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SFI-Sponsored Entry Places Fourth in International Solar Decathlon

WASHINGTON – North House, an advanced solar-powered home sponsored by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) program, placed fourth in the 2009 U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon – a biennial competition where 20 university teams from around the world competed to design, build and operate houses powered by the sun.

The 800-square-foot North House featured lumber, plywood and decking donated by three SFI program participants – AbitibiBowater, International Forest Products Ltd. and West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd. Promotional materials were printed by SFI-certified Aboriginal Printing Corp. of Toronto, Canada's largest Aboriginal printer. SFI Inc. is an independent registered non-profit organization responsible for one of the largest third-party forest certification programs in the world.

Germany was named Decathlon winner Oct. 16, followed by Illinois and California. Full standings and competition details are posted at www.solardecathlon.org. In total, the 20 university-led teams competed in 10 contests evaluating everything from appearance to market viability to efficiency and comfort. North House, representing Ontario and British Columbia, used materials and passive solar construction that absorb heat during the day and release it at night so it produced more energy than it consumed through the competition.

“Just as the Decathlon promotes whole building design and performance, SFI involvement meant the North House project used wood and paper products that address social, environmental and economic considerations,” said Kathy Abusow, president and CEO of SFI Inc. “Wood is a great choice for sustainable building projects, as long as it is from reliable, legal sources.”

“We would like to thank the SFI program and our other fantastic sponsors for their support over the course of this journey,” said Maun Demchenko, director of media and public relations for Team North, made up of researchers, academics, students, government and industry professionals from across Canada who designed and built North House. “The SFI sponsorship added to North House's credibility by providing wood and paper from responsible sources.”

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North House will be shipped to Vancouver for display at the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in February, before returning to Ontario where it will be set up as a public demonstration home in the Waterloo region.

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About Team North

Team North's mission is to design and deliver North House, a compelling, marketable solar-powered home for mobile, sustainable lifestyles; while building Canada's next generation of leaders in sustainable engineering, business and design. It envisions the combination of green building, solar and interactive technologies as a powerful vehicle for reducing energy demand, building a conservation ethic and improving quality of life. North House was developed by an expert team of leading researchers, academics, students, government and industry professionals. The core team comprises students and faculty members from the University of Waterloo, Ryerson University in Toronto and Simon Fraser University in Vancouver working alongside Canada's best and brightest industry leaders.

For more information about Team North, visit www.team-north.com.

For more information about the U.S Department of Energy's Solar Decathlon, visit www.solardecathlon.org

About SFI Inc.

SFI Inc. is a 501c(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the Sustainable Forestry Initiative program (www.sfiprogram.org), that is internationally recognized and among the largest in the world. It is one of the fastest-growing forest certification programs with over 70 million hectares (175 million acres) of SFI-certified forests across North America. The SFI Standard also includes unique fibre sourcing requirements that promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands and a chain-of-custody certification, which is used to tell buyers how much certified fibre is in a specific product. The SFI forest standard is endorsed by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes, a global umbrella organization that has strict requirements for endorsement. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally.

For more information about the SFI program, visit www.sfiprogram.org.