

Celebrating 3 presidents with roots in the forest



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Which president was a log cabin enthusiast who lived off the land? And which one was inspired on a camping trip to create national parks?

Many United States presidents have had close ties to forests. For example, Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps, responsible for planting billions of trees. Benjamin Harrison started a tradition with the first White House Christmas Tree. And Woodrow Wilson signed the act creating the National Park Service, 44 years after Yellowstone Park was designated.

There is much to celebrate when it comes to presidents and trees. This year, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) would like to applaud three U.S. commanders in chief most closely associated with our favorite thing—forests.

1. George Washington—for planting

The colorful tale of George Washington chopping down his father’s cherry tree with his shiny new ax, then coming clean about what he had done because he could not tell a lie, is unfortunately just that: a colorful tale. But SFI finds the truth of Washington’s tree planting in later years much more interesting than the myth about the cherry tree.

Washington planted hundreds of native trees and shrubs at his vast Mount Vernon estate. These included acres of fruit trees including apple, pear, peach, apricot and, yes, even cherry. Vegetables were planted in a kitchen garden beginning in 1760, and the same garden has been cultivated continuously since then.

Washington’s appreciation for sustainability grew a garden that is still productive 250 years later. Similarly, the sustainability practices of SFI will benefit multiple generations and future forests.

2. Abraham Lincoln—for living off the land and in the logs



Many of us know that Abraham Lincoln lived in, and likely helped build, a series of log cabins into his adulthood. But you may not know that he often lived in temporary shelters with his family for extended periods while the building was taking place. They used the forest for shelter and food, as well as a natural resource for housing materials.

Lincoln is also known as the “rail splitter,” which some mistakenly believe is related to the railroad. It actually

refers to his work on the farm splitting rails for fencing, a necessity on the frontier to protect and breed livestock.

Lincoln’s reliance on the forest echoes today in the thriving communities that depend on forests certified to SFI for their livelihoods.

3. Theodore Roosevelt—for camping out for conservation

John Muir, the pre-eminent preservationist at the turn of the twentieth century, once invited Theodore Roosevelt to camp in Yosemite National Park and share their perspectives on forests, and the future of our natural resources.



97% OF ALL FORESTLAND CERTIFIED TO THE SFI STANDARD IS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION.

Common activities include hiking, hunting, bird-watching, cross-country skiing, backpacking and primitive camping, cycling, foraging and gathering, off-highway vehicle use, non-motorized and motorized water activities, snowmobiling and horseback riding.

Roosevelt's commitment to forests helped establish 230 million acres of public lands, including 150 million acres of national forest and 23 national parks. In 1905, Roosevelt established the U.S. Forest Service and appointed Gifford Pinchot as its first Chief, to ensure the management and protection of the US national forests.

Roosevelt even instituted Arbor Day—one of SFI's favorite holidays.

At SFI, we're proud to say that we also are doing our part to get people outside to enjoy our beautiful forests—97% of the 280 million acres of forests certified to SFI are available for outdoor recreation.

Honoring the past and standing for the future of forests

SFI® Inc. is an independent, nonprofit organization that is responsible for the internationally-recognized SFI Program. SFI works at the intersection of sustainable forestry, thriving communities and responsible procurement. The SFI Forest Management Standard is based on principles that promote sustainable forest management, so we can all enjoy forests today and in the future.

SFI also administers the **SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant** program that is helping further our understanding of the conservation benefits of managed forests, and strengthening the connection between communities and forests. To find out more about sustainable forestry and SFI, visit <http://www.sfiprogram.org/>.