



## Highlights from the SFI Annual Conference

Last week, the [2015 SFI Annual Conference](#) showcased how the SFI community continues to grow and become more diversified year after year. People travelled from across North America. International guests included representatives from PEFC International who came from across Europe and Australia to help us set a new attendance record of close to 300 attendees.

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## Highlights From Thought Leaders

"Science clearly shows that declines among many forest birds, like the golden-winged warbler, can only now be reversed through more active management. Our work with SFI and its program participants is designed specifically to identify means of advancing bird conservation across millions of acres. There's a lot of land and a lot of opportunity in this partnership."

- *George Fenwick*

**President, American Bird Conservancy**

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"In my view caribou will need to be the priority for forest management planning and landscape management decisions. Grizzly bears will do fine as long as we can reduce human caused mortality."

- *Gordon Stenhouse*

**University of Saskatchewan, Adjunct Professor**

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"CEOs believe business should do more than make a profit. Seventy five percent of CEOs believe satisfying societal needs, beyond those of investors, customers and employees, and protecting the interests of future generations, is important."

- *Malcolm Preston*

**Global Leader, Sustainability and Climate Change, PwC UK Partner**

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"The SFI Forest Partners Program is a mechanism to demonstrate that customers do care about responsible sourcing of products and that SFI is a proof point for sustainable forestry."

- *Guy Gleysteen*

**Senior Vice President, Production, Time Inc.**

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"Forest certification mitigates risk in our supply chain."

- *John Westling Jr.*

## Senior Buyer Paper Goods, Walmart

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"When you think about the idea of the Empire State Building in wood, the technology already exists. It's not going to require enormous innovation. We can do it with the products made today."

- Michael Green

**Principal Architect, Michael Green Architecture**

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"Ten of the top 20 largest wildfires in California since 1932 have occurred in the last decade. Active forest management is essential for fire management. California continues to invest millions of dollars into protecting working forest lands and improving our state's urban forests, which will help increase carbon sequestration and has the added benefit of helping protect our state's precious water supply."

- Duane Shintaku

**Deputy Director, Resource Management California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection**

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## From Local to Global

The conference also showed that the more we work together at the local level with the American Tree Farm System and with our global partners, like PEFC International, we can help connect the dots between landowners, brand owners and customers around the world who are looking for integrated and sustainable supply chains (read recent [press release](#)).

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## Zero Net Deforestation

The conference featured discussions on important global sustainability issues, like zero net deforestation and avoidance of illegal logging. Tobias Webb, from the Innovation Forum, and Scott Poynton, from the Forest Trust, shared their perspectives on these issues and the role of certification. Post-conference, Toby delivered a [podcast](#) with Kathy Abusow, SFI Inc.'s President and CEO, discussing these and other issues.

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## SFI Award Winners

Some of the news on the conservation and community front included an SFI award presentation to Sierra Pacific and their partners in government and academia for coming together to save [the fisher](#). We also celebrated efforts to [engage youth and train loggers of the future](#) with an award to the Pennsylvania SFI Implementation Committee.

Rick Holley, Chief Executive Officer of Plum Creek Timber Company, was recognized with the [SFI President's Award for Leadership](#), for consistently showing leadership on behalf of working forests that support habitat and rural communities. Holley is known for his leadership on market transformation, sustainable communities and responsible forestry.

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## Survey and Prize Draw

We want to build on the success of our 20th anniversary conference. If you attended this year's conference, please take a moment to [complete this survey](#). Tell us what you liked and where we can improve. If you respond before Oct. 31, you have a chance to win one free registration to the 2016 SFI Annual Conference.

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## Many Memories

What a great conference we had last week, and it was all thanks to everyone who attended. We hope everyone had a good time, made some new friends, caught up with old friends, and enjoyed the activities, food and conversation. **Below is a peek** at just some of the great memories we captured.

We have many more great conference pictures. If you'd like to get any pictures or video clips from the conference, e-mail [Monika Gurzenski](mailto:Monika.Gurzenski).



A reception recognized our **founders** who played a key role in founding the SFI program in 1995 and its success in the early years (watch a [video](#)).



**Chuck Leavell** has played keyboards with the Rolling Stones since 1982 and he is a former Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. He wowed the audience with his musical talent and his knowledge of sustainable forestry.



The inaugural **SFI Annual Conference 5K Fun Run** saw 75 participants complete a beautiful course with the breathtaking Sierra Nevada Mountains as a backdrop.



**Sponsored students** bring fresh energy to the conference and get the chance to impress potential mentors and employers.



**A joint SFI-PEFC Board meeting** and ongoing participation of PEFC representatives in discussions and panels helped embody the local to global feel of the conference.



**Michael Green** talked about the future of tall wood buildings and the role of responsible forest management in shifting them into mainstream urban architecture. (watch a [video](#)).

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