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PARTNERSHIP AWARDED COMPETITIVE \$300,000 CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANT TO BOOST IMPROVED FOREST MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE IN MAINE

Grant is one of 19 awarded nationally by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, will support development of the Exemplary Forestry Investment Fund.

Portland, ME— The Maine Mountain Collaborative (MMC), with its project partners the New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF) and Quantified Ventures (QV), has been awarded a [Conservation Innovation Grant \(CIG\)](#) by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to support the development of the Exemplary Forestry Investment Fund (EFIF). The EFIF is an impact-first investment vehicle that blends public, private, and philanthropic capital to acquire and manage Maine forests for improved environmental and financial outcomes. The EFIF will pool investment funding to acquire

timberland and manage it for long-term forest health, carbon sequestration, improved wildlife habitat, and high-value forest products.

The MMC is a coalition of 10 land conservation organizations working in the western Maine mountain region. The two-year, \$300,000 grant to the MMC will be shared between MMC, NEFF, and QV. This was [one of 19 awards nationwide](#) selected from 77 applications. The grant award is being matched by the partners.

“We’re excited to continue to advance the Exemplary Forestry Investment Fund (EFIF) from concept to reality with the help of this grant,” said Bryan Wentzell, executive director of the Maine Mountain Collaborative. “We hope the EFIF will be another tool for conservation and long-term sustainable forest management in one of the world’s most intact mixed temperate forests.”

“Maine’s and New England’s forests have a critical role to play in mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration. Forests are one of our best natural climate solutions if we can manage them well for carbon and long-lived forest products,” said Bob Perschel, executive director at New England Forestry Foundation and a partner on the EFIF project. “The long-term goals of the Exemplary Forestry Investment Fund (EFIF) are to increase stocking of the forest for improved habitat, high-value forest products, and carbon sequestration while providing returns to investors.”

“Maine’s forests are a national treasure that deserve our collective best,” said Eric Letsinger, CEO of Quantified Ventures. “We’re thrilled to be working with these amazing partners to creatively finance the conservation of this forest ecosystem.”

Authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill, CIG helps develop the tools, technologies, and strategies to support next-generation conservation efforts on working lands and develop market-based solutions to resource challenges. The CIG program inspires creative problem-solving that boosts production on farms, ranches, and private forests; they ultimately improve soil health, grazing lands, and organic systems.

“Innovation is key to addressing the climate crisis and conserving the natural resources we all depend on,” said NRCS Chief Terry Cosby. “CIG partners are using the latest science and research to come up with solutions that work for farmers, ranchers and foresters and help ensure the longevity of American agriculture.”

About Maine Mountain Collaborative

The [MMC](#) is a coalition of statewide, regional, and national conservation and forestry organizations bringing a shared focus and innovative vision to accelerate the pace and scale of conservation in one of the world's most intact temperate forests.

About New England Forestry Foundation

Founded in 1944, [NEFF](#) pursues innovative programs to advance conservation and forestry throughout New England. In partnership with land owners, NEFF has conserved more than 1.1 million acres of forest, including one out of every three acres of forestland protected in New England since 1999.

About Quantified Ventures

[Quantified Ventures](#) is an outcomes-based capital firm that develops public-private projects by structuring innovative financial transactions that drive transformational health, social, and environmental impact. As a certified B Corporation, we partner with corporations, governments, and nonprofits to solve some of the most intractable environmental, social, and health problems facing communities today. We operate four synergistic areas of practice: Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use, Health and Human Services, and Urban and Coastal Resilience.

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