



SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program 2010 Clemson University: Wildlife Habitat Improvement Practices for Forest 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.

Wildlife Habitat Improvement Practices for Forest Landowners

The Clemson University Forestry and Natural Resources Department will receive \$30,000 a year for three years, for a total of \$90,000, to help South Carolina forest landowners improve wildlife habitat on managed lands through practices such as 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.

Supporting the SFI Standard

The project addresses a wide variety of SFI 2010-2014 Standard requirements including Objective 4, which says program participants must "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." It also addresses Objective 6, which requires that program participants "manage lands that are ecologically, geologically or culturally important in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities" and Objective 10, which requires the use of best management practices to protect water quality. The work is expected to result in an optional guidance module in the SFI 2010-2014 Standard for "value-added" wildlife habitat improvement on industry lands.

Project Partners

In addition to Clemson University, partners include Upstate Forever, Nemours Wildlife Foundation, Quality Deer Management Program and the National Wild Turkey Federation.



-2-

Project Details

The work at Clemson's 17,000-acre/6,900-hectare Experimental Forest will serve as a model for private landowners across the U.S. Southeast, and provide a teaching laboratory for students as well as providing new information and innovative approaches to integrate wildlife habitat improvement practices into timber management programs.

The project will implement and monitor over time forest-management practices that improve timber production while enhancing wildlife habitat. Practices to enhance plant diversity and wildlife habitat in the forest include prescribed burning, selective timber harvesting that opens forest stands to encourage multiple canopy layers, buffers around sensitive areas, and retaining and enhancing a variety of habitat features important to wildlife, such as deadwood, snags and dead trees.

About Clemson University

With more than 75 percent of South Carolina's natural resources on private lands, Clemson University (www.clemson.edu) provides research-based information to help landowners, foresters and natural resource professionals manage forest for timber products and wildlife habitat. Forestry and wildlife contribute more than \$6.5 billion annually to the state's economy.

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.

For more information:

Allison Welde, Director
Conservation Partnerships and Communications
Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc.
202-596-3452
Allison.welde@sfiprogram.org

Dr. Greg Yarrow, Professor of Wildlife Ecology
Department of Forestry and Natural Resources
Clemson University
864-656-7370
gyarrow@clemson.edu

May 20, 2010