



DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR RUFFED GROUSE, WOODCOCK, AND OTHER FOREST WILDLIFE



**SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE**

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 14, 2010

**SFI GRANT SUPPORTS LANDOWNER WILDLIFE WORKSHOPS**

MADISON, WI – Hundreds of woodland owners in the Upper Great Lakes Region will be able to manage their lands to better support wildlife thanks to two workshops led by the Ruffed Grouse Society and made possible through a Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant.

In a report released today, the 49 private forest landowners who attended the Wisconsin Coverts workshops in August pledged to implement what they learned on their own lands as well as passing the knowledge on to hundreds of others and encouraging them to adopt the concepts of good wildlife and forest management.

Among their commitments, attendees said they planned to implement new management plans on their own lands, develop plans to combat invasive species, invite school children to their property to teach them about wildlife, and reach out to landowners and the public through professional meetings and the news media.

Through its conservation grant program, SFI Inc., an independent non-profit forest certification program, is contributing \$10,000 a year for three years in support of the workshops. This year, the Ruffed Grouse Society and Louisiana-Pacific Corporation matched the SFI grant, and there was support from the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology and UW-Madison, the University of Wisconsin Extension and Braun Woodlands Foundation Inc.

“Through Wisconsin Coverts, we invite enthusiastic landowners to attend workshops where they learn about land management strategies for wildlife, and then become champions to educate and inform others in their communities,” said project coordinator Jamie Nack, wildlife outreach specialist with UW-Madison. “The workshops include sessions on a wide range of topics, including forest productivity and health, invasive species and the protection and promotion of biological diversity.”

Jason Spaeth, who owns 700 acres in northern Minnesota, said the workshop helped him learn how a mix of forest ages benefits ruffed grouse, whitetail deer and other wildlife species. “It gave me the tools I need to be a responsible landowner, a chance to meet others who are interested in managing their property for the benefit of wildlife, and knowledge to share with others.”

-more-



DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR RUFFED-GROUSE, WOODCOCK, AND OTHER FOREST WILDLIFE



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

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

. . . 2/2

The Ruffed Grouse Society and University of Wisconsin began the workshops in 1994 to address the fact that many private woodland owners were keen to enhance the abundance and diversity of wildlife on their lands, but few programs were available to help them. Private landowners are responsible for about 22.7 million acres of forest land in the Upper Great Lakes Region (Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota).

“The Wisconsin Coverts Project is a perfect fit for our conservation grant program because one of SFI’s strengths is its outreach to landowners across North America,” said SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow. “By offering professional level training and education for non-industrial private land managers, the project supports SFI Standard requirements related to landowner outreach, training and education.”

Through its Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant program, SFI Inc. has committed \$675,000 to date – \$307,500 in 2010 alone – to fund nine projects that bring together diverse partners to deliver conservation and community benefits across North America and tackle illegal logging issues globally. More information is found at [www.sfiprogram.org/forest-conservation/grant-program.php](http://www.sfiprogram.org/forest-conservation/grant-program.php).

-30-

#### **For more information:**

Allison Welde, Director  
Conservation Partnerships and Communications  
202-596-3452

Jamie Nack, Project Coordinator  
Wisconsin Coverts Project  
608-265-8264

#### **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 180 million acres/73 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 the Ruffed Grouse Society**

The Ruffed Grouse Society ([www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org)) supports national scientific conservation and management efforts to ensure the future of grouse and woodcock. Its team of wildlife biologists work with private landowners and government, including local, state and federal land managers who are interested in improving their land for ruffed grouse, American Woodcock and the other songbirds and wildlife that have similar requirements.