Annual Report 2014

Investing for Impact



Chairman's Thoughts

Credits Retiring Members; Welcomes New Talent



John Weaver Augusta, GA

Equally important as our investments in programmatic activity are investments in people especially those who guide and those who implement our plans. In 2014 we reached a significant milestone—all inaugural Board members completed terms of service. As I end my first year as Chairman, it is my pleasure to recognize the last two of the original eleven members who charted a course of action for this small but effective organization.

Peggy Clark—Arkansas's first lady of charm and humor endeared herself to all. From a "timber family," Peggy served eight years and ensured that the concerns of America's family forest owners were always on the table. Her acumen, honed in the family business, served us well as she chaired the Audit Committee. Her easy laughter, warm smile, and sly southern savvy will be missed.

Mack Hogans—the dirt forester from L.A. (that's "Lower Alabama") who rose to senior leadership in one of the bestknown names in forestry (Weyerhaeuser)—also completed eight years. Mack combined common sense from rural roots with diplomatic skills that would be the envy of the United Nations. He showcased those talents as Chairman for four years, where all found him to have listening ears like a loving grandfather, passion of a top athlete, and the wisdom of Solomon.

Returns on investment from our initial Board were stellar. Though it is bittersweet to see rich talent and now close friends retire from service, we are blessed to have wellqualified additions bring their own strengths.

Jim Hoolihan—former mayor of Grand Rapids, MN; longserving board member and past president of the Blandin Foundation; and head of a family business that spans threequarters of a century—joined in May.

We welcomed two more talents in November: John Cooper formerly of NC and now associate professor of practice at Texas A&M University—brings personal perspective on minority landowner issues and deep understanding of rural development, poverty, and charitable engagement in change. Andrea Tuttle former state forester of CA and renowned natural resources professional—shares an understanding of policy-making and global perspectives from years of international work.

The investments made in our Board are matched by those in six full-time staffers with whom it has been my honor to serve. Expected returns for the future look great!

President Shares Views

Recounts Hits, and One Miss, for 2014



Carlton Owen Greenville, SC

While the stock market was on a tear, 2014 was a year of stability and enhanced performance for the Endowment staff. Not so on the programmatic side. For our most significant investment to date, we rode a rollercoaster.

It is gratifying to point to successes something we do in the pages ahead. But just as no Wall Street investor picks only winners, not everything we attempt is successful. Four years ago we launched an

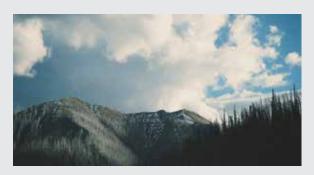
effort to pilot a community-scale business in what the New York Times in October termed "one of the ten hardest places to live in America." Our vision was family-supporting jobs, markets for low-value wood to strengthen area sawmills and forest harvesting operations, renewable energy to keep utility dollars at home, and a one-of-a-kind 30-year philanthropic investment to change the lives of citizens for the better. Learn more on Page 9. That startup foundered, but others surged.

With our partners at the USDA Forest Service, we launched two projects to sustain America's forest-rich communities. With experts from the Forest Products Laboratory, we doubled down to create a new generation of forest products for the 21st century. That work, founded on nature's building blocks at the nano scale—one-100,000th the thickness of a human hair—involves nine universities and companies across the nation. The goal: high-value products from low-value wood.

On a parallel track, the Endowment is engaging with the Forest Service and Georgia Southern University's Herty Center to generate moderate-value products from low-value wood at scales big enough to impact escalating wildfire losses. A new consortium targets the potential of torrefied wood (biomass roasted into energy-dense form) as a green alternative to coal, soil amendment (biochar), and water filtration material (activated carbon).

Three other efforts aim to retain America's working forests. In partnership with the American Water Works Association we are protecting forested watersheds that provide drinking water. We continue to aid the Department of Defense in buffering bases and posts against incompatible development that threatens military readiness. And we are working across three states with African American landowners and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to turn forests into economic assets.

