

# Need help keeping your New Year's resolutions? Forests can help keep you on track!



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Many of us made New Year's resolutions that we'd really like to keep. Popular ones include getting more exercise, spending more time with family, reducing stress, helping out the community and living greener. Look no further than your nearest forest to help you keep all these resolutions and more.

## 1. Get more exercise

About 86% of U.S. forestland – and 97% of forestlands certified to Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standards – is available for recreation, and U.S. National Forests welcome nearly 150 million visitors per year. In Canada, about 42% of the land mass is covered by forests, and according to the Canadian Parks Council, the nature tourism dollars they generate are worth billions. Healthy forests give everyone opportunities for hiking, camping, biking and more.



**2. Spend more time with family** □Get your whole family into forest recreation, especially if you have kids. Screen time has taken over the current generation, and the consequences are serious. In the U.S., childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Obesity rates among children and youth in Canada have nearly tripled in the last 30 years, according to the Canadian government. Obesity in children increases their risk of high blood pressure, diabetes and lifelong health problems. Physical activity is critical to reversing this trend, and it's easier when you get active together. Whether it's hiking, biking, climbing or camping, **forests provide the perfect setting for kids to get out and about.**

**3. Reduce stress** □Many studies have linked interacting with forests to improved mental health. Take it up a notch with outdoor meditation, yoga and even adult coloring—a fun stress-busting trend. Check out the **Doodlers Anonymous Epic Coloring Book**. It has drawings from nearly 100 contemporary artists, and it's printed on responsibly sourced paper certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). This is a great gift idea for the young or old, if random acts of kindness are also part of your New Year's resolution.

**4. Give back to the community** □Responsibly managed forests open up a wide range of ways for all ages to get involved and help enrich their communities. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative partners with a vast array of organizations to support conservation and community focused projects that you can get involved with:

- Girl Guides of Canada worked with SFI to build and install SFI-labelled **duck nest boxes** to improve local habitat.
- The **National 4-H Forestry Invitational** brings youth together to build forestry skills including tree measurement, insect and disease identification, compass orienteering and topographical map use.
- Just last year, SFI led an effort across North America to set **a new Guinness world record for the most trees ever planted by small teams simultaneously** in one hour—more than 200,000 trees. Although it won't always be to set a world record, there are numerous tree-planting programs that also need volunteers. **The Greening of Detroit project**, for example, recruited and trained 50 new citizen foresters to plant trees throughout the city to help replace the tens of millions of trees lost to urban expansion and Dutch elm disease.

**5. Living Greener** □Make 2016 the year you add a little green to your life with these tips

on buying and using responsibly managed forest products:

### ***Buy greener***

You'll find SFI labels at the **grocery store**, in addition to the home store. They're on hundreds of everyday products, from milk and paper cups and plates to health food packaging, facial tissue and toilet paper to cosmetics and school supplies. The label means that the wood fiber used to make the product or packaging was sourced from responsibly managed forests.

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### ***Build greener***

Responsibly managed forests give us the chance to build greener for others, as well as for ourselves. Since 2008, SFI and SFI Implementation Committees have donated countless volunteer hours or donated certified products to more than a dozen Habitat for Humanity projects throughout North America.



More and more green building materials are becoming **available**, including decking, and replacement windows and doors. SFI has developed standards and product labels so you, and builders and contractors, can easily identify wood that has been sourced from forests that are responsibly managed.

As you can see, our forests not only support all of the most common New Year's resolutions, they also accomplish many of them at the same time. Forests are the ultimate multi-taskers in terms of cleaning our air, purifying our water and making a home for our wildlife. This year, let forests help you multi-task toward your personal goals, too.

To find out more about sustainable forestry and SFI, visit <http://www.sfiprogram.org/>.