

US Endowment for Forests and Communities: *Sustainable Forestry as Generational Land Retention Strategy for Minority Landowners*

Project Overview

Loss of ownership and asset value by minority forestland owners in the US South has reached a critical level. While there are a multitude of contributing factors, there is an opportunity to establish new models for engagement of these landowners by utilizing networks that already exist within these communities, where many traditional approaches have failed. The US Endowment for Forests and Communities will receive \$72,000 from the SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant program over two years to establish new models for engaging minority landowners.

Through the engagement of trusted partners from within their own community, minority landowners will be led toward certification in the American Tree Farm System and Sustainable Forestry Initiative where appropriate, and given the opportunity to engage broadly in sustainable forestry. The US Endowment and partners will utilize existing networks, resulting in the advancement of sustainable forestry and ensuring the continued legacy and heritage of minority land-ownership in the region. This project links to a larger project underway by US Endowment, and addresses a key issue affecting minority landownership, intergenerational wealth, and cultural heritage in the region. It is expected that more than 100 minority family forest owners will be directly affected through this project, establishing a methodology that will extend far beyond the bounds of this project. The project addresses the SFI Standard goals of Landowner Outreach, and Community Involvement in the Practice of Sustainable Forestry.

Project Partners

The US Endowment for Forests and Communities will partner with Center for Heirs Property Preservation, Limited Resource Landowner Education and Assistance Network (LRLEAN), Roanoke Center of Roanoke Electrical Coop, and Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund.