



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ARKANSAS STATE FOREST EARNS CERTIFICATION TO THE SFI FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Washington, DC — The Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI) is pleased to announce that Poison Springs State Forest, the Arkansas state forest managed by the Agriculture Department's Forestry Commission, has earned certification to the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard through a rigorous third-party audit. Certifying to SFI sends a strong signal about Arkansas's commitment to sustainable forest management, conservation, and economic opportunity for its citizens.

"It shows we are working to ensure that our forests will remain healthy and productive for generations to come. Certification to SFI also boosts our competitive position in national and international markets because we can demonstrate that our forest products come from well-managed forests," said Joe Fox, Arkansas's State Forester.

The forest covers over 23,500 acres in western Ouachita and eastern Nevada counties. The Arkansas Forestry Commission manages it for multiple uses, including demonstrating good forest management practices, timber production, multiple recreational opportunities, water quality protection, research and wildlife habitat. The forest got its name from a nearby spring and it was the site of a Civil War battle of the same name.

"We are thrilled that the Arkansas Forestry Commission has demonstrated their leadership and commitment to responsible forest management. This state forest is also a showcase for the multiple values that well-managed forests provide such as clean water, healthy habitats and sustainable jobs. At SFI, we believe caring for forests improves everyone's quality of life," said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc.

The commission joins other public agencies seeking cost-effective and efficient methods to implement and achieve independent SFI certification through the SFI Forest Partners® Program. The SFI Forest Partners Program was founded by Time Inc., the National Geographic Society, Macmillan Publishers and Pearson, with support from Hearst Enterprises.

These founding partners are investing in the future of forests by making commitments to increase the source of certified forest products, starting in the U.S. South. By collaborating on shared objectives and linking market leaders directly to stakeholder groups, SFI and its partners are working together to strengthen forest practices and procurement through certification.

SFI's 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard is based upon principles, goals and performance measures that were developed nationally by professional foresters, conservationists and others with the intention of promoting sustainable forest management in North America. SFI and its many partners work together to balance environmental, economic and social objectives such as conservation of wildlife habitat and biodiversity, harvesting forest products, protecting water quality, providing forest industry jobs and developing recreational opportunities.

"By participating in the SFI Forest Partners Program, we are increasing the supply of certified timber and publicly reaffirming our long-standing commitment to responsible forest management. This new certification provides consumers and Arkansans with the assurance that our focus is on conserving and sustaining healthy, productive forests," Fox said.



About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI)

SFI® Inc. is a sustainability leader that stands for future forests. We are an independent, non-profit organization that provides supply chain assurances, produces conservation outcomes, and supports education and community engagement. SFI works with the forest sector, brand owners, conservation groups, resource professionals, landowners, educators, local communities, Indigenous peoples, governments, and universities. SFI standards and on-product labels help consumers make responsible purchasing decisions. Additionally, we oversee the SFI Forest Partners® Program, which aims to increase supply of certified forest products, the SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program, which funds research and community building, and Project Learning Tree®, which educates teachers and youth about forests and the environment. SFI Inc. is governed by an independent three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social, and economic sectors equally. SFI believes caring for forests improves everyone's quality of life. Learn more: sfiprogram.org.

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About the Arkansas Forestry Commission

The mission of the Arkansas Forestry Commission is to protect Arkansas's forests, and those who enjoy them, from wildland fire and natural hazards while promoting rural and urban forest health, stewardship, development and conservation for all generations of Arkansans. The Forestry Commission is part of the Arkansas Agriculture Department, which is dedicated to developing and implementing policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry. These efforts aim to keep Arkansas's farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Learn more: aad.arkansas.gov.

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