



# CONSERVATION AT SFI

## Promoting Conservation Through Daily Acts of Responsible Forest Management

**The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Inc. is the only forest certification program that requires participants to support research to improve forest health, conservation understanding, productivity and sustainable management of forest resources.**

SFI® advances conservation objectives in forests throughout the U.S. and Canada through the values expressed in our standards, through carefully targeted research, through direct leadership of critical initiatives, and through partnerships that effectively contribute to multiple conservation objectives.

Research initiatives, whether developed directly through SFI or SFI Program Participants, advance our collective interests in clean water, biological diversity, climate change, forest health and sustainable forestry, making a real difference in practices implemented on the ground.

SFI has initiated a specifically targeted research effort to evaluate, distill and convey the conservation-related attributes of SFI's forest certification work. This effort, called "Conservation Impact," will help conservationists understand the values associated with sustainable management, and provide assurance to stakeholders throughout the forest supply chain.

## SFI CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP

SFI provides leadership in the conservation community by playing a critical role at the intersection of sustainable forestry and conservation planning and accomplishment.

Examples include:

- All Lands and Large Ownerships Workshops – A collaborative effort to advance the attainment of landscape-scale conservation goals by ensuring the engagement of large private landowners. By bringing together large landowners, conservationists, agencies and academics, SFI and its partners will help to achieve the vision of “all lands” conservation.
- SFI-led symposia and workshops, at venues ranging from the Land Trust Alliance National Rally to the NatureServe Biodiversity Without Boundaries conference, help promote the importance of responsibly managed forests to critical conservation goals. SFI has presented on the role of well-managed forests in landscape conservation, the use of SFI certification standards to efficiently monitor conservation easements, and the use of species and community data by forest managers to protect biodiversity at multiple scales.
- Working with the American Bird Conservancy, SFI is facilitating collaboration between several of America’s largest landowners to reverse the loss of at-risk bird species across the continent. By focusing at the intersection of key geographies and large managed ownerships, ABC is collaboratively developing strategies to “Bring Back the Forest Birds,” affecting change at an unprecedented scale.
- In 2016, SFI participated in the organizing committee for the 16th North American Caribou Workshop held in Thunder Bay, Ontario, helping to ensure a variety of perspectives were brought to bear on the future management of this keystone species of the



Canadian boreal forest.

## SFI CONSERVATION IMPACT OVERVIEW

To facilitate good decision-making, and to help make the case for the value of sustainability, SFI is working to quantify the conservation benefits of its work, and the connection between sustainable supply chains and important conservation outcomes. By clarifying these conservation attributes, SFI will help make the link between well-managed forests and the public benefits that affect each of us every day.

The incentives to measure conservation values are diverse: brand owners seek to understand the impact of their sourcing; conservation stakeholders can engage more effectively if they understand the values that certification can provide; and improved tracking will better equip SFI to provide sustainability related metrics, and contribute meaningfully to conservation outcomes.

Developing metrics to assess conservation values across the over 300 million acre/121 million hectare footprint of lands certified to SFI will be complex, so SFI consulted key

## SFI IS FOCUSING ON THREE AREAS



SINCE 2010 SFI HAS PROVIDED

10 GRANTS FOR

**Bird conservation**

TOTALING **\$875,000+**



stakeholders to narrow the focus. SFI will engage directly with uniquely qualified research institutions, and additionally utilize its Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program to attract creative approaches to quantify conservation impact.

The project was initiated in 2016, and will continue for several years, with continued refinement of questions and data, and engagement of a wide range of stakeholders. For guidance on this work, SFI has convened a diverse group of scientists, drawn from academia, public agencies, the non-profit conservation community, SFI Program Participants and SFI leadership. This sounding board will help ensure credibility and transparency, and provide direct input



**524** DIFFERENT CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH PROJECTS REPORTED BY SFI-CERTIFIED COMPANIES IN 2019

WITH MORE THAN

**900**  
UNIQUE PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

NO OTHER FORESTRY STANDARD HAS A RESEARCH REQUIREMENT.

**\$1.8 BILLION**

Since 1995, SFI Program Participants have directly invested nearly **\$1.8 billion** in forest research.

**70%**

IN 2017, 7% OF RESEARCH FUNDING IS LINKED TO CONSERVATION-RELATED OBJECTIVES.

## → CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH PROJECTS ACROSS THE U.S. AND CANADA

SFI's Program Participants engage in a tremendous array of projects every day that help conserve the diversity of habitats, water quality and other important aspects of U.S. and Canada's great natural heritage.

