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SFI Delivers Results in Forests and Communities by Embracing Bigger Picture

WASHINGTON – The independent Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) Inc. progress report shows how the program goes beyond its rigorous forest certification standard to improve forest practices across North America through conservation research, community partnerships, logger training and landowner outreach.

“No other third-party forest certification program in North America matches our broad scope,” SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow said today. “SFI has achieved international respect but our roots will always be deep in North American communities – addressing their needs and gaining insight from their knowledge.”

The report, entitled *The Bigger Picture: Conservation. Integrity. Community.*, highlights the important contributions made by the SFI program and its many partners in the last year. “When the goal is improving the welfare of the world’s forests and communities, no one organization can claim to have all the answers or resources to achieve optimal results,” Abusow said. “The SFI program keeps its eye on the bigger picture and is shaped by its many partnerships so we can accomplish more in the forest, in communities and in the marketplace.”

After reviewing the progress report, the SFI External Review Panel – an independent expert panel that advises the SFI Board of Directors – concluded the SFI program is “substantially improving the quality of forests and forestry in North America.” Panel Chair Michael Goergen, also executive vice-president of the Society of American Foresters, said: “The SFI program meets tough criteria based on transparency, sound science, conscientious implementation, rigorous audits, and continuous improvement.”

The progress report lists achievements in 2010 and early 2011, including:

- **Conservation research** – SFI is the only forest certification standard in North America requiring participants to support forest research to improve forest health, productivity, and sustainable management of forest resources, and the environmental benefits and performance of forest products. In 2010, SFI program participants invested \$81.4 million for research activities, and since 1995, they have invested more than \$1.2 billion.
- **Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program** – In 2010 and 2011, SFI Inc. committed more than \$1.1 million for 24 projects bringing together conservation and community partners to build knowledge, support landowner outreach, strengthen global supply chains, and deliver countless benefits across the United States and Canada. With partner contributions, the total value of the projects is \$4.2 million.

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- **Aboriginal lands** – More than five million acres/two million hectares of lands held by or managed for Aboriginal communities are certified to the SFI Standard – more than any other certification standard in North America.
- **SFI Implementation Committees** – A cornerstone to the SFI program since its start, the 37 grassroots committees involve close to 1,000 people, and in 2010 contributed \$3 million to support local programs such as education and training for loggers and foresters, and outreach to family forest owners. The total contribution since 1995 is \$55.1 million.
- **Logger training** – In 2010, 5,584 resource and logging professionals were trained in responsible forestry through the SFI program or its recognition of other programs; the total since 1995 is 129,338.
- **Independent Board of Directors** – The six newest members elected to the SFI Board of Directors added a wide range of knowledge and expertise while maintaining the balanced approach to governance made possible with three equal sectors – environmental, social and economic.
- **On-Product Labels** – Enhancements to SFI on-product labels strengthened the link between the claim on the labels and definitions in the SFI 2010-2014 Standard, making it easier for consumers to make informed decisions.

The progress report is posted on the SFI website at

http://www.sfiprogram.org/files/pdf/SFI_ProgressReport2011_FINAL_singlepage.pdf. Information about the SFI External Review Panel is posted at www.sfiprogram.org/sustainable-forestry-initiative/external-review-panel.php.

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About SFI Inc.

SFI Inc. is an independent 501(c)(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). Across North America, more than 180 million acres/74 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard, making it the largest single forest standard in the world. SFI chain-of-custody certification tells buyers the percentage of fiber from certified forests, certified sourcing and/or post-consumer recycled content. 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.