



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Devastation to Restoration: Communities for Healthy Forests Transforms Post-Fire Rehabilitation into Learning Experience for Students

Roseburg, OR – Today, Communities for Healthy Forests, Inc. (CHF), with support from the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI), celebrated its second year of restoration on lands devastated by the Douglas Complex wildfire. An educational tree-planting field trip for 100 local fifth graders marked the anniversary.

“Communities for Healthy Forests is going beyond forest restoration by building a community around the practice of sustainable forestry” said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc. “Today’s tree planting not only ensures healthy future forests, but also an engaged next generation of community leaders by taking kids out of the classroom and into the woods.”

Last spring, CHF launched a three-year restoration and education campaign, through support from the SFI Conservation and Community Partnership Grant program, to respond to the July 2013 Douglas Complex wildfires. These fires gripped the State of Oregon, threatening homes, and forcing evacuations and road closures.

While firefighters successfully defended homes, lingering smoke following the wildfire posed a health risk. The Red Cross distributed 20,000 respiration masks to residents of southern Oregon. After only 11 days the Douglas Complex fire had burned 144,688 acres. The environmental impact was catastrophic, sterilizing the landscape and jeopardizing the future of the recreation and timber economy in the region.

“Even in fifth grade, these students understand how important it is to take action today, replanting the burned forest for the benefit of their grandchildren. In addition to all of the reading, writing and arithmetic, these teachers are doing a great job educating future leaders about sustainability,” said Javier Goirigolzarri, Executive Director of CHF.

This year’s field trip had twice as many student participants as last year’s spring event and hopes to have doubled the amount of trees planted. In addition to the 100 fifth graders from Fir Grove Elementary and Sunnyslope schools, SFI program participant [Swanson Group](#), [Douglas County](#), the [Society of American Foresters](#) and [Roseburg Forest Products](#) partnered with CHF to host the event.

CHF also established photo-monitoring points at planting sites to track restoration progress over time. Throughout the summer, CHF and their partners will conduct educational field tours for community leaders and the public to showcase the importance of active post-fire forest restoration.

To learn more about Communities for Healthy Forests, or inquire about future summer field tours please contact: Javier Goirigolzarri, CF, Executive Director, Communities for Healthy Forests at 541-957-9001.

For more information visit the [SFI Conservation Grant Program](#).

About Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI)

SFI® Inc. is an independent, nonprofit organization that is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized SFI program. SFI works collaboratively with conservation groups, local communities, youth, resource professionals, landowners and countless other organizations and individuals who share our passion for and commitment to responsible forest management. Since 1995, SFI program participants have invested more than \$1.4 billion in sustainable forestry research. Across the United States and Canada, more than a 250 million acres are certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard, of which 200 million acres are available for recreation. In addition, sustainable forestry is promoted through the SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard and the SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard. SFI on-product labels help consumers make responsible purchasing decisions. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber [board of directors](#) representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Learn more at www.sfiprogram.org and www.sfiprogram.org/Buy-SFI.

About Communities for Healthy Forests, Inc.

Communities for Healthy Forests was founded to inform the public, natural resource managers and policy makers about catastrophic stand clearing events in public forests caused by fire and other disasters. Communities for Healthy Forests exists to illustrate and explain the benefits of applying the best scientifically supported prescriptions for restoring health to overgrown forests and to rehabilitate severely damaged forests promptly following such events.

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