



## SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

*Good for you. Good for our forests.<sup>SM</sup>*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Sept. 22, 2010

Contact: Sue McMillan, Director, Marketing  
(250) 508-8323

### **Port Blakely Earns SFI Conservation Research Award**

VANCOUVER, British Columbia – Port Blakely Tree Farms received the Sustainable Forestry Initiative<sup>®</sup> (SFI<sup>®</sup>) Conservation Leadership Award for Biodiversity Research today for its participation in a cooperative project to reintroduce endangered Oregon spotted frogs to their former historic range.

“Twenty years ago, a population of Oregon spotted frogs was discovered on one of Port Blakely’s properties in Washington state,” SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow said when presenting the award at the 2010 SFI Annual Conference. “Since then, the company has worked closely with state and federal agencies, conservation groups and universities on reintroduction and research activities to facilitate the recovery of this state endangered species.”

Dr. Blake Murden, Port Blakely’s director of wildlife and fisheries, said the Oregon spotted frog population on company property south of Olympia is the only known viable population on commercial forestland. “Like our partners, we are determined to help the frogs recover and keep them off the federal endangered species list,” he said. “Port Blakely’s involvement in the conservation and recovery of this species shows it is possible to enhance wildlife habitat while supporting profitable and sustainable timber production.”

The reintroduction project involves taking frog eggs from three locations, including Port Blakely’s property, raising the frogs at regional zoos, Northwest Trek Wildlife Park and Cedar Creek Corrections Center, and then releasing them at Fort Lewis Military Reservation in Washington state.

“Port Blakely Tree Farms has been a pivotal conservation partner in a multi-state effort focused on conservation of the Oregon spotted frog,” said Dr. Marc P. Hayes, senior research scientist in the habitat division of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, which is leading many of the recovery efforts. “The company is instrumental in providing important research design assistance and support to studies addressing habitat enhancement for the species.”

In addition to Port Blakely Tree Farms and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, other partners involved in the recovery efforts include Washington Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, Oregon Zoo, Point Defiance Zoo, University of Washington, The Evergreen State College, Washington Department of Transportation and The Nature Conservancy of Washington.

-more-



## SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

*Good for you. Good for our forests.™*

. /2

SFI Inc. manages the largest single forest certification standard in the world, and is unique among independent third-party forest certification programs in that it includes research as one of its standard requirements. Since 1995, SFI program participants have contributed more than \$1.1 billion for research activities that improve the health, productivity and responsible management of forest resources. The SFI conservation leadership award was introduced in 2007 to recognize projects with strong partnerships that achieve ongoing and far-reaching benefits.

In addition to the SFI award, Port Blakely Tree Farms received a 2010 Environmental Excellence Award from the Association of Washington Business for a voluntary safe harbor agreement in Washington state, which calls on the company to voluntarily enhance thousands of acres of habitat for two federally listed wildlife species – the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet – in exchange for assurances against future regulatory restrictions.

-30-

**Editors: Please note that a backgrounder about Oregon spotted frog recovery efforts is attached.**

### **About SFI Inc.**

SFI Inc. is an independent 501c(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program ([www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org)). Across North America, more than 175 million acres/70 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard, making it the largest single standard in the world. SFI chain-of-custody certification tells buyers how much certified, responsibly sourced and/or recycled content is in a product. The SFI program's unique fiber sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally.

### **About Port Blakely Tree Farms**

Founded in 1864 and family owned for over a century, Port Blakely Tree Farms, LP, is proud to own and manage forestlands in the Pacific Northwest that provide sustainable forest products, healthy habitats and clean water for current and future generations. Port Blakely Tree Farms is a division of Port Blakely Companies. To learn more about Port Blakely Tree Farms and Port Blakely Companies, please visit [www.portblakely.com](http://www.portblakely.com).



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

*Good for you. Good for our forests.™*

## **BACKGROUND RECOVERY OF THE OREGON SPOTTED FROG**

The Oregon spotted frog (*Rana pretiosa*) became an endangered species under Washington state law in 1997, and is a candidate species for federal listing. Historically, the frogs were found within Washington state from the Canadian border south to the Columbia River near Vancouver, and east along the lower slopes of the Cascade Mountains. Loss of wetland habitat, introduced predators, such as the American bullfrog, and disease appear to have contributed to the decline of the Oregon spotted frog. Many wetlands within their historical range have been drained, filled, developed or severely altered.

In 1990, a remnant population of Oregon spotted frogs was found on Port Blakely Tree Farms property southwest of Olympia – the only known viable population on commercial forestland. The company has collaborated with state agencies to better understand the species, its breeding success and its habitat requirements.

Port Blakely has been part of a project aimed at reintroducing the frogs to their former historic range and establishing self-sustaining wild populations. Frog eggs were taken from three locations, including company property, raised at regional zoos or the Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, and then released at the Fort Lewis Military Reservation. The frogs were measured and weighed; and this data was analyzed to determine trends in growth rates and locations. They were also tagged for future monitoring by injecting a dye that is visible under ultraviolet light into the left hind limb.

Port Blakely is also involved in research to study the impact of cattle grazing on frog breeding areas. The company had leased the area for cattle grazing and when the cattle were removed in 2006, reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), an exotic invasive species, began choking the open seasonal pools where the frogs laid their eggs. Port Blakely has invited a rancher to graze cattle on the site in an effort to maintain and enhance the traditional breeding sites.

In addition to Port Blakely Tree Farms, the projects, led by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, involve many partners, including Washington Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, Oregon Zoo, Point Defiance Zoo, University of Washington, The Evergreen State College, Washington Department of Transportation and The Nature Conservancy of Washington.