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SFI Funds Community-Based Programs to Support Habitat for Humanity, African-American Landowners and More

WASHINGTON – The future of North America's forests is decided by actions taken every day in communities across the U.S. and Canada. To foster such on-the-ground adoption of responsible forestry practices, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) has awarded grants to seven community-based projects to educate youth and teachers, work with landowners, and support worthy community programs.

The grants were awarded under the SFI Conservation and Community Partnership Grant Program for projects with community groups in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Minnesota and New Mexico. Through the involvement of partners and leveraging other donations, the total value of the seven projects announced today is more than \$300,000 in combined cash and in-kind contributions.

“We feel it is important that all landowners have information and resources to create management plans to maintain productive and healthy forests,” said James W. Ford, Southeastern Director of the National Network of Forest Practitioners (NNFP). “The support from SFI helps us reach underserved landowners in the Southeast with information and support to make the most from their forest land.”

The focus of the NNFP project is to help transition minority landowners in counties with high African-American land ownership toward forest management and certification to increase the benefits derived from their woodlands and conserve environmental quality.

“Thanks to SFI’s support we were able to help build a home for a family in need, which strengthens the whole community,” said Donna Gallaher of the Georgia SFI Implementation Committee. “We also produced a film showing the cycle of sustainable forestry from harvesting to consumer products that we are sharing in communities throughout the state - demonstrating why sustainable forestry matters and making sure Georgia has healthy, thriving forests for generations to come.”

The Georgia SFI Implementation Committee created a film to educate leaders and consumers statewide about the sustainable forestry cycle featuring a Macon County Habitat for Humanity home built with wood certified to the SFI Standard and highlighting everyday consumer goods and paper products used by families.

“In 2010, SFI Inc. first invested \$400,000 to create the Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program to foster partnerships and conservation research improving forest management in the United States and Canada, and responsible procurement globally,” said Kathy Abusow, President & CEO of SFI Inc. “We are so pleased that in a few short years, by leveraging partner contributions, SFI has achieved a total investment of \$4.8 million in conservation and community partnerships and research, supporting more than 40 grants with 150 partners across North America. All of these partnerships promote education related to thriving working forests and sustainable communities.”

The project grants are awarded to:

- **The Georgia SFI Implementation Committee** built a Habitat for Humanity home in Macon, Ga., featured in a [new film](#) the group produced about the Georgia sustainable forest industry and the cycle from seedling to forest to mill to products and replanting, starting the cycle anew.
- **The Minnesota SFI Implementation Committee** will develop an educational kiosk to teach students visiting the Minnesota Historical Society's Forest History Center about responsible forestry.
- **The Florida SFI Implementation Committee on behalf of Florida Project Learning Tree (PLT)** will host educator workshops on forestry for university students during the 2013-2014 school year.
- **The Idaho Forest Foundation (c/o Idaho Community Foundation)** will host a Sustainable Forestry teacher's tour, exposing participants to the Project Learning Tree curriculum.
- **The National Network of Forest Practitioners** will engage, educate and support 120 minority and underserved forest landowners in counties with high African American land ownership.
- **The Boy Scouts of America's Philmont Scout Ranch** will teach sustainable forest management principles and skills to over 5,000 youth visiting Philmont Scout Ranch's Demonstration Forest in 2013.
- **Auburn University's Rural Studio** will design and build a Boy Scout Hut with sustainably harvested wood products, providing the Boy Scouts of Greensboro, Ala., a much-needed headquarters.

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About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc.

SFI Inc. is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) program. Across the United States and Canada, 240 million acres (nearly 100 million hectares) are certified to the SFI forest management standard. In addition, the SFI program's unique fiber sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI chain-of-custody (COC) certification tracks the percentage of fiber from certified forests, certified sourcing and post-consumer recycled content. SFI on-product labels identify both certified sourcing and COC claims to 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/facts and get details about [SFI's Community Grants](#).