Finally, we concluded a five-year effort to pilot regional forest-based economic development in our Forest Investment Zone Initiative. Read more about those achievements and learnings on Page 14.



Mission

The Endowment works collaboratively with partners in the public and private sectors to advance systemic, transformative, and sustainable change for the health and vitality of the nation's working forests and forest-reliant communities.

Vision

America's forests are sustainably managed to meet broad societal objectives such as marketable products, clean waters, wildlife habitats and other ecological services, while ensuring healthy and vibrant forestreliant communities.

History

The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, Inc. (the Endowment) is a not-for-profit public charity. It was established September 21, 2006, at the request of the governments of the United States and Canada in accordance with the terms of the 2006 Softwood Lumber Agreement between the two countries.

Theory of Change

The Endowment operates under a "theory of change" that focuses on work in three areas: retaining and restoring healthy working forests; promoting and capturing multiple value streams; and enhancing community capacity, collaboration, and leadership.

While many of our programmatic investments don't lend themselves to simple characterization, all are closely aligned and integrate well under this theory.

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Senior Vice President Aiken, SC

Intern

COLEMAN ALLUMS Furman University 1. Ended service. November 2014

2. Began service, November 2014 3. Began service, May 2014

What's News 2006

- **■** September: Softwood Lumber Agreement authorizes \$450 million for "meritorious initiatives" in U.S.
- October: "Side Letters" designate \$200 million for advancing sustainable forestry and family-wage jobs
- November: New entity, U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, establishes framework

2007

- April: Canada provides \$200 million perpetual corpus to support Endowment's programs
- June: Endowment Board adopts vision, mission and values, sets course for work ahead
- November: National survey and workshop results guide theory of change to direct program



Investors in **Nanotechnology Target Outsized** Returns

In 2014, P3Nano—a public-private partnership initiated by the USDA Forest Service and the Endowmentawarded nine research grants worth more than \$3 million to advance commercialization of cellulosic nanomaterials. The investment is expected to stimulate new industries, develop 21st-century green products, and provide high-wage jobs in rural America.

Uncommonly strong and lightweight, products made from cellulosic nano material could revolutionize the auto, aerospace, electronics, food packaging, and other industries. Projects will investigate using cellulose nanomaterial in cement, to reinforce plastics, creating fiberglass alternatives, reinventing fiberboard, developing advanced papers, and more.

International competition, recessionary pressures, and other factors have sapped the U.S. forest product sector's oncerobust R&D programs. According to the most recent data available, from before the 2008 recession, the forest industry devoted only half of 1 percent of total sales to R&D, versus an average of 3.4 percent for the U.S. non-high-tech manufacturing sector.

Public funding for R&D is also rapidly declining, even as many foreign competitors are ratcheting up investments. Without targeted investment and collaborative innovation to create highvalue products and develop new markets, the forest products sector will weaken.

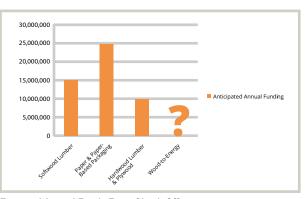
The P3Nano initiative, the Endowment's effort to back new models for innovation, is leveraging public and private investments and spurring commitment to research and development for the next generation of forest products.

Growing Markets for Forest Products

Manufacturers Check "Yes" for Research & Promotion

Through programs developed and adopted with matching funds from the Endowment, producers of a range of forest products will direct more than \$40 million annually to growing their markets.

paper-based Paper and packaging and hardwood lumber and hardwood plywood producers are following the lead softwood lumber producers



Expected Annual Funds From Check-Of

who voted overwhelmingly in 2011 to adopt the first Research & Promotion Program (a.k.a. "check-off") for a forest product. Their action was encouraged by a 2009 Endowment report on the feasibility of using commodity check-offs—a U.S. Department of Agriculture-approved way for producers to jointly fund generic marketing campaigns.

The paper check-off is now in place (effective July 2014) and a vote by hardwood producers is expected in 2015.

