

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 22, 2014

**Montreal Lake Cree Nation Certified to SFI® Standard to Enhance
Forestry Operations and Community Sustainability**

Ottawa, ON — A forested area in central Saskatchewan — more than half the size of Prince Edward Island — is now certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) 2010–2014 Standard. The Montreal Lake Cree Nation adopted the SFI Standard because of its ability to promote sustainable forest management by protecting water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat and species at risk. Enhancing the economic sustainability of the community was another key factor in the decision to choose SFI.

“Meeting SFI objectives and other performance criteria improves our ability to cooperate with local partners in harvesting our annual wood allocation. At the same time we can also participate more fully in the local economy of our ancestral territory,” said Bart Smith, General Manager of Kaskew Forestry Products. Kaskew is licensed by Montreal Lake Cree Business Ventures to manage and operate the wood allocation.

Aboriginal and Tribal forestland certified to the SFI Standard covers an area greater than three million hectares — more than any other certification standard in North America. Twenty seven Aboriginal and Tribal communities and businesses in Canada and the U.S. work to maintain SFI certification on these lands.

“First Nations across Canada pride themselves on supporting their communities by practising responsible and sustainable forest management that respects and incorporates their cultural values and use of the land,” said SFI Board member, David Walkem, Chief of the Cooks Ferry Band and President of Stuwix Resources Joint Venture.

SFI continues to develop its partnerships with First Nations. Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc., and J.P. Gladu, President and CEO of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, signed a memorandum of understanding to support the Progressive Aboriginal Relations certification program. The program promotes corporate social responsibility and Aboriginal business and employment opportunities, especially for youth, in forest communities.

SFI is also involved with a variety of other projects involving First Nations partners. SFI recently awarded two grants to help improve knowledge and management of cultural heritage resources. “The [Heiltsuk First Nation](#) is recording, tracking and managing cultural resources such as culturally modified trees on the British Columbia coast. The [Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nations](#) people of southern British Columbia worked with their elders and training youth to identify trees, lands and other resources with historical and cultural significance,” said Andrew de Vries, Vice President of Conservation and Indigenous Relations at SFI.

SFI also supports the State University of New York’s Center for Native Peoples and the Environment. The university explored forest sustainability with indigenous youth through an educational program that focused on the sustainability of ecologically and culturally significant trees. The program was incorporated into a Native Earth Environmental Youth Camp sponsored by the university in July 2014.

Learn more: [SFI Aboriginal and Tribal partners fact sheet](#).

About Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI Inc.)

SFI Inc. is an independent, nonprofit organization that is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative program. Across Canada and the United States, 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 and sfiprogram.org/Buy-SFI.

About Montreal Lake Cree Business Ventures

Within their traditional ancestral territory, Montreal Lake Cree Nation, through its fully owned business entity Montreal Lake Business Ventures Ltd., has an annual wood fiber allocation of 200,000 cubic metres of softwood and 40,000 cubic metres of hardwood in the Prince Albert Forest Management Agreement area. Sakaw Askiy Management Inc. holds an agreement with the Province of Saskatchewan to manage the Prince Albert Forest Management Agreement area. Montreal Lake Business Ventures is a class A shareholder of Sakaw. Montreal Lake Business Ventures holds a licensing agreement with Kaskew Forestry Products whose purpose is to manage and operate their wood allocation within the Prince Albert Forest Management Agreement area.

SFI Media Contact

Laura Balance
laura@lbgm.ca
604-637-6646