration with government agencies.

Areas of the SFI 2010-2014 Standard highlighted through the grant application process included:

- the role of certified forests in the emerging bioenergy/carbon markets;
- avoidance of controversial sources, including illegal logging in the global supply chain;
- improved wildlife habitat management and conservation of biodiversity; and
- support for activities that benefit communities involving organizations such as government agencies, Aboriginal communities and universities.

### **SFI Support for Conservation Research and Community Outreach**

The SFI program is the only independent third-party forest certification program that includes research among its standard requirements. Since 1995, SFI-certified organizations have invested more than \$1.1 billion US for research activities that improve the health, productivity and responsible management of forest resources.

The SFI 2010-2014 Standard includes a new principle for research, which states: "To support advances in sustainable forest management through forestry research, science and technology." Objective 15 of the standard calls on program participants to support forestry research, science and technology; and expands the definition of relevant research to include the environmental performance of forest products and climate change impacts on forests, wildlife and biological diversity. The SFI 2010-2014 Standard is posted at [www.sfiprogram.org/sustainable\\_forestry\\_initiative\\_standard.php](http://www.sfiprogram.org/sustainable_forestry_initiative_standard.php).

The SFI program also responds to diverse local needs across the United States and Canada through a unique network of 37 SFI Implementation Committees. In 2009, these committees contributed a total of \$3 million to support local programs such as education and training for loggers and foresters, and outreach to family forest owners – bringing the total since 1995 to \$55.1 million.

SFI Inc. values and facilitates this research and outreach work through awards and support for collaborative activities, including the SFI Leadership in Conservation Research Awards.

### **SFI Standard Requirements**

The SFI program introduced a Requirements kit with its new SFI 2010-2014 Standard, bringing together all the program components into one binder – including the forest and chain-of-custody standards, rules for label use, procedures, guidance and more. This is in keeping with the SFI program's efforts to ensure its standard is practical and that all guidance materials are clear, avoid unnecessary complexity and are easy to find. The materials are posted at [www.sfiprogram.org/sustainable\\_forestry\\_initiative\\_standard.php](http://www.sfiprogram.org/sustainable_forestry_initiative_standard.php).

The Requirements kit includes a section for optional modules, allowing the SFI program to offer guidance on emerging issues or opportunities such as bioenergy and carbon markets or conservation easements.



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## **Summary of Initial Projects for 2010**

**Bird Studies Canada** ([www.bsc-eoc.org](http://www.bsc-eoc.org)) will lead a three-year project to provide science-based data and tools to improve forest habitat management beyond regulatory compliance for the conservation of bird biodiversity and species at risk across Canada. Partners include the Canadian Wildlife Service, Regroupement QuébecOiseaux, and Breeding Bird Atlas projects in the Maritimes, Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia, and the following SFI program participants – NewPage, Port Hawkesbury Corporation, Bowater Mersey Paper Company Ltd., Abitibi-Bowater, J.D. Irving Ltd., Acadian Timber, Louisiana-Pacific Corp.,

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**Clemson University** ([www.clemson.edu](http://www.clemson.edu)) forestry and natural resources department will help South Carolina landowners of all sizes adopt and implement practices to improve wildlife habitat on managed forest lands. Practices include promoting aquatic and riparian areas, managing for landscape wildlife habitat features, conserving rare species and communities, protecting special sites, and encouraging partnerships with natural resource agencies and conservation organizations. Partners include Upstate Forever, Nemours Wildlife Foundation, Quality Deer Management Program and the National Wild Turkey Federation.

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**Forest Trends** ([www.forest-trends.org](http://www.forest-trends.org)) will receive support for the fourth Potomac Forum on Illegal Logging & Associated Trade in the fall of 2010, which will help U.S. suppliers, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, navigate legality in the global supply chain. The project involves a workshop and policy brief to help U.S. suppliers comply with market and policy demands for legal, wood products, such as the revised U.S. Lacey Act and emerging European Commission legislation and public procurement policies. SFI has sponsored previous Potomac Forums, along with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Forest Service and the World Bank.

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**South Coast Conservation Program** ([www.sccp.ca](http://www.sccp.ca)) will develop materials and tools to identify and protect habitat and populations of forest-dependent plant and animal species at risk on 40.7 million acres/16.5 million hectares of forest on British Columbia's Pacific Coast. The multi-partner landscape-based conservation program will build on existing collaborative work to update and expand a field guide/training tool on species at risk for the forestry sector; develop and deliver a training package to field personnel/forestry practitioners, planners and First Nations; and complete a technical review of grizzly bear critical habitat polygons. Partners include the British Columbia Ministry of Environment, as well as SFI program participants Capacity Forest Management (which has certified forest tenures held by coastal First Nations to the SFI standard) and International Forest Products Ltd. (Interfor).

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**The American Chestnut Foundation** ([www.acf.org](http://www.acf.org)) will receive support to establish some of the first plantings of blight-resistant American Chestnuts in the southeastern United States. The American Chestnut, historically a critical food source for wildlife and valuable generator of high-value wood products, was functionally removed from its historic range (Maine to Georgia) during the turn of the century by an exotic fungal disease. This two-year project is a core first step in a process to restore the species, and will also include development of a web-based database to monitor and assess test plantings and management guidelines for reintroduction. Partners include the Tennessee Tree Farm state committee as well as the Tennessee SFI Implementation Committee and program participants Georgia-Pacific and MeadWestvaco (MWV).

**Project contact:** **Bryan J. Burhans, President & CEO, The American Chestnut Foundation**  
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**The National Council for Air and Stream Improvement** ([www.ncasi.org](http://www.ncasi.org)) will pilot a habitat-based approach to protecting at-risk imperiled species and communities. There will be three pilots, one each in the Southeast, Pacific Northwest and Great Lakes regions. In each pilot region, the investigators will develop a regional list of imperiled species and communities of conservation concern to the forest products industry and a relational database describing key generalized habitat types where the species and communities are known to occur. Researchers will summarize known occurrence of the species and communities by key habitat types, then develop plans for a field test of a habitat-based approach to protecting them. Partners include NatureServe and SFI program participant Weyerhaeuser.

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**The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation** ([www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)) will enhance the biodiversity of young forest habitats through a two-year project, helping to reverse the declines of some 80 species of highly imperiled birds and other wildlife species dependent on shrublands and early successional forest habitat. There will be technical assistance to help SFI program participants voluntarily integrate State Wildlife Action Plan and Partners in Flight bioregional management recommendations into their forest operations. Project partners include the Ruffed Grouse Society, National Wild Turkey Federation and Wildlife Management Institute, and government resource agencies in New York, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, West Virginia and Virginia. Thirty 30 SFI program participants in 14 mid-west, northeast and central east coast states and two Canadian Maritime provinces are also involved.

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**The Ruffed Grouse Society** ([www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org)) will increase the impact of Wisconsin Coverts – A Woodland Wildlife Management Program for Private Landowners in the Great Lakes Region by holding six Coverts workshops over three years. The Wisconsin Coverts Project enlists and educates coverts cooperators about management opportunities for their land for wildlife so they can lead by example and help others better understand their role as land stewards. Partners include the University of Wisconsin – Extension, the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology at UW – Madison, and SFI program participant Louisiana-Pacific US.

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**World Resources Institute** ([www.wri.org](http://www.wri.org)) will lead a three-year project to create an online dynamic risk assessment tool. The Forest Legality Alliance Risk Tool will reduce the proportion of wood and forest products of illegal origin that is imported into the United States by helping importers and other stakeholders exercise due care within their procurement process. The project is one activity of the Forest Legality Alliance, made up of many retail, industry, government and conservation organizations.

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