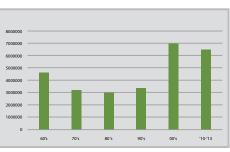
In late 2014 the Endowment and leaders from the wood-to-energy industry began considering a check-off for wood pellet and electricity producers firing with woody biomass. If this and the hardwood check-off are adopted, the total funding for research and promotion efforts across the four segments of the forestry sector could exceed \$60 million per year.

Raging Forest Fires Demand Breakthrough Solutions

Wildland fires are burning more than wood-to-energy solutions are designed to trees: They consume some \$3 billion use the power of markets to help restore in federal funds annually in suppression costs and also cause loss of human life. Economic and environmental losses are valued in the tens of billions. The growing intensity and acreage of wildland fires are attributed to deteriorating forest health. Large volumes of wood—diseaseand insect-killed trees, slash, and smalldiameter trees and noncommercial species in overstocked stands—need to be removed, but without markets for this low-value biomass, forest landowners and land managers have few options.

The Endowment's collaboration with the USDA Forest Service in advancing cellulosic nano products and advanced

forest health and make America's forests more fire resistant.



Average Forest Acres Lost Annually to Wildfire by Decade

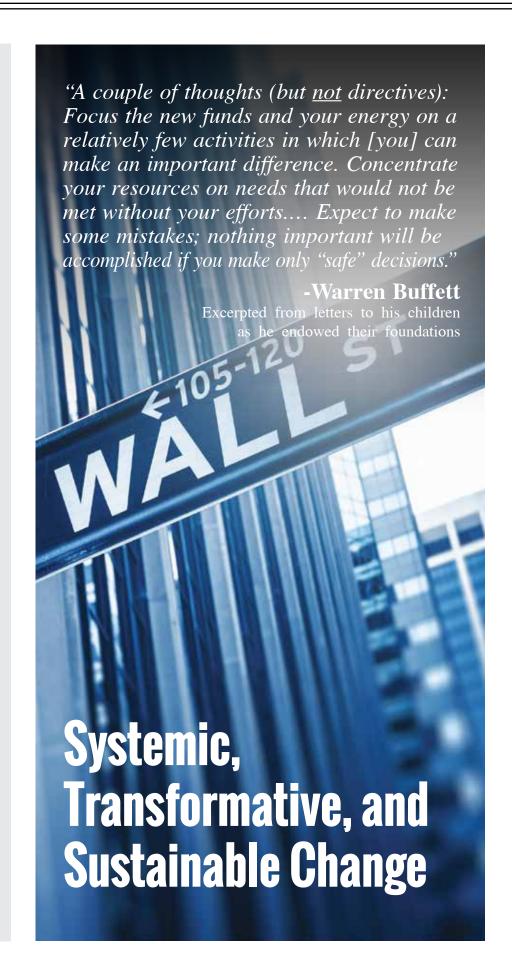
What's News

2008

- May: Forest Health Initiative becomes first holding in Endowment's portfolio
- July: Commodity check-off report tallies benefits for forest products sector
- August: Working forests and forest products markets get boost under Endowment initiatives
- November: Forest Investment Zone Initiative focuses on regional economic development

2009

- May: Online database begins tracking conservation easements for land trust partners
- November: Working forests and green building gain recognition in federal policy
- December: Nontraditional Markets Initiative addresses drinking water as forest product





Drinking Water: Two-Thirds Originates From Forests

Investors look for companies that improve returns by lowering costs and improving efficiency. That's also one of the Endowment's strategies when assessing projects. For example, investing in management of forested watersheds to cut water treatment costs yields higher returns for consumers.

The Endowment is funding pilot projects in Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina, Oregon, and South Carolina to demonstrate how watershed management can lower costs for water utilities and their customers.

Called Healthy Watersheds through Healthy Forests, this program promotes investments in sustainable management of forested watersheds, which are the source for two-thirds of the nation's drinking water. Healthy, well-managed forests produce cleaner water that may be less expensive to treat. That gives water utilities and water consumers incentive to invest in healthy, well-managed forests in their watersheds.

