



## Center for Forest and Wood Certification: Providing Certification Possibilities for Woodland Owners

*by the Managing Partners of the Center for Forest and Wood Certification*

The Center for Forest and Wood Certification (Center) is a partnership venture that provides solutions to forest and wood certification issues in the eastern United States. The Center is designed to define problems associated with wood and forest certification and works toward developing programs and providing assistance so those who could benefit from certification do. The Center assists everyone

from private woodland owners with small acreages to large private and public forest owners. The Center also works with all sizes and types of forest industries, including logging, sawmills, secondary industries, and large

market force that provides the economic incentive for woodland and forest certification. In some cases, non-market incentives from conservation easements and ecosystem services are also possible and the Center works to facilitate these opportunities for woodland owners as well. Regardless, building sustainable certification efforts for woodland owners requires incentives, often the presence of markets for certified timber and fiber (pulpwood), and the development of certified acreage must be done in concert with the development of local markets for certified fiber and timber. Foresters, loggers, and forest industries' capacity to manage, procure, and manufacture also must be choreographed. The design of the Center recognizes the need for balanced growth of all entities involved in certification in order to build sustainable certification networks. The Center also recognizes the need to understand all the costs of producing certified fiber and timber products and how these costs are distributed along the supply chain. Armed with this knowledge, individuals and companies can make good business decisions and certification costs can be appropriately distributed across the supply chain to enhance certification of woodlands.



Photo courtesy: Jeff Stringer

*Christopher Reeves, certification forester, with the Center is training cooperating foresters on certification standards and the management plan requirements.*

forest industries such as pulp and paper. While the Center does work with public sector forests, its focus is on building private sector certification capacity. The ultimate aim is to allow all entities involved with certification to develop, manage, and profit from their certification efforts. In this regard, the Center is a certification incubator, helping private owners engage and ultimately be self-sufficient in their certification efforts.

### ***Designed to Succeed***

The wide range of programs, opportunities, and partnering offered by the Center is strategic. The demand for certified wood products is the primary

### ***How the Center Functions***

The Center for Forest and Wood Certification was developed by eight founding partners representing forest industries, forest industry associations, consulting foresters, economic and environmental non-profits, and universities (see Managing Partners box below). These founding partners are referred to as managing

### ***Founding and Managing Partners***

- Bobby Ammerman (University of Kentucky, Department of Forestry Extension)
- Britt Boucher (Consulting Forester, Blacksburg, Va.)
- Ken Negray (Kentucky Forest Industry Association /NewPage Corp.)
- Christopher Reeves (University of Kentucky, Department of Forestry Extension)
- Scott Shouse (Mountain Association for Community and Economic Development)
- Jeff Stringer (University of Kentucky, Department of Forestry Extension)
- Chris Will (Central Kentucky Forest Management Inc.)
- Hagan Wonn (Kentucky Hardwood Lumber Company)

partners and actively set Center policy and approve program development\*. While the Center has projects throughout the eastern United States, it focuses the majority of its efforts in the Central Hardwood and Appalachian regions. Funding comes from a variety of sources, including membership fees from forest and woodland owners, loggers, and industry; contributions from managing partners; grants; and donations from businesses, non-profits, and associations and organizations (see Support and Endorsement box on page 16). All are directly involved in or interested in promoting forest and wood certification.

### Center Structure and Administration

The Center contains three sections designed to manage the wide range of programs undertaken, including forest management (FM), forest industry/chain-of-custody (CoC), and logging. Each has an administrator who manages programs and projects in that section. Of particular importance to woodland owners is the FM section that manages the FM group certificates, including an independently managed group for the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and an FM group for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). This section also trains and supports the Center's Cooperating Foresters—consulting and industry foresters trained to manage certified forests and woodlands.

establish payments for conservation easements for a working certified forest, the Center will help with these contacts as well. Forest owners are able to sell ATFS and/or FSC timber and pulpwood to industries that are in need of this timber or fiber. In some cases these industries are willing to assist with certification costs.

### When Does Certification Make Sense

Certification may be important for family forest or woodland owners if industries are willing to provide preferential treatment for certified timber or pulpwood. Currently this is the case with all industries that have a CoC certificate for FSC or SFI. It is also important to note that all forest industries that are provided assistance by the Center are required to provide preferential treatment to woodland owners who are certified. All woodland owners who are members of the Center are FSC and ATFS certified, so regardless of local demand for one type of certification over the other they are covered. Certification may also provide an opportunity for landowners who want to derive income from harvesting timber and non-timber products and at the same time participate



Anne Marie Kittredge auditor for Scientific Certification Systems discusses certification procedures with Walter Alexander (left) owner of Kentucky Flooring Co., LLC. Bobby Ammerman, in charge of chain-of-custody certification for the Center looks on.

The other sections have similar responsibilities for certificate management, training, and technical assistance. The Center also has an operational director who provides administrative support and coordination of Center projects.

