



Press Releases Relevant to Tree Farm Group Certification



Forest Tax Law Recognizes Certification Plans

(From The Empire Envoy, July 2008 – Empire State Forest Products Association)

Thanks to the concerted efforts of Senator Betty Little and Assemblywoman RoAnn Destitio New York's forest tax law may be simpler for those already certified under a forest certification program.

A872/S1120 passed both houses. It authorizes DEC to accept forest management plans from a recognized forest certification plan as an alternative to the existing plan requirements. The legislation specifically identifies SFI, FSC and Tree Farm as examples of legitimate forest certification programs.

ESFPA had advanced this proposal three years ago at the request of our Adirondack Committee. In a show of common support for forest certification, the bill was supported by the Adirondack Council and the Nature Conservancy. Although this has passed both houses, Governor Paterson has yet to review it.

State Formalizes Green Building Standards

(From The Empire Envoy, July 2008 – Empire State Forest Products Association)

This legislation (A2005-B by Assemblywoman Lupardo and S5442-A by Senator Marcellino) creates formal "green building" standards for new or remodeling of State building. Those standards recognize a range of certification programs including the US Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design or Leed and Green Globes.

ESFPA work with the American Forest & Paper Association and the Northeast Retail Lumber Association to assure that alternatives to LEED, such as the Green Globes program, were recognized in the bill. The bill sponsors – Assemblywoman Lupardo and Senator Marcellino – were very receptive to these comments and modified their proposal. We greatly appreciate their willingness to work with us.

US Schools to Receive Billions for Green Building

(From The E-Forester, June 16, 2008 – Society of American Foresters)

The US House recently voted to allocate more than \$20 billion to retrofit and build greener schools that are more energy efficient and will provide a healthier environment for children. It is possible that the bill will dedicate approximately \$6.4 billion to US schools by the beginning of 2009. Recognized green building standards include LEED, EnergyStar, or Collaborative for High Performance standards.

For more information, visit the [GreenerBuildings](#) website.

California Adopts Statewide Green Building Code

(From The E-Forester, July 28, 2008 – Society of American Foresters)

The California Building Standards Commission adopted the amended state agency combined green building standards. The guide, developed by the California Building Standards Commission and other state agencies, is the first US statewide green building code. The code calls for a 50 percent reduction in landscape water use and builders will be required to reduce the energy consumption of their structures by 15 percent more than current standards.

The Green Building Code accepts certified forest products from the American Tree Farm System, Canadian Standards Association, Forest Stewardship Council, Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes, and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

More information, visit the [Californian Building Standards Commission](#) website.

American Tree Farm System Receives PEFC Endorsement

(Press Release, August 2008 – American Tree Farm System)

Washington, D.C. - Family forest owners in the U.S., who own nearly two-thirds of the country's forestlands, today cheered the international approval of the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC). PEFC is an international, independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization, founded in 1999 which promotes sustainably managed forests through independent third party certification. ATFS is the oldest and largest forest conservation, certification, and advocacy program in the United States. The 67 year-old program is sponsored by the American Forest Foundation.

Family forest landowners welcomed the endorsement by PEFC for certifying sustainably produced wood, a step that will open the door to new green markets for wood that is sustainably produced on their land.

The Geneva-based Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC) made the announcement after a 14-month rigorous review designed to provide assurance to purchasers that certified wood and paper products are in fact produced from sustainably managed forests.

For some U.S. companies like NewPage Corporation whose North American operations include a mill in Rumford, Maine, this change could not come soon enough. "We sorely needed this endorsement in order to satisfy our customers who are demanding that our pulp and paper come from certified forest operations," said Tony Lyons, Director of Fiber Supply at the NewPage Rumford Mill. He added that the market dynamics for sustainably produced wood have changed dramatically over just the last two years. "We can't meet the demand, and that's a shame when qualified forest owners are standing ready. This fixes that problem."

"This is fantastic news for conservation-minded family forest owners who are struggling to survive in tough economic times," said Laurence Wiseman, President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Forest Foundation, the parent group of ATFS. "PEFC approval is the key to connecting more of the good operators to the rapidly growing marketplace of green manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers."