"The rational investor buys shares in companies that are cutting costs and improving efficiency," said Peter Stangel, Endowment SVP. "Forested watersheds are a similarly good investment: they cut water treatment costs for utilities, thus yielding high returns for consumers."

Financial support from water utilities and their customers could help transform how landowners manage forested watersheds. If both forest owners and water users realize economic benefits, the change will be sustainable.

With the American Water Works Association, the Endowment is funding research to clarify the relationship between raw water quality and treatment costs—a critical point for winning support from water utilities and making forest management integral to the water service business. The Endowment is also hosting symposia and workshops to help forest landowners and water utilities find common ground and is securing funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service for an analysis of water projects by the World Resources Institute.

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What's News

2010

March: Wood-to-Energy **Initiative** begins seeking

markets for low-value wood

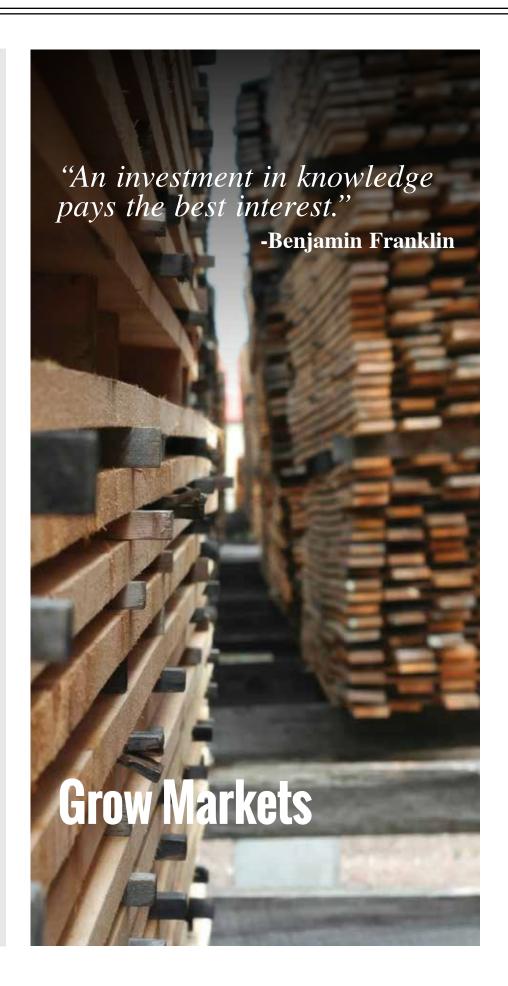
■ July: Program-related investments—essentially low-interest loans—advance Endowment's mission

■ November: Georgia project pilots economic development to address drivers of persistent poverty

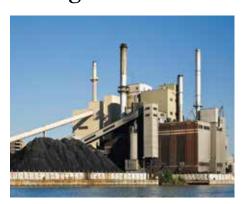
2011

June: Canadian and U.S. representatives address common challenges in firstever Forest Health Summit

July: Softwood lumber **producers** adopt check-off program under USDA Research & Promotion authority



Consortium Seeks Enhanced Forest Health and **Renewable Energy** through Torrefaction



Commercially viable, advanced woodto-energy products can be made from low-value trees and forest residuesmaterial that often compromises forest health and heightens the risk of wildfires. To fill critical knowledge the Endowment, the USDA Forest Service's Forest Products Laboratory, and Georgia Southern University's Herty Advanced Materials Development Center have launched the Consortium for Advanced Wood-to-Energy Solutions (CAWES).

"Our initial work will center on determining the commercial viability of torrefaction—the 'roasting' of wood in a low-oxygen environment—to create an energy-dense product that can more easily be shipped, stored, and used to produce renewable energy," said Alexander Koukoulas, President and CEO of Herty.

The Endowment and the USDA Forest Service, via its State & Private Forestry division, jump-started the consortium with a \$4 million investment.

Bold Plan to Demonstrate Positive Power of Enterprise Falters

partner, a four-year impact investment effort on one reinvestment strategy that if may fail, the Endowment has conceded.

