



SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program 2010 American Chestnut Foundation: Restoring the American Chestnut

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.

Restoring the American Chestnut

The American Chestnut Foundation will receive \$30,000 a year for two years, for a total of \$60,000, to establish some of the first plantings of blight-resistant American Chestnuts in the southeastern United States. About 3,000 of the most advanced American Chestnuts will be planted, providing the baseline information needed to begin the process of species restoration.

Supporting the SFI Standard

The project supports Objective 4 of the SFI 2010-2014 Standard by providing critical long-term information needed to restore the American chestnut to its historic range, and addressing knowledge gaps to ensure the future success of American Chestnut restoration. Objective 4 requires that program participants “manage the quality and distribution of wildlife habitats and contribute to the conservation of biological diversity by developing and implementing stand- and landscape-level measures that promote a diversity of types of habitat and successional stages, and conservation of forest plants and animals, including aquatic species.” One of the indicators (4.2) is a program to protect threatened and endangered species.

Project Partners

In addition to The American Chestnut Foundation, partners include the Tennessee Tree Farm State Committee Tennessee and the SFI Implementation Committee, as well as SFI program participants Georgia-Pacific and MeadWestvaco (MWV).

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Project Details

In addition to planting blight-resistant American Chestnuts, the project includes development of an easy-to-read best management practices manual for growing and managing American Chestnuts, and a web-based database so participants can enter data about their activities and generate reports about their progress on a landscape scale.

The test sites themselves will be used as demonstration areas to promote the goals and methods of chestnut restoration with private landowners and natural resource professionals. In addition, this project involves work with private landowners to evaluate hurdles to restoration, and develop specific strategies to overcome them.

About The American Chestnut Foundation

The mission of The American Chestnut Foundation (www.acf.org) is the restoration of the American chestnut tree to its historic range, from Maine to Georgia. The American chestnut, a valuable food source and source of high-value wood products, was functionally removed during the first half of the 20th Century by chestnut blight, an exotic fungal disease.

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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