Forest landowners who voluntarily commit the extra time and expense to produce wood sustainably under the ATFS system will now qualify for access to the international markets that they never had before. Traditional markets for U.S. wood have been shrinking as more foreign wood gains control into those markets, and Wiseman believes this endorsement step will help U.S. growers.

The United States is permanently losing 1.5 million acres per year of family forestland to development. Many people mistakenly assume that forestland they see is owned by either the government or large paper companies, when in fact 60 percent of all the wood harvested in the U.S. actually comes from family forestlands. For many of these small forest landowners, achieving some economic return on their property is essential if they are to avoid the pressures of development.

Jo Pierce is a sixth-generation family forest owner in Cumberland County, Maine who walks the talk. Not only does he spend much of his time teaching other landowners how to manage their forest sustainably, his own operation won the national ATFS Tree Farmer of the Year award in 2007 for his conservation practices. A pioneer in this area whose grandmother first enrolled the family's forestland in the volunteer ATFS program in the 1960's, Jo credits his great, great grandfather who reportedly once said "Take care of the land first, and it will take care of you."

By using selective thinning and other conservation practices, the Pierce family has both earned an income and protected black bear, bobcats, moose, red-tailed hawks and other wildlife. He and his wife Kathy even took steps to re-introduce wild turkeys on the land. A wild island on their land has been reserved for wilderness canoeists. "I was brought up to love this land its plants and its wildlife," Jo Pierce said. "It's a legacy for all our family that Kathy and I have been blessed with and that we want to continue."

Certification lets everyone know that we take care of our land properly." He added, "We are lucky. So many people don't have a special place that gives them roots."

Many communities depend on private forests to provide benefits including water purification, clean air, recreation, wildlife habitat and education. Eighty percent of all rain that falls east of the Mississippi River falls on family-owned forests where it is purified, stored, and released into aquifers.

"By joining the largest forest certification system in the world, the American Tree Farm System is creating new markets for American growers," said Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of PEFC International. "The demand for sustainably-procured wood is rapidly increasing because more businesses and more consumers are stepping up to the plate on issues like climate change. PEFC endorsement means that more American growers can now serve this rapidly growing market. "

Only about 10 percent of the global wood market currently comes through forest certification systems. Now with ATFS, PEFC has 500 million certified acres. At this size and growing rapidly, PEFC is by far the largest global program for certifying sustainable forests. Canada, Norway, Finland, Spain, Brazil, the Malaysian Republic, and many other European countries are among those with PEFC-approved forest certification systems. This is the second such approval for the U.S., with the first being the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

The American Tree Farm System was first launched in 1941 as a private initiative to address concerns that America's forests were being cut at unsustainable rates without reforestation. It now represents more than 90,000 family forest owners in 45 states, most of whom manage woodlots of less than 100 acres. ATFS is the largest private forest conservation and forest restoration initiative in the history of the U.S. "The number of certified family forests landowners in the system has doubled over the past four years, and this shows the tremendous growth potential in this area," said Bob Simpson, Senior Vice President for the American Forest Foundation.

The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) is a national program of the Center for Family Forestry that promotes the sustainable management of forests through education and outreach to private forest landowners. Founded in 1941, ATFS has 23 million acres of privately owned forestland and 90,473 certified forest properties that exhibit excellence in forest stewardship. ATFS private forest landowners [Tree Farmers] manage their forestlands for wood, water, wildlife, and recreation with assistance from 4,400 volunteer foresters.

The American Forest Foundation (AFF) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) conservation and education organization that strives to ensure the sustainability of America's family forests for present and future generations. Our vision is to create a future where North American forests are sustained by the public which understands and values the social, economic, and environmental benefits they provide to our communities, our nation, and our world.

Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC). PEFC is a framework for the assessment and endorsement of national forest certification systems that have been developed based on internationally recognized requirements for sustainable forest management. Since its launch in 1999, PEFC has become the largest forest certification umbrella organization covering national systems from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tons of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from currently more than 200 million hectares of certified forests. This is an area which is larger than the combined forest area of all European Union member states. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions, and non-governmental organizations.