

MEDIA RELEASE

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It's time for teachers to spruce up their forestry knowledge!

The 11th Annual Teacher's Forestry Tour adds a new ring to forestry education

The Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF), in partnership with the Canadian Ecology Centre (CEC), will be hosting the 11th Annual Teachers' Forestry Tour from August 14-17th. More than 30 teachers will gather at the CEC, which is located in Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park, just minutes from Mattawa, Ontario. The Teachers' Forestry Tour aims to provide teachers with up-to-date information on forestry in Canada from the people and companies that drive the industry.

"It is vital for educators to have a complete picture of forestry in Canada so they can transfer unbiased knowledge to their students in the classroom. Wood utilization is sustainable; the forestry sector is environmentally responsible, safe, and is a source of a wide array of jobs. Teachers and their students need to know more about this within the curriculum where our forests are identified directly and indirectly" said Bill Steer, General Manager (Teacher) of the Canadian Ecology Centre.

The forest industry strives to meet society's needs while grappling with highly complex challenges such as climate change. As a result, the industry is ever-evolving as it expands to overcome its challenges while ensuring the continuation of a wide array of forest products and services such as timber, wildlife, and renewable energy. Biomass is currently on the forefront as a sustainable source of energy and economic driver for small communities. "The forest industry is a leader in researching biomass as a renewable energy source" said Mr. Steer. "Teachers need to know wood fibre can either be used directly, or converted into other energy products such as biofuel."

The goal is simple: provide teachers with first-hand knowledge and experience about these issues so they can get a complete picture. "We bring them together for three and a half days, talk about biology, ecology, economics, and issues that are so pivotal in forestry and really pin the picture of what the business is about" said George Bruemmer, Executive Director of the Canadian Wood Fibre Centre. Teachers will also have the opportunity to participate in hands-on curriculum activities. This will allow them to become more familiar with the curriculum resources entitled 'Focus on Forests' and national resources provided by the Canadian Forestry Association and the Canadian Institute of Forestry.



Mattawa and the surrounding areas are ideal learning grounds because there are plenty of sites to visit and lots of expertise involving the federal government, the forest industry, and the Ministry of Natural Resources. One of the highlights will be a visit to the Petawawa Research Forest located near Chalk River. “It is one of Canada’s most valuable assets when it comes to forest science and the Canadian Forest Service” said John Pineau, Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Institute of Forestry. “Teachers will also visit a number of forest industry manufacturers in the North Bay area such as Quality Hardwoods and Kent Trusses.”

The driving force of this event is the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF) (www.cif-ifc.org). The CIF is the national voice of forest practitioners; the Institute represents foresters, forest technologists and technicians, ecologists, biologists, geographers, educators, scientists and many others with a professional interest in forestry. The Institute's mission is to provide national leadership in forestry, promote competence among forestry professionals, and foster public awareness of Canadian and international forestry issues. “Canada is a country rich in natural resources and forestry is part of our natural and cultural heritage. The wood fibre-related industries play an integral part of our socio-economic landscape. Teachers and their students will benefit from knowing more” said Mr. Pineau.

The forest sector has been extremely helpful in providing human and logistical resources in making the Teachers’ Forestry Tour a reality. Many private sector sponsors have contributed, including: the Canadian Forestry Association, Tembec, Nipissing Forest Resource Management Co., the Algonquin Forestry Authority, and Tree Canada.

The CEC (www.canadianecology.ca) continues to be an ideal host for the CIF’s Teachers’ Forestry Tour. The CEC is a national, non-profit organization with charitable education status. It is an environmental education institution, delivering high school credits and school programs. It hosts a number of college and university field camps. The CEC is the host of the Green Check Recognition Program and the National GPS Certification Program.

For more information regarding the Teachers’ Forestry Tour, please visit www.canadianecology.ca, or contact Bill Steer at (705) 744-1715, ext. 570; bill@canadianecology.ca ; or John Pineau at (705) 744-1715, ext. 585; jpineau@cif-ifc.org.