In late 2010 the Endowment created a public-private partnership to develop a community-scale wood-to-energy project. It would provide a market for low-value and waste wood, support a local sawmill, shore up a sagging tax base, and create 25 direct and 50 indirect jobs in recessionstricken Jefferson County, Georgia. It would also generate a guaranteed 20-year stream of income for the community to

The Endowment put up \$3 million (half to own 40 percent of the entity and thus 40 percent of the returns; half as a start-up loan) to leverage a total \$80 million investment. North Star Jefferson had much going for it, including the 20year power purchase agreement with a Fortune 500 company, a proven technology, and an experienced project developer.

A for-profit subsidiary, Community Wealth through Forestry (CWF), was created to hold the Endowment's North Star Jefferson interests on behalf of the community. Net revenues from the 40 percent ownership was expected to approach \$500,000 per year.

Endowment President Carlton Owen called North Star Jefferson "the quintessential triple-bottomline project. And the social benefit was truly stellar. Most such schemes involve shortterm philanthropy for only a few kids. This was a long-term, universal program tied to a stable, for-profit business."

With a change in plans by a major The Endowment asked residents to agree pursued consistently would lift their deeply challenged, majority minority community. A nonprofit community activist helped a representative, 15-member "listening committee" discuss ideas with their neighbors and study approaches that had worked elsewhere.

> CWF then developed the chosen strategy: Children's Savings Accounts (CSAs) for each of the 3,400 K-12 students in the county. In a tiered approach, families below the poverty level would receive \$2 for every \$1 invested for each child, up to a total of \$120 per year per child. Families earning up to twice the poverty level would get a dollar-for-dollar match. No one would be left out: higher-income families would get 50 cents for each dollar-an instant 50 percent return.

> Studies from around the globe show it isn't the amount of money that goes into a CSA that makes the difference; rather, it's the conversations about the future and the goals parents set for their children. Most CSAs involve short-term philanthropy for only a small segment of a population. Nowhere did the Endowment find a longterm, universal program tied to a forprofit business.

> CWF was forced to take legal action to remove its first partner, however, and another party was selected. The power purchase agreement was extended to 30 years, raising the community's potential return to as much as \$1 million a year. Then in 2014 the second partner sought to withdraw from its commitments, dimming prospects for the effort.

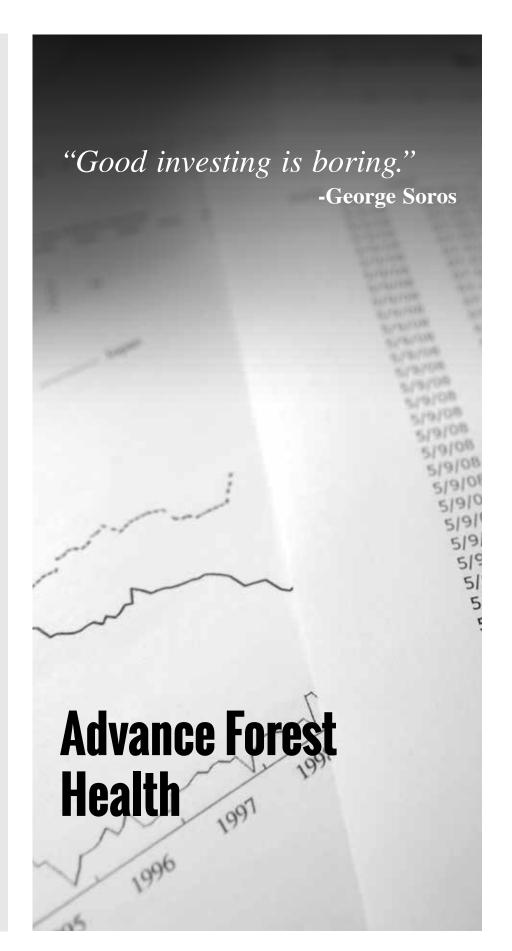
A complete autopsy of the experience will be publicly available before year-end 2015.



