

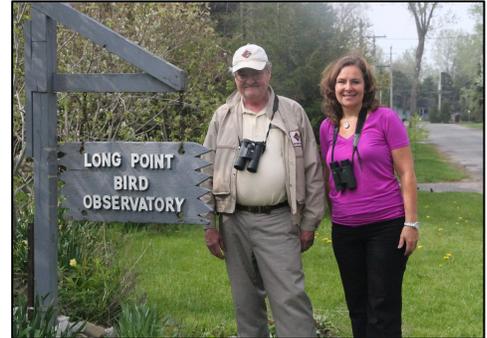
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 28, 2014

## **Bird Lovers Unite with Biologists to Keep Migratory Bird Habitats Safe Across Canada**

**Port Rowan, ON** – Migratory bird season is upon us once again, which means that millions of birds are currently flocking to forests all over the country. Coinciding with this major movement is the culmination of a series of dynamic projects joining bird enthusiasts and biologists to gather information that will help manage and conserve bird habitats in working forests.

With support from Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI®), Bird Studies Canada and its partners are developing a series of Breeding Bird Atlases – or detailed maps for hundreds of breeding bird species showing where they breed within a particular region as well as a host of other information. The mapping takes place across the country, province by province, with bird lovers playing a significant role by volunteering their time to gather information that serves as an important source of information for government agencies, the forestry sector and wildlife viewing communities.



George Finney (President of Bird Studies Canada) and Kathy Abusow (President & CEO of SFI Inc.) pose for a photo at North America's longest running bird banding location - the Long Point Bird Observatory in Port Rowan, Ontario - in May 2014. Many birds pass through this location to forest habitats.

“As wild birds are excellent indicators of environmental health, this research plays a pivotal role in how Canada's bird populations may be affected by a variety of factors in our forests,” said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc. “For one, the results of this research will provide updated information for forest managers related to bird habitat, which can better inform forest management decisions and practices.”

Countless devoted volunteers spend hundreds of hours collecting data across their specific region over a five-year period, which is typically repeated every 20 years. This information is transformed into maps, which outline different breeding bird species, their geographic locations, and the number found in those specific areas. These maps are available online at each project's website (<http://bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/atlas/>) and have been shared with forestry companies so they can incorporate bird habitat conservation into their forest planning processes.

The SFI funded portion of the project from 2010 – 2012 saw approximately 1.3 million breeding bird records collected from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia. Because of the information gathered from the Maritime Atlas project, several companies in the Maritimes have already committed to using products to inform harvest and conservation planning. While the SFI funded portion of the project has been completed, Bird Studies Canada is committed to building upon these results.

“We are more than thrilled that the wider forest landowner community has responded so well to the information that was produced from this project,” said George Finney, President at Bird Studies Canada. “This is a huge step towards improving forest habitat management in order to conserve bird species that are at risk across Canada.”

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Information has been gathered for hundreds of different types of bird species including several considered to be at risk such as the Canada Warbler, Olive-sided Flycatcher and Rusty Blackbird.

Since 2010, SFI has awarded more than 50 conservation partnership grants totaling more than \$1.9 million to support projects that promote sustainable forestry practices and engage communities. When leveraged with project partner contributions, that total investment exceeds \$7.1 million.

For more information visit the [SFI Conservation Grant Program](#).

**About SFI Inc.**

SFI Inc. is an independent, nonprofit organization that is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) program. Across the United States and Canada, more than 100 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard. In addition, the SFI program's unique fiber sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI chain-of-custody (COC) certification tracks the percentage of fiber from certified forests, certified sourcing and post-consumer recycled content. SFI on-product labels identify both certified sourcing and COC claims to help consumers make responsible purchasing decisions. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Learn more at [sfiprogram.org](http://sfiprogram.org) and [sfiprogram.org/Buy-SFI/](http://sfiprogram.org/Buy-SFI/).

**About Bird Studies Canada**

The mission of Bird Studies Canada is to advance the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of wild birds and their habitats, in Canada and elsewhere, through studies that engage the skills, enthusiasm, and support of its members, volunteers, and the interested public. Bird Studies Canada is a not-for-profit organization built on the enthusiastic contributions of thousands of volunteer Citizen Scientists. Data from Bird Studies Canada's volunteer surveys and targeted research projects are used to identify significant population changes and help direct conservation planning. Learn more at [birdscanada.org/](http://birdscanada.org/).

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