2011 Annual Report

Our Mission: *To protect forested land and ecosystems and support rural communities through working forests; to raise awareness of the importance of preserving intact forested ecosystems; and to highlight sustainable forestry and practices for the benefit of the land.*

This past year proved to be one of great success and growth for the Foundation for Sustainable Forests. Notable achievements include:

- Acquiring 50.7 acres in Spring Creek Township, Warren County from Clarence Cleer. Clarence made his property available to the Foundation so that it would be forever protected from development and managed to the highest ecological standards. Clarence was drawn to the Foundation by its forest management practices that place the health of the land first.
- Completion of the financing of the 80-acre French Creek Township, Venango County property through a partnership with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, which obtained the conservation easement.
- The hiring of the Foundation's first staff person, enabling the Foundation to increase its capacity at all levels to achieve its mission and fulfill its vision.
- Development of a five-year strategy/work plan.
- Continued growth of educational programs and development of promotional and educational brochures and related material.
- The strengthening of partnerships with other land trust and conservation organizations throughout Pennsylvania and western New York.
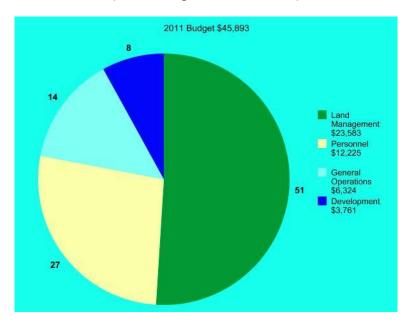- The Foundation's assets, consisting of land and timber, now total more than $1.5 million.

These achievements and many smaller ones are setting the base for the Foundation to ensure its operational self-sufficiency, a key component of its unique model of acquiring and maintaining working forests that support conservation and rural communities.

Our Vision: *Is an abundance of intact forest ecosystems that provide for the widest range of native biodiversity possible, sustainable forest products, the economic viability of rural communities and recreational opportunities. Our management philosophy is to partner with nature.*

How the Foundation Spent Its Money

A Snapshot of the 2011 Budget

(Percentages are rounded)

2011 Budget $45,893

- Land Management $23,583
- Personnel $12,225
- General Operations $6,324
- Development $3,761

On the Ground

Education   ^   Mimicking Nature v   ^ Minimal Impact Harvesting

The Next Five Years

The Foundation for Sustainable Forests' conservation model is unique in Pennsylvania. As a land trust, the Foundation protects land by owning it outright and managing it to create healthy productive forests and ecosystems. Careful and selective timber harvests and other earnings from the land support the work of the Foundation. The goal of the five-year plan is to protect additional land and acquire funding for land acquisitions and to ensure a long-term financial base for the foundation.

Key components to achieve that goal include:

- Raising Awareness of the Foundation and the importance of preserving intact forested ecosystems and assisting private landowners in achieving the highest forest management standards.
- Developing working partnerships with other land trusts, conservation organizations, community groups and institutions.
- Identifying and working with potential donors of forested land.
- Identifying and working with potential major donors for establishment of a restricted acquisition fund.
- Raising funds to ensure Foundation self-sufficiency.

Within each of those broad categories the Foundation has developed or is in the process of developing specific action plans.

Included for 2012 is a sustainable forestry conference focusing on ecosystem management that goes beyond current forest certification standards and on the importance of the working forest model of conservation. Keynote speaker will be Wendell Berry, noted author and advocate of sustainable working communities. The two-day event will include multiple programs to appeal to and meet the needs of a variety of interest groups, including forest landowners, forest and land managers, the conservation oriented public and other organizations interested in land protection. Wendell Berry, noted author and advocate of sustainable working communities, is the keynote speaker.

Over the next year the Foundation will also develop a detailed fundraising plan to help support its operations while continuing to identify land acquisition opportunities and the necessary financing for such acquisitions.

The Foundation has available brochures that explain its work and goals. They are available upon request.

For more information visit the Foundation's Web site at:
www.FoundationForSustainableForests.org

 Or e-mail:
Info@FoundationForSustainableForests.org.

A Message from the President

The Foundation for Sustainable Forests was founded in 2004 and originally called the Firth Family Foundation. The name was changed to the Foundation for Sustainable Forests in 2009 to better reflect our mission and goals. The purpose for starting the Foundation was a desire to see forested land permanently protected and managed to the benefit of the land and future generations. The starting point was land I had acquired and wanted to ensure it would remain intact and managed to the highest standards in perpetuity.

The 'working forest' model that we have employed on these lands certainly appears to be achieving the dual purposes of creating and maintaining forest oriented jobs while sustaining the ecological integrity of the land. Furthermore, the model allows the Foundation to become financially self-sustaining, a unique model among land trusts.

In 2011 the Board of Directors decided it was time to grow the foundation through additional land acquisitions and management and increase public awareness of the importance of protecting our forested lands. In order to accomplish this goal John Bartlett was hired in mid-2011 as Development Director. John has spent the latter half of the year introducing the Foundation to other local non-profits and individuals interested in land conservation. I have been very encouraged by the results of this effort and am certainly optimistic that we will make further gains in 2012.

Troy Firth
President and Founder