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Acquisition of 3,000-Acre Maine Forest by Innovative New Investment Fund Seeks Environmental and Financial Returns for Investors and Local Stakeholders

Greenville, ME (January 22, 2024) – Exemplary Forestry Management, together with its partners New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF), Maine Mountain Collaborative (MMC), and Quantified Ventures, today announced that it has leveraged philanthropic, private, and public capital to acquire the first forestland holding in its new [Exemplary Forestry Investment Fund](#) (EFIF) Initiative, the 3,000-acre Scammon Ridge Headwaters. The property was purchased from the Haynes Family of Winn, Maine.

The EFIF aims to eventually own 100,000 acres of Maine forest by raising approximately \$90MM and manage them using the climate-smart Exemplary Forestry approach developed by NEFF to improve carbon storage, long-term forest health, wildlife habitat, and sustainable timber value and production in partnership with local communities. Significant to this acquisition was the sale by EFIF of a conservation easement to the Forest Society of Maine, which together with the Friends of Wilson Ponds Area raised the funding for the easement.

“I’m delighted we’ve reached this milestone after considerable research, planning, and collaboration that went into crafting the Exemplary Forestry Investment Fund, which is genuinely unique in the conservation field,” said Robert Perschel, NEFF Executive Director and an EFIF board member. “Now we’ll focus on judiciously scaling up this innovative program and building momentum, as we believe the Exemplary Forestry Investment Fund has immense potential to demonstrate to a global audience how productive, climate smart forestry can be accomplished at scale.”

NEFF and MMC launched Exemplary Forestry Management, a separate non-profit entity that manages the Exemplary Forestry Investment Fund. EFIF is meant to be a long-term timber investment fund initially conceived by NEFF staff that is intended for investors who are interested in a stable, long-term asset that seeks to deliver financial returns and measurable, real-world environmental results. The EFIF blends sources of capital from private equity, philanthropy, and government funding with the goal to produce monetizable climate and community outcomes that deliver multiple revenue streams and allow the EFIF to steward forests for the long term to produce durable forest health, carbon sequestration, improved wildlife habitat, and high-value forest products.

“This effort comes out of the conservation community in Maine,” said Bryan Wentzell, MMC Executive Director. “We are looking to create a new landownership and investment model whose financial goals are aligned with the ecological carrying capacity of the forest. We see this new landowner as a conservation and investment tool to complement existing conservation efforts.”

The EFIF's key goals are:

- Prove that a long-term investment model that delivers environmental and financial returns is viable in the forestry sector in the United States
- Conserve 100,000 acres under Exemplary Forestry management in the largest intact mixed temperate forest in the eastern United States
- Reach the landscape's potential for timber productivity, volume, and quality
- Sequester upwards of 30 metric tons of CO₂e per acre more than present levels, and produce third-party verified carbon credits that can be sold for additional revenue
- Increase timber stocking to 25 cords per acre, or almost 50 percent more than current levels
- Access new sources of capital by connecting project outcomes to a wider network of stakeholders

"We are proud to have played a role in the development of this blended capital model to enhance the biodiversity, climate, and community outcomes delivered by Maine forestlands," said Seth Brown, Vice President at Quantified Ventures. "This innovative partnership and fund approach creates a new potential pathway for institutions and individuals to invest in the future of the Maine woods and support the many co-benefits that come from long-term forest health."

The EFIF is run and overseen by the non-profit Exemplary Forestry Management, which comprises investment and forestry professionals, with the on-the-ground operations handled by a highly respected forest management company. The EFIF aims to own the land forever by allowing one group of progressive investors to replace one another overtime, which could revolutionize forest management by taking the long view. Adherence to Exemplary Forestry standards is assured through the oversight of a Board of Directors with cross-disciplinary expertise in forestry, conservation, ecosystem markets, and finance. The Scammon Ridge Headwaters property is owned by Scammon Ridge Headwaters LLC – the first fund under the EFIF initiative. Two of the fund's investors include the Maine Community Foundation and the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation.

The Scammon Ridge Headwaters property has exceptional conservation value and encompasses several important ecosystems. Deep in central Maine in the town of Greenville, Scammon Ridge spans a high elevation ridge located between Lower Wilson Pond, which is within the Penobscot River watershed, and the Prong Pond, which lies within the Kennebec River watershed. The upland ridge portions of the property provide expansive views of Moosehead Lake and the surrounding landscape.

Conserving this land will ensure the habitat it provides will remain undeveloped. Additionally, the Scammon Ridge Headwaters easement will ensure that the forest will remain available for year-round recreational activities and can continue to be managed for forest products, which bolster the regional economy.

NEFF, MMC and Quantified Ventures offer their thanks to the Haynes Family of Winn, Maine, previous owners of Scammon Ridge, who wanted to see it conserved; the Ropes and Gray legal team; the Innovative Finance for National Forest grant program, a program funded and managed in partnership between the US Forest Service and the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities; Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Innovation Grant; and the Forest Society of Maine and Friends of Wilson Ponds for successfully leading the fundraising on the Scammon Ridge easement, as well as local residents and camp owners who chipped in.

The land known as Scammon Ridge Headwaters is on the unceded homeland of the Wabanaki People. Please read more about Wabanaki land return (<https://dawnlandreturn.org/>) and Wabanaki sovereignty efforts (<https://www.wabanakialliance.com/>).

About New England Forestry Foundation

Through the application of its core expertise in conserving forestland and advancing Exemplary Forestry, [New England Forestry Foundation](#) (NEFF) helps the people of New England to sustain their way of life, protect forest wildlife habitat and ecosystem services, and mitigate and adapt to climate change. In partnership with land owners, New England Forestry Foundation has conserved more than 1.2 million acres of forest since its founding in 1944, including one out of every three acres of forestland protected in New England since 1999. It also owns and manages more than 150 Community Forests across the region. This makes NEFF the fourth-largest land trust in the United States by acres conserved.

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 Quantified Ventures

[Quantified Ventures](#) (QV) works with pioneering organizations to design, capitalize, and scale investible solutions that improve the wellbeing of people and the planet. We catalyze impact for the greater good by pulling the levers of data, finance, innovation, partnerships, and policy to construct bold solutions that produce verified outcomes to address the most pressing environmental and social challenges facing communities. QV is a certified B Corporation and operates two complimentary groups: Climate Finance and Health and Human Services.

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