

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TIMBERWEST IS THE FIRST SFI PROGRAM PARTICIPANT TO BE CERTIFIED UNDER THE PROGRESSIVE ABORIGINAL RELATIONS PROGRAM

Ottawa, ON — TimberWest is the first Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Program Participant to achieve the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) Bronze certification under the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program. This certification demonstrates to Indigenous communities that TimberWest is a good business partner, a great place to work and is committed to the prosperity of Indigenous communities. TimberWest is also the first BC forest company to earn PAR certification.

“As a forester by training I am very pleased that TimberWest has shown its commitment to Indigenous communities by undergoing PAR certification. This leadership demonstrates to other forest companies, and other companies outside BC’s forest sector, that strong Indigenous relations make good corporate policy,” said JP Gladu, President and CEO of the CCAB.

The PAR framework evaluates companies on four PAR performance areas known as the PAR drivers, which are designed to ensure comprehensive business engagement with a community. The four PAR drivers are: leadership actions, employment, business development, and community relationships. PAR certification provides a high level of assurance to communities because the designation is supported by an independent, third-party verification of company reports. The final PAR level achieved by a company is determined by a jury comprised of Indigenous business people.

Across Canada, more than 80% of Indigenous communities live in or near forested areas. They have strong ties to Canadian forests ranging from traditional uses, such as for food and medicine, to working with forest companies or managing forestlands. SFI works with Indigenous communities in myriad ways including having Indigenous leadership on its board of directors, providing community and conservation grants, and fostering lasting relationships between the CCAB and SFI partners like Habitat for Humanity Canada and its Indigenous Housing Program.

“We are proud to be the first forestry company in BC to achieve PAR certification,” said Jeff Zweig, President and CEO of TimberWest. “The PAR program is consistent with our commitment to recognizing and respecting the rights of First Nations, and it provides a clear roadmap for further improvement.”

Having lands certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard means TimberWest is formally accountable for respecting Indigenous peoples’ rights and traditional knowledge. This includes protecting spiritual, historical and cultural sites.

“I am pleased that through SFI’s MOU with CCAB, we have this strong partnership that encourages progressive aboriginal relations in the forest sector,” said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc. “SFI thanks TimberWest for its leadership and looks forward to seeing other SFI Program Participants using CCAB’s PAR certifications as a mechanism to fulfill their SFI standard requirements related to Indigenous relations.”



At the SFI 2017 Annual Conference in Ottawa a ceremonial canoe by artist Curtis Wilson, commissioned by TimberWest, was presented to the Honourable Jim Carr, Canada’s Minister of Natural Resources, by Hereditary Chief James Wilson of the Wei Wai Kum Nation, as a reminder of the important relationship between Indigenous Peoples and Canadian Forests.



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, produces conservation outcomes, and supports 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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About TimberWest

TimberWest is a member of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business. TimberWest has been operating for over 100 years on the BC Coast. All its public and private forest lands are third-party certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. TimberWest is privately owned by two leading Canadian pension funds. Learn more: timberwest.com.

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About the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) is committed to the full participation of Aboriginal peoples in Canada's economy. A national nonprofit, non-partisan association, CCAB offers knowledge, resources, and programs to both mainstream- and Aboriginal-owned companies that foster economic opportunities for Aboriginal peoples and businesses across Canada. Learn more: ccab.com.

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