



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SFI Inc. Welcomes Extension of Maine Forest Certification Project

WASHINGTON – Time Inc., Hearst Enterprises, National Geographic Society, Verso Paper Corp. and Sappi Fine Paper North America are building on the success of a recent pilot project to make forest certification to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) standard more accessible to medium-sized landowners in Maine.

“SFI Inc. welcomes and values this strategic partnership – it is truly a testament to responsible sourcing,” SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow said today. “This project shows the power of partnerships and the importance of responsible forestry from the forest floor to magazine stands.”

The initial pilot project that began in 2010 offered a rigorous yet more cost-effective and coordinated approach for medium-sized landowners to seek forest certification, as well as offering resources to support responsible forest management. This led to an additional 620,000 acres of lands certified to the SFI standard in Maine. The project extension announced today involves new landowners, including Hilton Timberlands LLC, and is expected to add another 600,000 acres of certified lands.

“Time Inc. supports SFI certification because we know it contributes directly to responsible forestry practices,” said Guy Gleysteen, Senior Vice President of Production at Time Inc. “The pilot project was a success because it gave us a chance to show landowners the value of certification, and coordinated activities to reduce costs.”

“Promoting sustainable forestry and certification remains a cornerstone of Hearst's purchasing strategy, and we are pleased to have the opportunity to participate in another quantum step in the State of Maine,” said David Schirmer, Vice President and General Manager of Hearst Enterprises.

Abusow said it made sense to start the project in Maine because of the state's strong commitment to forest certification. She said the SFI program is looking for ways to expand the work through its network of 37 grassroots SFI Implementation Committees. “The Maine SFI Implementation Committee played a key role in the pilot project, and its members are sharing their experience with others across North America,” she said.

“The National Geographic is committed to do all it can reasonably do to ‘walking the talk’ of environmental conservation and sustainable operations,” said Hans Wegner, Chief Sustainability Officer for National Geographic Society. “We know that certifying forest management, harvesting, and replanting practices is a critical part of that goal. We see our participation in expanding forest certification as a logical and necessary step in this process.”

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Through forest certification, forest operations meet requirements set out in an independent standard such as SFI, and this is verified by a third-party audit. The SFI 2010-2014 standard is based on 14 core principles that promote sustainable forest management, including measures to protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk, and Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value.

About 10 million family forest owners account for more than 60 percent of private forest lands in the United States. The pilot project increased access to SFI certification by creating a template so medium-sized landowners could develop, implement and coordinate management plans in a simpler and more consistent manner. An independent certification body also coordinated activities to save staff time and travel costs. The State of Maine has more than six million acres certified to the SFI Standard.

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About SFI Inc. (www.sfiprogram.org)

SFI Inc. is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program. Across North America, more than 180 million acres/74 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard, making it the largest single forest standard in the world. SFI chain-of-custody certification tells buyers the percentage of fiber from certified forests, certified sourcing and/or post-consumer recycled content. The SFI program's unique fiber sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally.