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SOUTH CAROLINA SFI IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE WINS AWARD FOR STRONG PARTNERSHIPS THAT IMPROVE SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY AND PROMOTE THE SFI PROGRAM

Westminster, CO — The Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI) announced today that the South Carolina SFI Implementation Committee is the winner of the 2018 SFI Implementation Committee Achievement Award. The South Carolina committee was selected for its ability to build strong partnerships in ways that improve sustainable forestry and promote the SFI Program.

"SFI Implementation Committees do such good work and to be recognized among our peers is really special. The whole South Carolina committee deserves credit because recognition like this always comes down to excellent teamwork," said Bart Copeland, Chair of the South Carolina SFI Implementation Committee and the Manager of Procurement and Certification Standards at Collum's Lumber Products.

This award, announced at the [SFI Annual Conference](#), recognizes the exceptional work of the grassroots network of 34 SFI Implementation Committees across the U.S. and Canada. SFI Implementation Committees promote SFI standards to broaden the practice of responsible forestry and achieve on-the-ground progress. Groups ranging from Habitat for Humanity and Boy Scouts to universities and the American Bird Conservancy work with SFI Implementation Committees.

"The South Carolina committee stands out as a real leader when it comes to building partnerships. These partnerships are establishing a new university forest research center, supporting a visiting scholar fellowship, engaging with African American family forestland owners and delivering youth education programming," said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc.

The South Carolina committee is working with Clemson University to launch a new Center for Excellence in Forestry Research. It will focus on research needs for landowners to enhance timber production, biodiversity and forest health. The committee is also fully supporting a 2019 visiting scholar fellowship in applied forestry through the non-profit Belle Baruch Foundation, which owns a 16,000-acre/6,500-hectare property dedicated to research and education in Hobcaw County.

The South Carolina committee is building on its long-standing partnership with the Center for Heirs' Property Preservation. The committee is providing about 30% of the annual cost to help support the center's new Woodland Community Advocate Institute, which is designed to create a cadre of landowner leaders to encourage resolution of heirs' property issues and sustainable woodlands management.

On the youth education front, the committee has joined multiple partners to develop a sustainable forestry exhibit at Bee City, which is a zoo, honeybee farm, and nature center that hosts over 35,000 students each year. The committee is also building on its partnership with South Carolina Tree Farm and Project Learning Tree, an initiative of SFI. "This work is helping to provide students with an understanding of sustainable forestry through hands-on activities. It works by connecting teachers, schools and local forestland owners through field trips and workshops," said Gordy Mouw, SFI's Director of Program Participant Relations.

About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI). SFI® Inc. is a sustainability leader that stands for future forests. We are an independent, non-profit organization that provides supply chain assurances, delivers conservation leadership, and supports environmental education and community engagement. SFI works with the forest sector, brand owners, conservation groups, resource professionals, landowners, educators, local communities, Indigenous peoples, governments, and universities. SFI standards and on-product labels help consumers make responsible purchasing decisions. Additionally, we oversee the SFI Forest Partners® Program, which aims to increase supply of certified forest products, the SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program, which funds research and community building, and Project Learning Tree®, which educates teachers and youth about forests and the environment. SFI Inc. is governed by an independent three chamber board of directors representing environmental, social, and economic sectors equally. SFI believes caring for forests improves everyone's quality of life. Learn more: sfiprogram.org.

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