### Forest and Woodland Certification

Family forest owners (woodland owners) can become ATFS and FSC certified by contacting the Center. The Center will determine if income opportunities are available through timber sales or other sources of payments for certified forest lands and put them in contact with trained Cooperating Foresters who can help them with their management plans and certification requirements. The woodland owner and forester work out their own arrangement on fees. Once the management plan has been written, the Center will work with the forester or landowner on finalization of the certification process. There is an initial and annual fee for membership that is kept as low as possible to help promote certification (see table to right). Also woodland owners will be apprised of loggers and industries that are interested in purchasing their certified timber or pulpwood. Where opportunities exist to

Family Forest Group Members		
Size (in acres)	Initial Fee	Annual Fee
20 - 500	\$50	\$40
501 - 1,000	\$100	\$50
1,001 - 2,470 <sup>1</sup>	\$200	\$75
Large or Industrial Forest		
12.9 cents/acre plus initial audit fee.		
<sup>1</sup> based on FSC's 1,000 hectare size limit of the family forest standard.		

\*The Center is housed at the University of Kentucky, Department of Forestry Extension. While extension personnel provide for the majority of the staffing for Center programs, the managing partners provide direction and make Center policy. Managing partners also provide in-kind services to facilitate program development.



# CFWC

Center for Forest & Wood Certification

Photo courtesy: Jeff Stringer



*Mr. and Mrs. Hewitt Brown's woodlands are being certified through the Center and are also being used to develop a model for using FSC certification as a means of providing a working forest that can potentially obtain conservation easement payments. Certification auditors observed an archeologist dig of a native American Indian fort during a certification audit of the Brown's Massy Springs Farm on the Green River.*

in conservation easements and ecosystem services. Certification allows for the concept of a working forest that fits many conservation easement requirements since certification helps to ensure the maintenance of a wide range of conservation attributes that are of interest to the entities providing easement funding or those providing ecosystem payments (such as carbon markets). Finally, certification may make sense for those woodland owners who want a higher degree of technical assistance that is normally provided for on non-certified forests or if they are interested in showing their commitment to high standards of forest management.

## ***Contacting the Center***

To get more information on the Center, go to the Center's Web site at [www.forestcertificationcenter.org](http://www.forestcertificationcenter.org), e-mail the Center at [info@forestcertificationcenter.org](mailto:info@forestcertificationcenter.org), or call 1-855-579-2690. The Web site describes all of the Center's programs and provides details on certification. The Center also sends out an e-mail newsletter. If you would like to be on the list to receive this newsletter, contact the Center.

## ***Support and Endorsement***

### ***Corporate Sustaining Sponsors***

- Time Inc.
- Domtar Corp.
- NewPage Corp.
- Kentucky State Implementation Committee-Sustainable Forestry Initiative

### ***Grants/Public***

- Kentucky Division of Forestry (U.S. Forest Service),
- University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Department of Forestry

### ***Non-Profit***

- Central Appalachian Forestry Alliance lead by the Mountain Association of Community and Economic Development and Rural Action

### ***Endorsements***

- National Woodland Owners Association
- The Nature Conservancy
- Kentucky Forest Industry Association
- Kentucky Woodland Owners Association
- Association of Consulting Foresters-Kentucky Chapter
- SFI-Kentucky and Tennessee State Implementation Committees



## *From the Woods...*

*Kentucky Woodlands Magazine interviewed Tom Christopher, Marion County woodland owner, to learn his experiences with certification. He has worked with his forester, Chris Will, and the Center for Forest and Wood Certification.*

*Why did you get involved in woodland certification and how long have you been working with Chris Will?*

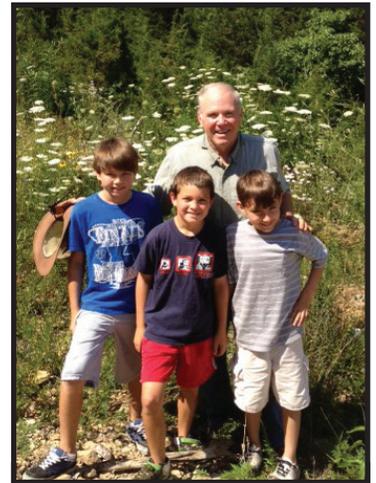
**Tom:** I've relied on Chris for the past 15 years and have found his advice very helpful. Chris introduced me to the idea and I like the quality process that I saw. I was drawn to the long term range nature of the program. I also want to ultimately get a good price for my timber and through this program hopefully get a higher price. But a big concern is that when I take the timber I don't damage the land.

*Forest certification involves an audit process; please tell us a little about your audit experience.*

**Tom:** I'm a Certified Public Accountant and I understand the audit process. But from my perspective the audit was not bad at all because I had already been through an audit with the carbon credit program. The audit really didn't require a lot from my end but it further solidified what I had already done. Chris helped develop a management plan for the property using some material I already had. I didn't have to change anything to get enrolled.

*Do you have any advice for other woodland owners when it comes to woodland certification?*

**Tom:** I hope a lot more people get involved in certification because of the long-term benefits of the program. In general though, I would also recommend that woodland owners involve their families in management and get their lands surveyed especially when it comes time to harvest.



*Tom Christopher in the back with his grandchildren (from left to right) Tate, Clay and Samuel. Tom's woodlands are one of the first Forest Stewardship Council Family Forests certified in Kentucky.*