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES:** SFI Program Participants regularly support projects to ensure the conservation of heritage and cultural features important to Indigenous peoples of in the U.S. and Canada, ranging from Caddo Indian structures in Texas to culturally modified trees on lands of the Heiltsuk First Nation in the Pacific Northwest.

**FROM LONGLEAF TO STEELHEAD:** In 2015, SFI Program Participants reported dozens of projects that help advance restoration of the longleaf pine ecosystem, through planting, prescribed burning and understory habitat restoration. Iconic in the U.S. South, the longleaf ecosystem is home to over 1,000 plant and animal species. A number of other projects support management, research and restoration of anadromous fish on both Canadian and American coasts, like steelhead and salmon, which require carefully managed forests upstream for their survival. These projects include efforts to ensure fish passage at stream crossings, and measures to provide compatible stream temperature and conditions in managed forests.

**SUPPORT RESEARCH:** SFI is the only forest certification program that requires participants to support research to improve forest health, conservation understanding, productivity and sustainable management of forest resources. Since 1995, these investments have exceeded \$1.8 billion. In 2019, SFI's unique research requirements resulted in \$57 million in direct investments by SFI Program Participants, with 70% linked to conservation-related objectives.

**CLEAN WATER:** Well-managed forests certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard contribute and protect clean water sources for both wildlife and people. A 2015 study by the National Association of State Foresters confirmed the important contribution of SFI to advancing training and other practices that protect water quality.



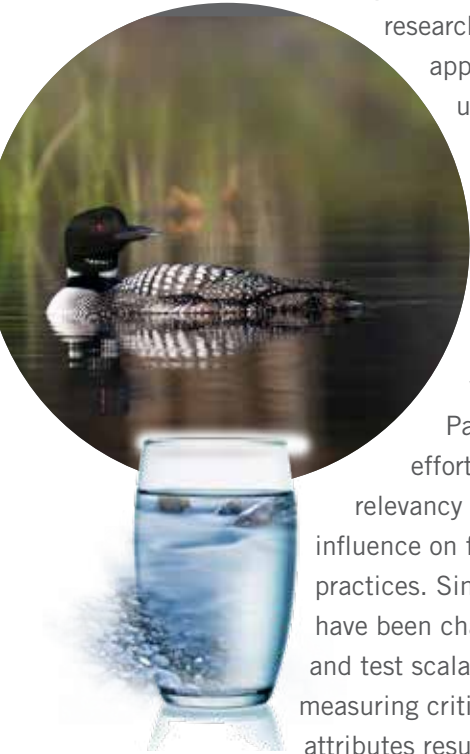
into project development.

## SFI CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

SFI's Conservation Grants (part of the Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program) enable researchers to harness the scale of over 375 million acres/152 million hectares of forestland certified to SFI.



Through a competitive RFP process, researchers propose creative approaches to improve understanding of the relationship between forest management, and conservation attributes of interest. By linking proposed projects with SFI Program Participants, these efforts gain immediate relevancy and long-term influence on forest management practices. Since 2015, researchers have been challenged to develop and test scalable approaches to measuring critical conservation attributes resulting from the implementation of SFI's Forest



Management and Fiber Sourcing Standards.

## GRANTS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING AND MEASURE RESULTS

- **ALBERTA'S FRI RESEARCH** is using support from SFI to identify ways to link landscapes to help woodland caribou increase their range and repopulate managed forests.
- **QUEBEC'S LAVAL UNIVERSITY** works with SFI and its partners to help Indigenous communities and forest companies cooperate to expand opportunities for Indigenous forestry workers.
- **KEEPING MAINE'S FORESTS** is helping address climate change by examining ways for lands certified to SFI to participate in carbon credit programs, and thus help reduce greenhouse gases.
- **NATURE CONSERVANCY OF CANADA** is showing how sustainably managed forests certified to SFI can offer big biodiversity benefits for small vernal pools and the amphibians that live there.
- **THE NATURE CONSERVANCY** is teaming up with SFI to help at-risk youth prepare for jobs as forest technicians, while restoring conservation values in native forests.
- **THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA** is quantifying how the SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard and logger training are influencing statewide best management practices that protect critical drinking water supplies.
- **THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA** is using remote-sensing laser technology to measure and rapidly evaluate biodiversity in forests certified to SFI.
- **THE SASKATCHEWAN RESEARCH COUNCIL** has initiated a project to measure carbon values in the boreal forest, including new methodologies for forested wetlands.



**THE SFI STANDARDS REQUIRE PARTICIPANTS TO SUPPORT DIVERSITY OF NATIVE FOREST COVER TYPES TO ENHANCE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AT THE LANDSCAPE SCALE**

SOME OF SFI'S CONSERVATION GRANTEES INCLUDE:



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