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SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE CELEBRATES RECORD GROWTH WITH PLANS TO KEEP MOMENTUM GOING

Salt Lake City, UT – At its annual convention, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI, Inc.) put an exclamation point on a year in which it achieved full independence and also welcomed a new president, Kathy Abusow, who pledged to keep the program and its successes growing.

The SFI® program is a comprehensive sustainable forestry certification system that encompasses more than 135 million certified acres across North America and includes 220 program participants, making it one of the largest forest certification programs in the world. The SFI program offers a labeling system for program participants to use to indicate that their products are independently, third-part certified demonstrating that the product comes from a well-managed forest.

“The market demand for certified products is growing worldwide in response to a growing number of consumers who want to make product choices that are best for the environment,” said Abusow. “The market has clearly demonstrated a growing preference for certified products and as the only North America-wide standard, SFI has the supply to meet this new demand.”

Among SFI’s notable achievements this past year:

- SFI became fully independent, with a three-chamber board with equal representation given to the conservation, social and economic sectors.
- The number of chain of custody certificates grew by 90% and since July 1st, alone, SFI has 160 new chain-of-custody certified facilities.
- SFI has also grown in international recognition with nations around the globe like the United Kingdom recognizing SFI as providing customers with the assurance that the SFI forests products they buy, such as paper and wood, come from legal and sustainable sources.
- A new marketing campaign to raise awareness of the SFI program.

“SFI has worked hard over the past year to demonstrate the rigor of its standard and the ability to meet the supply needs of the market,” said John A. Luke, Jr., chair of the SFI Board and chairman and CEO of MeadWestvaco Corporation. “The market has responded with global recognition and acceptance of SFI certified products and I believe this will continue to grow.”

This year’s annual conference brought together more than 170 delegates from the conservation, academic, labor and government sectors and also forest product companies and auditing agencies that provide third-party auditing for the program. The delegates came from across North America and Europe to discuss the latest trends in green markets, chain of custody growth and carbon.



“At no time has certification been more in the spotlight,” Abusow noted. “But we must remember that while the SFI certification standard is an excellent way to help buyers and consumers make sound purchasing decisions, we need to keep the spotlight on raising the issue of global forest management and the 90 per cent of the world’s forests that are not certified. It’s time to reward the leaders in the industry and encourage the environmental community to focus on some of our competitor markets around the globe where there is limited certification and legal framework.”

“We need working forests for wildlife and water quality, for our communities and for our children,” said Larry Selzer, president and CEO of The Conservation Fund. “With over 135 million acres certified across North America, the SFI standard is helping to ensure that today’s forests remain tomorrow’s treasures.”

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About SFI, Inc.

SFI, Inc. is a 501c(3) non-profit organization and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Program. SFI, Inc. directs all elements of the SFI program including the SFI Standard, chain of custody certification, labeling and marketing. SFI, Inc. is overseen by a three-chamber Board of Directors representing social, environmental and economic sectors.

For more information about the SFI program, visit www.sfiprogram.org