



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 22, 2010

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ALABAMA COMMITTEE WINS SFI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

VANCOUVER, British Columbia – Alabama won the 12th annual Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) Implementation Committee achievement award for innovative activities that strengthen forest practices and raise awareness about the benefits of using wood from responsible sources.

“Alabama has shown why SFI Implementation Committees are such an important part of the SFI program through accomplishments such as its qualified logging professional training and outreach to landowners, legislators and educators,” SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow said when presenting the award at the 2010 SFI Annual Conference. “These grassroots partnerships are unique to the SFI program and help us address local needs.”

“The Alabama committee is made up of a diverse group of people who share a common goal – to promote responsible forest management in Alabama,” said committee chair Mike Griggs. “We work hard to support our communities through landowner outreach and logger training, and by increasing forest certification across the state.”

The Alabama SFI Implementation Committee was recognized for activities that include:

- an information session and wood design competition so architecture students at Auburn University appreciate the value of wood for green construction;
- qualified logging professional training – 89 individuals completed the initial two-day training program in 2009, and more than 1,900 have completed the initial training and maintain their designation with six hours of professional development annually;
- preparation and distribution to landowners of a *Guide to Sustainable Forests*;
- participation in an SFI exhibit at the Southeast Building Conference with the Florida SFI Implementation Committee, and sponsorship of videos on endangered species and non-native invasive species developed by the North Carolina Forestry Association; and
- a commitment to double the area certified to the American Tree Farm System in Alabama so family forest owners can help to meet growing market demand for certified fiber.

“Implementation of best management practices in Alabama stands at 97 percent – thanks in large part to the training and outreach led by the Alabama SFI Implementation Committee,” said Alabama State Forester Linda S. Casey. “A recent review by the Southern Group of State Foresters Water Resources Committee found Alabama has a level of commitment to its BMP program that serves as an example for other states.”

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The SFI program has 37 SFI Implementation Committees at the state, provincial or regional level to support local programs. They involve private landowners, independent loggers, forestry professionals, local government agencies, academics, scientists and conservationists. Members of the Alabama committee, which also won the achievement award in 2002, include SFI program participants, the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University and The Nature Conservancy.

“SFI Implementation Committees are at the heart of the SFI program, and Alabama is no exception,” said Dr. Richard W. (Dick) Brinker, dean and professor in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University and a member of the SFI board of directors. “Through training and outreach activities, it is helping forest professionals and landowners improve practices on the ground.”

SFI Implementation Committees promote the SFI forest standard as a means to broaden the practice of responsible forestry and achieve on-the-ground progress. They offer a forum to provide information or answer questions about local forestry operations, and most have a process to respond to questions or concerns about forestry practices on SFI-certified lands.

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About SFI Inc.

SFI Inc. is an independent 501c(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely Responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program (www.sfiprogram.org). Across North America, more than 175 million acres/70 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard, making it the largest single standard in the world. SFI chain-of-custody certification tells buyers how much certified, responsibly sourced and/or recycled content is in a product. 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.