



## **MICHIGAN FOREST PRODUCTS COUNCIL HONORS PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE**

**PRESIDENT AND CEO OF SFI INC., KATHY ABUSOW, HONORED FOR PROMOTING, PROTECTING AND SUSTAINING FORESTS NATIONWIDE | | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich., July 25, 2019 – The Michigan Forest Products Council announced today that SFI Inc., President and CEO, Kathy Abusow received the annual Tuebor Award from MFPC board of directors at their annual board meeting in Traverse City.

“Kathy has been and continues to be a leader for Michigan and for North America,” said MFPC Chairman, Todd Johnson. “Since her start with the SFI in 2007, she has an accomplished record as a sustainability leader, particularly her successful effort to double the number of acres certified to SFI’s standards.”

The MFPC cited her efforts to:

- Increasing forests certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard from 140 million acres to more than 360 million acres across public and private lands in Canada and the U.S.
- Acquiring Project Learning Tree, an award-winning environmental education program that increases youth understanding of the environment.
- Launching the SFI Conservation and Community Grants Program, which has, together with leveraged funds from partners, invested \$16 million in forest research in collaboration with conservation and community groups.
- Influential in discussions with the U.S. Green Building Council in recognizing wood and paper from the SFI Program as available for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) credits.
- Establishing the SFI Forest Partners Program with founding partners Meredith, National Geographic Society, Macmillan and Pearson, to increase SFI forest management, fiber sourcing and chain-of-custody certification throughout the supply chain.
- Developing a memorandum of mutual of support with Boy Scouts of America focused on working together to demonstrate forest stewardship and environmental education for America’s youth.
- Mentoring other women in the forestry sector as evidenced by her role as a founding member of Nature Canada’s Women for Nature Initiative.

The annual **Tuebor Award** recognizes significant accomplishments in business and natural resource policy and recognition focuses on leadership in support of well-managed forests that are vital to Michigan’s quality of life, environment and economy.

“This award recognizes not only her dedication to advancing forest sustainability but also an uncommon passion to evolve the SFI program into a solutions-oriented sustainability organization that focuses its work across four key pillars: standards, conservation, community and education. She recognizes the vast societal benefits that come from sustainable forests,” said Director of SFI and Public Policy for MFPC, Scott Robbins.

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The SFI Implementation Committee in Michigan, in partnership with Michigan State University, is currently developing projects that work to address several major issues within the forest industry. Between the two organizations they have received two grants – one designed to help address concerns over declining enrollments in forestry and related natural resource degree programs, and another that will offer robust e-learning content linking working certified forests with carbon management and associated climate benefits.

The total economic benefit of Michigan's forest products industry grew from \$17.5 billion in 2012 to \$21.2 billion in 2015. The state has 20.3 million acres of forestland, including 2.5 million acres of federal National Forests and 312,500 private landowners. There are 5.4 million total acres certified to SFI's standards in Michigan - state owned land accounts for roughly 4 million acres and private land accounts for about 1.52 million acres.

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### **About Michigan Forest Products Council**

The Michigan Forest Products Council works to promote, protect and sustain a globally competitive forest products industry in Michigan. The Michigan Forest Products Council is a statewide organization representing the forest products industry, which owns millions of acres of timberland and employs over 99,000 men and women in Michigan.

### **About SFI**

SFI®Inc. is a sustainability leader that stands for future forests. We are an independent, non-profit organization that provides supply chain assurances, delivers conservation leadership, and supports environmental education and community engagement. SFI works with the forest sector, brand owners, conservation groups, resource professionals, landowners, educators, local communities, Indigenous peoples, governments, and universities. SFI standards and on-product labels help consumers make responsible purchasing decisions. Additionally, we oversee the SFI Forest Partners®Program, which aims to increase supply of certified forest products, the SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program, which funds research and community building, and Project Learning Tree®, which educates teachers and youth about forests and the environment. SFI Inc. is governed by an independent three chamber board of directors representing environmental, social, and economic sectors equally. SFI believes caring for forests improves everyone's quality of life.

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