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**OBISHIKOKAANG CERTIFIES TO SFI STANDARD TO ENHANCE
FORESTRY OPERATIONS, SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

OTTAWA, ON — The Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI) announced today that Obishikokaang Resources Corporation has certified more than 1 million hectares of the Lac Seul Forest in Northern Ontario to the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard. Lac Seul First Nation, also known as Obishikokaang, is the oldest Reserve in the Sioux Lookout District. Lac Seul First Nation has over 800 members and is made up of the communities of Kejick Bay, Whitefish Bay and Frenchman's Head, all located on the shores of Lac Seul.

"Lac Seul and the surrounding forest have always provided for the economic and cultural well-being of the people of Obishikokaang. Certifying to SFI is part of our commitment to the kind of sustainable business practices that are designed to protect the environment and support economic growth. Band members are working as part of the management teams, supervising harvesting and playing an important role in forest regeneration," said Clifford Bull, Chief of Lac Seul First Nation.

The SFI Forest Management Standard respects Indigenous peoples' rights and traditional knowledge. This includes protecting spiritual, historical and cultural sites, and using non-timber forest products. Obishikokaang Resources Corporation also 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 by opening new markets was another key factor in the decision to choose SFI.

"Certifying a forest to SFI is an important way for Indigenous communities to assure their markets and the general public that the forestry they practice is sustainable. It also helps Indigenous communities ensure our values and economic priorities are reflected in the management of those forests," said SFI Board member, David Walkem, Chief of the Cooks Ferry Band and President of Stuwix Resources Joint Venture.

Today, 28 Indigenous and tribal groups across Canada and the U.S. manage more than 3.1 million hectares of forest land, certified to SFI. Obishikokaang Resources Corporation is the second SFI certificate holder in Ontario.

SFI continues to deepen its partnerships with Indigenous people in Canada and the U.S. SFI and the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business have a Memorandum of Understanding to support the Progressive Aboriginal Relations certification program. The program promotes corporate social responsibility and Indigenous business and employment opportunities, especially for youth in forest communities.

SFI is also involved in a variety of other projects with Indigenous partners. To date, SFI has awarded nine grants across the U.S. and Canada to support and protect Indigenous values.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Obishikokaang Resources Corporation to the SFI community. Indigenous values are reflected throughout our organization including in our governance structure, our grants program, and our partnerships. And having Indigenous land managers choose to certify to the SFI Forest Management Standard ensures that the Indigenous communities and forests they manage are always front and centre," said Andrew de Vries, Vice President of Conservation and Indigenous Relations at SFI.

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



About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc.

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.

About Obishikokaang Resources Corporation

Obishikokaang Resources Corporation (ORC) was established in 2012, by Chief and Council to manage the Lac Seul Forest and to provide economic development opportunities for Lac Seul First Nation. Since then, Obishikokaang Resources Corporation has proven itself to be an effective and successful forest manager, working closely with all stakeholders in the forest. ORC has three strategic goals: maximizing economic development opportunities associated with managing the Lac Seul Forest; building capacity within the community to operate all aspects of the organization; and meeting and exceeding forest management obligations as outlined in the corporation's License and Forest Management Plan. Learn more: obishikokaangresources.com.

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