- January: Hardwood **producers** seek help to grow markets: Endowment cofunds check-off development
- **April:** Asset Creation Initiative takes forest pathway to economic progress for disadvantaged populations
- **May: Resources for the Future** creates Chair in Forest Economics and Policy with Endowment support
- September: Endowment manages military's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration challenge program

2013

- **March: Second Forest Health** Summit, in Ottawa, advances cross-border forest health collaboration
- May: State of Forestry and Forest Industry meeting identifies challenges and opportunities for growth
- **May: Innovation Agenda for** future forest products begins as Forest Investment Zone projects wrap up
- **July: National Conservation Database** adds 100,000th easement. helps land trusts coordinate efforts



Working Forests Support National Defense

Investments in businesses that supply the U.S. military often pay off. Here's another investment tip: ensuring the viability of working forests around military bases helps keep those installations functioning.

Most military bases were established in rural areas, but encroaching development is threatening training exercises and weapons testing. Working forests buffer operations from residential areas and create dark skies for night air maneuvers. Forests also provide a refuge for wildlife, relieving commanders of obligations to reserve habitat for imperiled species that would otherwise find refuge on bases.

The Endowment partners with the Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program to maintain and expand working forests around military bases. In 2014 the Endowment helped manage the REPI Challenge Program, which awarded \$5 million to protect buffer lands around Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland and Delaware.

The Endowment also prepared a primer to explain the benefits of working forests for installation personnel and, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, began seeking matching funds for basebuffering programs from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

"Investments in businesses that supply the U.S. military often pay off," said Peter Stangel. "We saw a good opportunity in investing in working forests around military bases."



Actions Follow Cross-Border Summits Convened by Endowment

the first report (2013/2014 Year End Report) of results of cross-border collaboration to address forest health issues affecting the second-largest forest expanse in the world—the combined forest estate of Example Results of Enhanced Canadian-Canada and the U.S.

"While cooperation among our two countries and especially forest scientists and forest managers in both has a long-history," said Endowment President Carlton Owen, "the enhanced collaboration and the positive results showcased in this report point to the importance and benefits to the forests and people of both nations when that cooperation is more strategic. As we've seen with Ebola, it is vitally important that people focus on cooperation

In late November the Endowment released and rapid sharing of information to effect positive results. The forests of North America are benefitting from just such collaboration."

U.S. Collaboration:

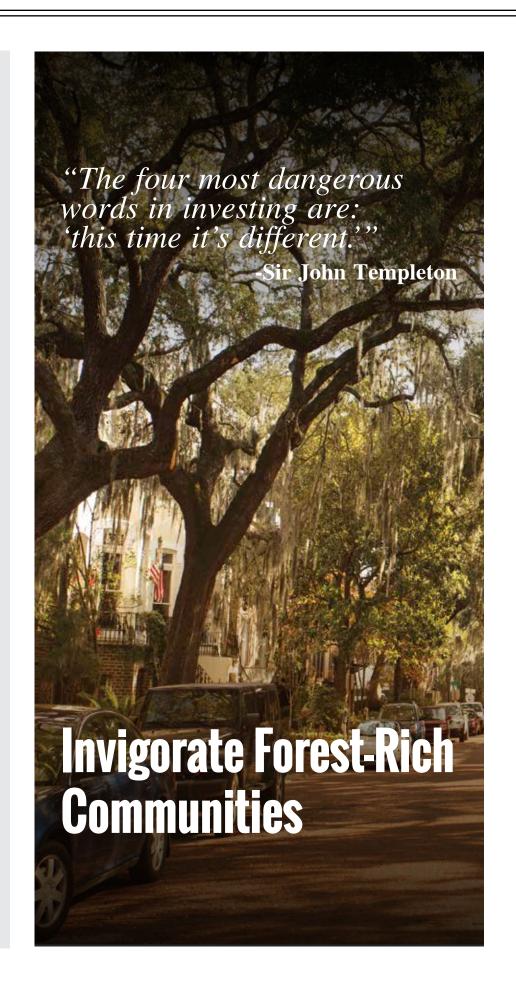
- Markets: Environmental declarations for particleboard and medium-density fiberboard will help make wood products a preferred material for green building.
- Fire: A coordinated approach to sharing wildland firefighting resources portends more effective suppression.
- Pests: Enhanced collaboration facilitates response to spruce budworm outbreaks in eastern North America.
- Inventory: First-generation continuous map of above-ground forest biomass and above-ground carbon in North America aids planning.
- International: Coordination of information for the 2015 Global Forest Resource Assessment report will improve accuracy.

