



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

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**SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program 2010
The Ruffed Grouse Society: Wisconsin Coverts – A Woodland Wildlife Management
Program for Private Landowners**

In 2010, Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) Inc. introduced its Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program, furthering its long-standing commitment to research and bringing together diverse partners, including SFI program participants, conservation groups and several government agencies, to deliver conservation benefits across North America and tackle illegal logging issues globally.

Independent non-profit SFI Inc. invited applications for collaborative projects that help to implement the SFI 2010-2014 Standard, make it stronger, and show how SFI certification delivers tangible benefits on the ground and complements existing government initiatives in North America. Applicants were encouraged to address topics of current importance such as the role of certified forests in emerging bioenergy and carbon markets, improving wildlife habitat management, avoiding controversial sources of fiber such as those resulting from illegal logging, and delivering community benefits through activities involving partners such as government agencies, Aboriginal communities and universities.

In May 2010, the SFI program announced a commitment of \$675,000 to support nine projects, including \$307,500 for 2010 alone. Through the involvement of partners, these projects will leverage additional resources and achieve a total value of almost \$2.7 million.

Wisconsin Coverts – A Woodland Wildlife Management Program for Private Landowners

The Ruffed Grouse Society will receive \$10,000 each year for three years, for a total of \$30,000, to 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.

Supporting the SFI Standard

The workshops include sessions related to SFI Standard requirements on forest productivity and health, the protection and promotion of biological diversity, and responsible fiber sourcing practices. The project is related to SFI 2010-2014 Standard Objective 8: "To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry by forest landowners through fiber sourcing programs," as well as Objectives 17 and 18, requiring community involvement and addressing public land management responsibilities.

Project Partners

In addition to the Ruffed Grouse Society, 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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-2-

Project Details

The Wisconsin Coverts Project (http://fwe.wisc.edu/wl_extension/wicovertsproject.html) 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. Since it began in 1994, 427 Coverts Cooperators have attended 17 workshops. These cooperators are responsible for managing 330,735 acres/134,000 hectares in Wisconsin, and have impacted more than 700,000 acres/283,000 hectares.

The project will target difficult-to-reach, non-industrial private lands with professional level training and education. The funds will be used to hold six three-day workshops for non-industrial private landowners, starting with two in 2010: August 12th -15th and August 26th -19th, at the Kemp Natural Resources Station in Woodruff, WI.

About the Ruffed Grouse Society

The Ruffed Grouse Society (www.ruffedgrousesociety.org) supports national scientific conservation and management efforts to ensure the future of grouse and woodcock. Its team of wildlife biologists work with private landowners, and government, including local, state and federal, land managers who are interested in improving their land for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and the other songbirds and wildlife that have similar requirements.

About SFI Inc.

SFI Inc. is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program (www.sfiprogram.org). Close to 200 million acres/80 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard across North America, making it the largest single forest standard in the world. SFI chain-of-custody certification tells buyers the percentage of certified, uncertified and recycled content in a product. Unique SFI fiber sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands in North America, whether certified or not. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally.

The SFI program is grounded in science and research, and based on conservation and community partnerships. 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 program also responds to diverse local needs across the United States and Canada through a unique network of 37 SFI Implementation Committees. SFI Inc. values and facilitates this research and outreach work through awards and support for collaborative activities.

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