

Top 10 ways well-managed forests and SFI make a world of difference



The clean air we breathe and water we drink are only part of the story of sustainable forestry. And if you have hiked in a forest or enjoyed the shade of a tree on a city sidewalk you have experienced the benefits of trees and forests first hand.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) is an independent, non-profit organization that aims to make the world a better place by promoting sustainable forest management through standards, research, community building and

conservation partnerships. Take a look at some of the projects SFI has supported that help keep our forests and communities healthy and beautiful.

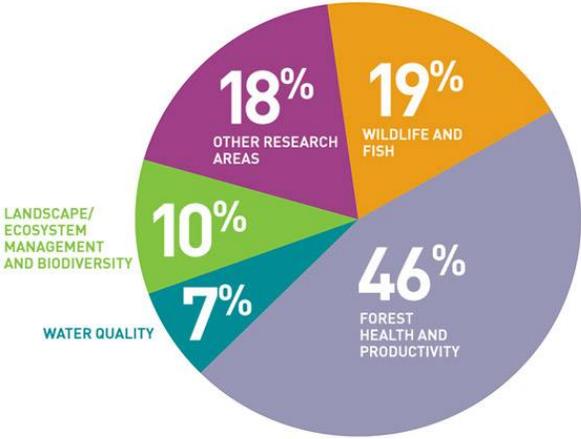
1. Providing places for outdoor adventures

Forests are a place where people of all ages recreate and enjoy the great outdoors. Of the more than 250 million acres of responsibly managed forests certified to the SFI Standard, 90% are available for outdoor recreation including hiking, boating, camping and ecotourism. It's an area bigger than the amount of forestland in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Texas and Oregon (234,925,262 acres). Get out and enjoy it!

2. A growing base of scientific study

Forests and forest landscapes are dynamic and constantly evolving and forest research is critical to ensuring their health and future. SFI 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, and the environmental benefits and performance of forest products. Since 1995, SFI program participants have invested more than \$1.3 billion in forest research activities.

RESEARCH IS KEY TO THE SFI PROGRAM



3. Bringing communities together

SFI supports local communities through landowner outreach, community-building projects and logger training. For example, SFI is helping African American small-forest-owners in the southern U.S. manage their forests in ways that provide them with an income stream while supporting responsible forestry. SFI has also partnered with Habitat for Humanity to help families break the cycle of poverty by building homes, communities, and hope. And through SFI's expanded network of universities, forestry associations, and government agencies, more than 150,000 loggers have completed professional training programs since 1995 — ensuring that their actions support healthy forests today and in the future.

4. Improving water quality

An overwhelming majority of our freshwater resources come from forests. Forests absorb rainfall, control runoff from storms, guard against flooding, provide a home for fish and wildlife, and ensure the availability of clean water for downstream communities.

SFI awarded a grant to help fund a project by the National Association of State Foresters to assess the effectiveness of programs to improve water quality on managed forestlands. These programs implement best management practices for water quality. The project underscores the important role of forests in protecting water quality, and provides an accessible tool for forest managers and the public to better understand water quality best practices in their state.

5. Helping protect fish and wildlife

Forests provide critical habitat for a variety of species, in the water, on the ground and in the air. One example of SFI making a difference comes from Maine, where a local SFI implementation committee is improving stream crossings for Atlantic salmon and native brook trout. SFI Program Participant Lyme Timber Company engaged the Wildlife Management Institute to create 11,000 acres of new habitat in New York State for the American woodcock. Check out some of the other projects that are helping birds and the critical habitats they depend on [here](#).

6. Cleaning the air we breathe

Trees work tirelessly to purify the air we breathe. They take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and release oxygen back into it. In addition to conserving working forests and their future, SFI funds tree planting programs at the community level. For example, SFI supports Scouts Canada's annual Scoutrees, which has planted more than 80 million trees across Canada since 1972. SFI is also spearheading a Guinness world record attempt that will see 40 teams of 25 to 100 people across North America come together to plant more than 200,000 trees in one hour.

7. Providing a cultural link to indigenous peoples

For many indigenous peoples across North America, forests play an integral role in meeting cultural, spiritual, material and economic needs. SFI has long worked with indigenous communities to cultivate and maintain healthy forests so these needs can be met. To date, almost 30 groups have more than 7 million acres or 3 million hectares of forest certified to the SFI Standard.

"The timber-based economy of the Yakama Nation is unique in that it balances economic needs while ensuring the protection of the Yakama cultural and traditional practices," says Steve Andringa, Administrative Forester for the Yakama Nation. "To keep this balance, it's critical that we maintain a high sustainability standard, and SFI helps us do just that."

8. Getting kids outside

The connection between kids and nature is weakening in large part due to the amount of time children spend inside on computers, playing videos or watching TV. SFI is helping kids switch from screen time to tree time by bringing young people outdoors to reconnect with nature, forests and conservation.

An SFI-funded Ducks Unlimited program, gives Girl Guides of Canada the opportunity to get out and preserve duck habitats in their local communities. "Building duck nest boxes, as part of our Operation Earth Action National Service Project, gave girls a tangible, hands-on way to learn about the positive impact they can have on our environment. We believe experiences such as this provide an invaluable means of increasing girls' awareness of the world we live in," said Deborah Del Duca, CEO of Girl Guides-Guides du Canada. And SFI supports programming at jamborees for the Boy Scouts of America and Scouts Canada, which is only part of the growing relationship with SFI. In fact, the Boy Scouts of America Philmont Ranch in New Mexico was certified to the SFI Standard in 2013.

9. Bringing nature to the city

Trees play a critical role in urban settings as well. They provide clean air, shade, aesthetic beauty and recreation areas in cities large and small. In the last 50 years, Detroit has lost tens of millions of trees because of urban expansion and the toll from things like Dutch elm disease and the emerald ash borer. SFI's community based Implementation Committee in Michigan is currently supporting The Greening of Detroit's project to recruit and train 50 new volunteer Citizen Foresters to plant trees throughout the city and help the community to connect with the environment.

10. Making conservation work

Lands managed to the SFI Standard constitute a 250-million-acre living laboratory, where researchers, conservationists and forest managers can work together to sustain communities and environmental benefits. Projects in these working forests range from restoring the longleaf pine ecosystem in the southeastern US to helping bats, bees and bears and linking habitats so species can roam further afield.

Working together with natural resource investment managers at Campbell Global, researchers at Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas are studying the movement of mammals to help develop recommendations to protect biodiversity in managed forests. "We are developing management strategies to promote biodiversity and connectivity across the landscape," said Daniel Scognamillo, an associate professor of wildlife ecology and conservation at Stephen F. Austin State University.

To find out more about SFI and the projects it funds on the planet's behalf, visit: sfiprogram.org.



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