What's News

* * *

2014

- January: Forest Service and Endowment ink MOU to direct long-running partnership
- January: Report on R&D in U.S. forest industry points to challenges in maintaining global position
- February: Health of timber harvesters and haulers is subject of pilot agreement with loggers and producers
- August: Endowment-led consortium plans approach to substituting torrefied wood for coal
- September: USDA Rural Development becomes fifth federal agency to partner with Endowment
- December: Loan to Wisconsin's Menominee Tribe will improve sawmill efficiency and enhance air quality





Management of Forests Rewards African Americans; Promotes Land Retention

The Endowment's pilot program, launched in 2013 to help African American landowners resolve land tenure problems and adopt forest management practices, has posted results for its first full year of operation.

In 2014 the program engaged 357 forestowning African American families, with 128 targeted for full forestry and land tenure services. Of those receiving full services:

"Whether the next generation will retain and manage the family woodlot or sell it for conversion to other uses may depend on the owner's ability to realize a return on its productivity," said Alan McGregor, the Endowment's Vice President.

- 105 now have or are developing forest management plans;
- 62 are receiving land tenure services, such as wills, estate plans, or resolution of heirs' property;
- 92 have implemented forestry practices, such as thinning; and
- 60 have completed or planned timber sales.

The program aims to build family wealth and improve forest health and productivity through four basic mechanisms: secure land tenure, forest management plans, forest practices, and access to markets. Only 20 percent of family-owned forestland is managed under written plans, and for African American forestland owners in the Southeast, the percentage may be even smaller, according to USDA Forest Service reports. In 2013 only two of the 133 African American owners who initially signed up to participate in a Low Country (South Carolina) sustainable forestry program of the Center for Heirs' Property Preservation had forest management plans. Whether the next generation will retain and manage the family woodlot or sell it for conversion

Coordinating Organizations for Pilots

Coastal South Carolina: Center for Heirs'
Property Preservation

Northeast North Carolina: Roanoke Electrical Cooperative/Roanoke Center

West Alabama: Limited Resources Landowne Education and Assistance Network and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund

Anchor partners with the Endowment are the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and USDA Forest Service

to other uses may depend on the owner's ability to realize a return on its productivity.

Critical to the program is collaboration with USDA and state agencies, particularly the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the USDA Forest Service, the Farm Services Administration, and state forestry commissions. A clear measure of success: 75 African American landowners have received or are under consideration for cost-share funding for forestry plans and practices from the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

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Zone Work Concludes; Forest Communities Benefit

A five-year project with three ambitious goals—advancing forest health, growing markets, and invigorating forest-rich communities—has closed out, reporting gains at a regional scale.

In 2009 the Endowment, working as funder, bridge-builder, and risk-taker, challenged three regional nonprofits to collaboratively and holistically address the economic impact of changing forestry markets on communities in forest-reliant regions. Despite the recession's drain on philanthropic and government resources, grantees leveraged more than \$8 million to match the Endowment's \$6 million investment, generating tangible results and identifying opportunities for future investment.

The Forest Investment Zone Initiative focused on three regions—Northern Forest (Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont), Central Appalachia (Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia), and Dry Forest (eastern California, Oregon)—each with a distinct forest ecosystem and social-political-economic context, including soft demand for forest products, mill closures, weak civic capacity, and often poor forest management.

