



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SFI Brings Together “Women in Wood” for Habitat for Humanity Build Day
to Benefit Ottawa Indigenous Family**

Ottawa, ON –The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa (Habitat GO) are joining forces for a “Women in Wood” Build Day on Tuesday, August 15 to help build homes alongside Ottawa families in need of affordable housing.

The second-ever “Women in Wood” Build Day will take place at Habitat GO’s largest build to date, Leacross Landing, which consists of 16 townhomes being built in Orléans at the corner of Jeanne d’Arc Blvd. and Fortune Drive. Phase 1, involving four townhomes, will be completed in 2017, with the other homes finished over the next two years.

The build will have a transformational effect in the lives of four Ottawa families this year, including Annie Aningmuiq, a single mom of a four-year-old boy, who is originally from Pangnirtung, Nunavut. Annie will purchase the home with an affordable mortgage when it is completed later this year as part of Habitat GO’s third Indigenous Build.

The “Women in Wood” Build Day, which first took place in Ottawa in 2013, will be led by Kathy Abusow, SFI’s President and CEO, to celebrate Habitat GO’s third Indigenous Build. The volunteers will help with a “wall raising” and building the framework of four townhomes. Later this week, SFI is also leading an Indigenous Build Day and Youth Build Day on the Habitat GO site.

The special “Women in Wood” Build Day will include a diverse team of Ottawa women and SFI volunteers who work in various sectors, including government, forest industry, environmental, education and social sectors. Despite being from different fields, all of these women share a common passion of making a difference in their communities and a positive impact on the environment.

“SFI is passionate about responsibly sourced forest products being put to projects that improve our quality of life. To be able to participate with one of our closest partners, Habitat for Humanity GO, on a project that elevates the role of women in inspiring change while providing affordable housing to several families, including an Indigenous family, is simply a win-win-win,” said Kathy Abusow, SFI’s President and CEO. “If we can play even a small role in addressing a significant societal challenge – that of affordable housing, including Indigenous housing in Canada – then this is a very positive thing!”

“SFI has demonstrated tremendous community leadership through this partnership with Habitat GO and their commitment to Habitat for Humanity Canada’s Indigenous Housing Program,” says Alexis Ashworth, Habitat GO’s CEO. “We are incredibly grateful for SFI’s financial support, donated products from responsible sources and partner volunteerism, which will change the life of an Indigenous family in Ottawa forever.”

Since 2008, the SFI community has donated countless volunteer hours and certified products to numerous Habitat for Humanity builds across Canada and the U.S. In 2014, SFI and Habitat for Humanity Canada signed a memorandum of mutual support known as Wood 4 Good. This program encourages local home building through SFI's grassroots network, increases awareness of sourcing wood products certified to the SFI standards, and helps make supply chains more efficient. The partnership also works to encourage collaborative solutions to support Indigenous housing in Canada.

SFI arranged for over \$100,000 of wood products, from forests certified to the SFI Standard, to be donated to the [Red Bull Crashed Ice](#) event in February in Ottawa. Some of the wood donations, from SFI Program Participants West Fraser, LP Building Products and JD Irving, were repurposed for Habitat for Humanity builds, including the ones this week, and for ReStores in the Greater Ottawa region.

"As Chairman of the SFI Board, I am so pleased to see SFI's commitment to building communities through these local projects," said Mark Rodgers, President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Canada. "SFI is leading the way in supporting the Indigenous Build through the repurposing of SFI certified products and through their Wood 4 Good program."

Habitat GO's third urban Indigenous Build represents the ongoing effort to create opportunities for Indigenous families through affordable homeownership as part of Habitat for Humanity Canada's Indigenous Housing Program. Since 2007, local Habitats across Canada have helped 166 Indigenous families access affordable homeownership, including 38 on First Nations, Métis Settlements and reserves.

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About Sustainable Forestry Initiative

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) is a sustainability leader that stands for future forests. SFI® is an independent, non-profit organization that works with countless individuals who share our commitment to healthy forests, responsible purchasing and sustainable communities. SFI oversees the SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program and the SFI Forest Partners® Program, which brings landowners and brandowners together to provide supply chain assurances, including the use of forest certification standards. SFI works collaboratively with the forest sector, conservation groups, resource professionals, landowners, local communities, Indigenous Peoples, government agencies, universities, educators, and youth. Project Learning Tree (PLT) became a program of SFI in 2017, bringing over forty years of experience in developing students' awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of the environment. SFI Inc. is governed by an independent three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Forests affect us all. Caring for them improves our quality of life. Learn more at sfiprogram.org.

About Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa

Habitat for Humanity Greater Ottawa (Habitat GO) brings communities together to help families build strength, stability and independence through affordable homeownership. Habitat GO's future homeowners build their homes alongside volunteers and then pay an affordable mortgage. Since 1993, Habitat GO has served 72 families in the Greater Ottawa area. To learn more, visit www.habitatgo.com.

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