



Rainforest Alliance
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Contact: Abby Ray, 646-452-1939, aray@ra.org

Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood Program Certifies Largest Forestry Group to FSC Standards

Madison, WI – The Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood program announced today its certification of the largest forest management group ever to be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Managed Forest Law (MFL) group of family forest landowners has the most landowners of any single certified group, with over 40,000 privately-owned forest parcels.

"This is a significant achievement," said David Bubser, SmartWood regional manager for the Rainforest Alliance. "Demonstrating that certified responsible forestry on private land is within practical reach on a large and meaningful scale is truly a milestone for the forestry community and sets the stage for others to follow."

Forests certified by the Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood program must meet FSC standards of responsible forestry. FSC-certified forests provide habitat for wildlife, sequester carbon, protect soil and waterways and improve worker safety and training. Continuing growth of FSC-certified forests helps to slow global deforestation rates, which is an effective and cost-efficient way to reduce atmospheric carbon.

Due to the growing demand for sustainable wood for furniture, pulp, paper and green buildings, FSC-certified forest owners often experience better market access and value for their timber. Since certification is voluntary, MFL group members were given the choice of opting out of certification; only two percent chose to do so. Participating landowners must individually demonstrate that their forest management meets FSC standards. The Rainforest Alliance will conduct annual audits to evaluate continued conformance.

The newly certified land totals 2,166,271 acres under 40,702 properties with each individual property averaging 53 acres. Prior to the MFL certification, SmartWood had certified 7,697,404 acres (3,115,029 ha) in the United States and 115,133,849 acres (46,593,026 ha) in 64 countries worldwide.

The Rainforest Alliance, a nonprofit international conservation organization, was instrumental in

the founding of the FSC in 1993. It is the world's leading certifier of forestlands to FSC standards, which is considered the gold standard of well-managed forest certification. In addition to certification, the Rainforest Alliance verifies legality of timber, analyzes supply chains for risk, designs and implements procurement policies and helps communicate partner successes.

For more information on the Rainforest Alliance, visit www.rainforest-alliance.org.