In each zone the Endowment partnered with a strong nonprofit intermediary: the Northern Forest Center led the initiative in the Northern Forest Zone, the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development directed the Central Appalachia Zone, and Sustainable Northwest steered the Dry Forest Zone. Grantees received \$2 million each and assembled local partners to supplement their expertise and coverage.

Strategies that gained traction and hold potential include the following:

Opening Public Lands via Community Collaboratives

In the Dry Forest Zone, diverse local stakeholders—bridging industry, community, and environmental divides—sought agreement on plans for public lands management. After 15 years of legal impasse, federal forestlands in the Northwest are again producing timber for local mills, and planning and activities have resumed on more than 4 million acres of National Forests.



Making Certification Feasible for Small Owners and Producers

The Center for Forest Certification at the University of Kentucky could be an enduring legacy of the Central Appalachia Zone. It gives family-forest owners and producers access to group certification at an affordable price, dismantling the barrier to new markets for green products. The center has certified 67,800 acres and helped 93 wood products companies and 59 loggers secure certification.

Generating Community-Scale Biomass Heat

In the Northern Forest Zone, the Model Neighborhood Project enabled 40 homeowners in Berlin, New Hampshire, to switch from oil to state-of-the-art wood pellet heating systems, generating \$400,000 in local economic benefits, saving families \$100,000 on their fuel bills, and avoiding 681 tons of carbon emissions. This project is now being replicated in Vermont and Maine and in the Adirondacks.

The Dry Forest Zone's Integrated Biomass Campus is demonstrating that low-value wood from forest restoration activities can generate value as firewood sold in large grocery chains, poles for vineyards and orchards, and biomass for heat and power.

Catalyzing Innovation in Wood Products Manufacturing

The Northern Forest Zone's Regional Wood Products Consortium persuaded 28 wood products companies to adopt the tools of lean manufacturing, mass customization, and online marketing. One example: once near bankruptcy and with just three employees, Timeless Frames in Watertown, Vermont, now produces digitally customized picture frames, employs 300 people, and uses 2 million board feet of northern hardwoods annually.

Creating Community-Owned Forests

In Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, 13 community-owned forests covering more than 11,000 acres now generate income from timber sales for the sponsoring municipality while providing recreation, preserving ecologically sensitive land, and furthering public understanding of the forest as a critical asset. The Northern Forest Zone's partners help localities identify properties to purchase and finance, engage the broader community, and help plan for continued forest management and long-term stewardship.

To learn more about the Forest Investment Zone Initiative results, visit www.usendowment.org.

Statements of Financial Activity

(For the 12 Months ended December 31)

Program Investment	2014*	2013	2012
Partner Investment (public and private support) Program Expenditures	\$2,738,000	\$3,109,000	\$2,222,000
Grants and Contracts	5,146,000	6,535,000	7,309,000
Impact Investments (\$8,650,000 cumulative)	2,750,000	1,551,000	4,349,000
Total	\$7,896,000	\$8,086,000	\$11,658,000
Operation Expense			
Personnel, General and Administrative	\$636,000	\$629,000	\$611,000
Investment Activity			
Income, realized and unrealized gains	\$17,804,000	\$19,458,000	\$16,967,000
Total Increase in Net Assets	14,760,000	15,403,000	11,269,000
Net Assets at Beginning of Period	204,475,000	189,072,000	177,803,000
Net Assets at End of Period	\$219,235,000	\$204,475,000	\$189,072,000
Leverage			
Endowment investments of \$30,659,000 leveraged		External Investment	\$81,019,000
\$105,971,000 in partner and external investments		Partner Investment	24,952,000
for a total of \$136,630,000.		Endowment Investment	30,659,000
			\$136,630,000

^{* 2014} information is preliminary pending completion of year-end closing and audit procedures

This report was printed on Husky Offset 70 lb. text and Finch Fine, Bright White, Ultra Smooth 100 lb. cover. The wood fiber used to make these papers is independently certified by two of the world's premier forest certification standards as coming from responsibly managed forests. Certification ensures that the Endowment's publications meet strict environmental and socio-economic principles consistent with our mission.

^{**} Cumulative impact investments from 2010-2012

