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SFI PLEDGES \$400,000 IN 2013 FOR CONSERVATION RESEARCH
Nonprofit group supports sustainable forestry

WASHINGTON, DC – The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) announced today it will deliver up to \$400,000 in 2013 to support research into responsible forestry practices through the SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program.

Since 2010, SFI has awarded 33 grants totaling more than \$1.32 million to support projects that promote sustainable forestry practices and engage communities. When leveraged with project partner contributions, that total investment exceeds \$4.8 million.

“The decisions we make today regarding research investments and partnerships will better inform our future understanding of how working forests can continue to provide jobs, forest products and a variety of conservation services and benefits,” said Kathy Abusow, President & CEO of SFI Inc.

Up to \$250,000 is to be awarded to new grants in 2013, which will bring SFI’s total investment in conservation and community grants in 2013 to \$400,000. This amount includes ongoing multi-year research grant commitments for projects awarded to groups like Ducks Unlimited Canada and the World Resources Institute. Ducks Unlimited Canada’s grant supports developing and testing best management practices for forestry roads on SFI program participant managed lands that serve to protect wetland ecosystems in the Western Boreal Forest. Results to date include the construction of five innovative wetland crossing sites that are monitored for project effectiveness. A sixth wetland crossing is planned for 2013.

The World Resources Institute is compiling the latest knowledge about the benefits of best management practices for water quality across Maine, Georgia, Oregon and Washington. Special attention is being paid to forest roads, forest certification, and the potential for landowners to receive payments and other incentives for exceeding minimum regulatory requirements.

In opening its 2013 Request for Proposals (RFP) today, SFI Inc. invites applications for conservation research projects that explain or inform the role of sustainable forestry in the following 2013 grant categories: Working Forests; Water; Carbon and Bioenergy; Capacity Building; and Wildlife and Biodiversity.

In addition to the conservation research grants, SFI will award five to seven community grants in amounts up to \$5,000 to support youth education in forestry, green building, and advancing management and awareness of culturally important land. Past community grants included support for the Lauderdale County Habitat for Humanity to build a home using SFI-certified products and certified to the ANSI National Green Building Standard, as well as support for the National 4-H Forestry Invitational showing youth how forests grow, the role forests play in their lives, and how forests are managed to provide multiple benefits.

The complete 2013 RFP and the latest information about the SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant program are posted at <http://www.sfiprogram.org/conservation-grant/2013/grant-rfp.php> The deadline for this year’s grant applications is Monday, March 18, 2013.

The SFI 2010-2014 Standard is based on 14 core principles encouraging community involvement while promoting sustainable forest management including measures to protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk, and Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value. The SFI program is the only forest certification standard in North America that requires participants to support and engage in research activities to improve forest health, productivity and sustainable management of forest resources. Conservation research grants must link to a requirement in the SFI standard to demonstrate project relevance for application on SFI certified lands.

About SFI Inc. (www.sfiprogram.org)

SFI Inc. is an independent non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program. Across North America, more than 200 million acres (81 million hectares) are certified to the SFI forest management standard. The SFI program's unique fiber sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI chain-of-custody certification tells buyers the percentage of fiber from certified forests, certified sourcing and/or post-consumer recycled content. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally.