



WPN MEDIA RELEASE: UNITED NATIONS REPORTS NORTH AMERICAN FORESTS ARE GROWING

Forestinformation.com Shares Good News on Forests and Encourages Everyone to "Grow. Learn. Explore."

CONTACT

Kimberly Eberl 312-988-2072
Steve Bauer 312-988-2348

Chicago, IL (June 1, 2001) - North American forests are abundant and growing, according to the recent United Nations' State of the World's Forests report, the most comprehensive evaluation of global forestation in its 50-year history. The UN report says forest coverage expanded nearly 10 million acres over the last decade.

According to Dr. Patrick Moore, ecologist and co-founder of Greenpeace, the report comes as no surprise. "There is a common misconception that our forests are shrinking and we are running out of trees, when actually the opposite is true. The volume of North America's forests has grown and continues to grow," says Moore.

Spreading the Word

To celebrate the good news and educate people on North America's forests, a new Web site, forestinformation.com, is sprouting up on the World Wide Web. Forestinformation.com is an educational Web site with up-to-date forest statistics, as well as news and reports from experts on the positive steps being taken to protect North American forests. Providing information and activities for both adults and children, forestinformation.com will help inspire everyone to "Grow. Learn. Explore." their forests.

Grow. - Forestinformation.com offers an interactive map showing a breakdown of working forest land cover, protected forests, up-to-date statistics on the number of trees planted in North America, and data tracking certification efforts for sustainable forest management practices across the United States and Canada.

Learn. - Forestinformation.com includes activities, lessons and crafts for parents, teachers and kids to learn more about forests, how they grow and how forests contribute to their everyday lives.

Explore. - Using state-of-the-art photography, forestinformation.com offers a virtual "Walk Through the Woods," with online tours through the Redwood National and State Park in Northern California and Voyageurs National Park in International Falls, Minnesota.

Signing On

Dr. Moore will help launch forestinformation.com with a live webcast from Pacific Spirit Park in Vancouver, Canada, educating viewers about the forest and the importance it plays in our everyday lives. Adults and children can take part in this first-ever webcast from a forest by visiting forestinformation.com on Tuesday, June 12, at 12 p.m. EDT.

Seeing the Forest Through the Trees

The good news about North American forests shared on forestinformation.com is part of a bigger picture about the positive steps being taken by the forest industry to protect and maintain North America's forests.

Certification is the independent verification process that ensures forest companies are respecting standards and practices for sustainable forest management. Achieving sustainable forest management is the goal of all good standards, and certification is proof that it is happening.

Chuck Leavell maintains a sustainably managed tree farm in Georgia when he is not touring as a pianist with such musicians as the Rolling Stones and Eric Clapton. "As a tree farmer, I know good forest management keeps our trees and land working for future generations to enjoy more forests than ever before. Conservation through planting more trees than I harvest each year helps protect the land," he said.

Leavell, two-time recipient of National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year for his conservation efforts, has written a book, released this month called "Forever Green: The History and Hope of the American Forest."

North American forestry practices have been so successful, the United States and Canada now serve as a role model for other countries. The facts speak for themselves:

Canada and the United States together maintain the largest area of protected forests in the world - greater than Sweden, Finland, Russia, Brazil, Germany and the U.K. combined.

Today, the United States has about the same amount of land covered by trees as it did 100 years ago.

Today, Canada has more than 86.5 million acres (35 million hectares) of protected forests, which is equivalent to the size of Germany.

Each year, some two billion seedlings are planted in Canada and the United States - more than six new trees a year for every person in both countries.

"North America is making great headway in protecting our forests and preserving the only renewable resource that sustains and supports our everyday lives," says Dr. Moore. "Sharing this good news and encouraging everyone to learn more about their forest is an important step in continuing this progress to preserve our forests for future generations."