

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Pennsylvania SFI Implementation Committee Takes Logger Training
for Youth and Harvesting Professionals to New Heights**

Olympic Valley, CA — Gone are the days when children followed their fathers to work in the woods. These informal apprenticeships are a thing of the past because of today's safety considerations. So the Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Implementation Committee decided if they can't bring youth to the forest, they would bring the forest to youth.

"What are the risks to the supply chain, to our economy, to forests in general, if we don't secure a future generation to care for our forests and to harvest them responsibly?" said Kathy Abusow, SFI Inc. President and CEO. "The Pennsylvania Committee members are thought leaders when it comes to youth training."

For the second year in a row, students in the Natural Resource Management Career and Technical Program at Central Mountain High School in Mill Hall received the SFI Professional Timber Harvester Training credential. The training is provided through a partnership with the Pennsylvania SFI Implementation Committee that allows students in the program to complete it as part of their regular curriculum at no additional cost to them or the school.

"We hope that through this partnership more students will become interested in a career in the forest sector. By graduating with this training credential, these students come out ahead of the game as they enter the workforce. They already have the training that employers are looking for," said Chuck Coup, the SFI Implementation Committee's Program Manager.

The training is the same that loggers in Pennsylvania are required to complete to maintain their status as harvesting professionals recognized by SFI. The training program emphasizes safety, environmental conservation and professionalism. Students are taught requirements for timber harvesting safety, and methods of protecting the environment during timber harvesting operations, including best management practices for protecting water resources.

The Pennsylvania Committee has a history of expertise in logger training. More than 7,000 individuals have participated in the Pennsylvania SFI Professional Timber Harvester Training Program. About 700 participants maintain their current training status each year, and some loggers have completed more than 100 hours of training.

The benefits of the training program were further recognized and bolstered when the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry adopted a policy in 2007 that requires SFI-trained loggers to lead all commercial timber harvesting activities on Pennsylvania's 2.2 million acres (890,308 hectares) of state forestland.

And most recently, the SFI Committee convinced state lawmakers to unanimously designate June 5 officially as Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative Day. Both the House and Senate Resolutions specifically cite SFI logger training as a major reason for declaring SFI Day.

"This strong recognition from the state government is a fitting tribute to the 20-year history of progress and leadership on sustainability from the Pennsylvania SFI Implementation Committee. It also reminds us all of the critical role loggers play on the front lines when it comes to the sustainability of habitats and ensuring critical steps are taken to protect things like water quality," Abusow said.

The Pennsylvania Committee was presented with the 17th annual SFI Implementation Committee Achievement Award at the SFI 2015 Annual Conference.

About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI)

SFI® Inc. is an independent, nonprofit organization that is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized SFI program. SFI works collaboratively with conservation groups, local communities, youth, resource professionals, landowners and countless other organizations and individuals who share our passion for and commitment to healthy forests, responsible purchasing and sustainable communities. Since 2010, SFI has awarded 38 conservation and 28 community partnership grants totaling more than \$1.9 million to foster education, research and pilot efforts to better inform future decisions about our forests. When leveraged with project partner contributions, that total investment exceeds \$7.1 million. In addition, sustainable forestry is promoted through the SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard and the SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard. SFI on-product labels 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 www.sfiprogram.org and www.sfiprogram.org/Buy-SFI.

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