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Trees & Turkeys: a bountiful partnership



Sustainable Forestry Initiative

November 20, 2018



This Thanksgiving, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) express gratitude for another productive year working together toward common goals, including:

- Well-managed forests
- Wildlife conservation
- Habitat protection
- Recreational opportunities on public lands

The cooperation and collaboration between the two non-profit organizations is based on a Memorandum of Mutual Support they created in 2015.

According to Jim Karels, Director of the Florida Forest Service and state liaison to the NWTF, “A good portion of our state forest system is certified to the SFI Standards. We very much believe in what they do in managing the land for the betterment of forest health and sustainable working forest systems across the United States.”

More than 300 million acres (120 million hectares) of forestland throughout the U.S. and Canada are currently certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard, which includes strict criteria for water and air quality, biodiversity, and efficient use of fiber resources. Ninety-six percent of the forestland is also available to the public for outdoor recreation.

Of the NWTF, Karels said, “It’s a fantastic organization that thinks about not only improving the habitat for wild turkeys but also all animals in the ecosystem. It’s a wildlife organization that really has its act together.”

NWTF is dedicated to the restoration of the wild turkey and the preservation of the U.S. hunting heritage. Since it was founded in 1973, NWTF has helped increase the number of wild turkeys in North America from 1.5 million to a historic high of almost seven million.

The organization’s 10-year initiative, “Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt,” promotes active forest management and conservation of upland habitat specifically. Its goal is to raise \$1.2 billion over the next decade to secure the future of wildlife, wild places, and the hunt for future generations.

“The partnership that brings NWTF, SFI, and state foresters altogether—on the ground and in the legislature—really strengthens what we’re trying to do for the land and people of North America,” Karels said. “It’s what gets us through tough times like we’re experiencing with Hurricane Michael now. It’s amazing the turkeys survive, but they do.”

To learn more about forest sustainability, the partnerships that make it possible, and what you can do to participate, visit <http://www.sfiprogram.org/>.



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