



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 2, 2014

SFI® Community Comes Together to Celebrate the People's Tree at the U.S. Capitol

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Capitol Christmas Tree, also known as the People's Tree, is being lit today thanks to people like Jim Scheff. He harvested the towering 88-foot-tall white spruce from the Chippewa National Forest in northeastern Minnesota. Scheff won the Logger of the Year Award from the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI) Minnesota Implementation Committee.

The People's Tree is chosen every year by the U.S. Forest Service. It is a powerful symbol of the relationship between the American people and the land. The tree stopped in [30 communities en route](#) to the Capitol in time for the start of the Christmas season.

School kids, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts and adults all had a chance to see the Christmas tree and take part in Christmas craft workshops. The tour was also a chance to tell the SFI story about the integral role sustainable forest management plays in maintaining healthy forests and providing wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities and thriving communities.



An SFI Implementation Committee from Minnesota will also place two ornaments on the Capitol Christmas tree today to celebrate the warmth and good will of the holiday season. The ornaments will mark the contribution sustainable forestry makes to communities across America. SFI Implementation Committees across North America bring people together to work for the future of forests.

Professional loggers like Scheff are a big part of sustainable forestry. They are using and influencing best management practices aimed at protecting water and other key parts of the forest environment. Scheff is a member of the [Minnesota Logger Education Program](#) and a [Minnesota Certified Master Logger](#). These two programs provide the training and certification needed to meet the requirements in the SFI Standard for Qualified Logging Professionals and Certified Logging Professionals.

SFI's logger training requirements and support of programs like Minnesota Logger Education Program help to ensure loggers have the training needed for safe, productive and environmentally responsible timber harvesting. In 2013, more than 7,500 loggers and resource professionals took part in SFI-sponsored training aimed at continuous improvement.

"We were honored to be a part of this annual Christmas tradition. Keeping America's forests as healthy, sustainable working forests is a gift that generations to come will enjoy," said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc.

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 Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program. Across the United States and Canada, about 250 million acres are certified to the SFI forest management standard. In addition, the SFI program's unique fiber-sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI chain-of-custody certification tracks the percentage of fiber from certified forests, certified sourcing and post-consumer recycled content. SFI on-product labels identify both certified sourcing and chain-of-custody claims to 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 The Capitol Christmas Tree

The tradition of the Capitol Christmas Tree, or The People's Tree, began in 1964 when Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives John W. McCormack (D-MA) placed a live Christmas tree on the Capitol lawn. This tree lived three years before succumbing to wind and root damage. In 1970, the Capitol Architect asked the U.S. Forest Service to provide a Christmas tree. Since then, a different national forest has been chosen each year to provide The People's Tree. This national forest also works with state forests to provide companion trees that are smaller Christmas trees for offices in Washington, D.C.

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