



Pinchot Institute Partners with American Carbon Registry for Forest Health–Human Health Initiative

ARLINGTON, Va., October 24, 2011 – The [Pinchot Institute](#) and Winrock's [American Carbon Registry](#) (ACR) announced today a partnership to pilot the Forest Health-Human Health Initiative, the world's first demonstration of linking forest carbon projects with affordable health care services for forest landowners.

The loss of U.S. forestland is estimated at four acres per minute, and family forests are a major contributor. To find out what drives family woodland owners to sell or develop their forestland or harvest timber unsustainably, Senior Pinchot Fellow Catherine Mater conducted extensive research, including interviews of over 1,000 forestland owners and their offspring across the U.S. The findings revealed that one of the leading factors for sale, development or harvesting of family woodlands is to cover unexpected medical or long-term health care expenses.

With the average age of forestland owners now over 75, an estimated 40 million acres of family forests are at risk of being subdivided or completely converted to non-forest uses. The Forest Health-Human Health (FHHH) initiative was developed by Pinchot Institute to propose a solution to this high rate of loss of family-owned woodland due to development, and the unsustainable management or sale of family forestlands, due to unexpected health-related financial needs.

"Instead of developing, selling or harvesting their forestland, the Forest Health-Human Health Initiative will provide family forest owners the option to implement sustainable forest management practices to generate carbon offsets," Mater said. "The revenue from carbon offset sales will be banked to cover health care expenses. The FHHH initiative is specifically tailored to address this link between forest conservation and health care, which is not addressed by existing federal and state programs that promote forest stewardship private lands."

This creative twist on carbon markets provides forest landowners with greater financial security, helping to keep forest land in the family, even if a catastrophic health event should occur.

Pinchot selected ACR to serve exclusively as the global carbon offset standard and registry for the project. Pinchot Institute President Al Sample stated, *"Pinchot selected ACR as our carbon standard and registry partner for the FHHH initiative not only because ACR has an approved IFM (Improved Forest Management) Family Forests methodology, but also because ACR has an established reputation for environmental rigor and workable forest carbon standards popular with a wide range of buyers."* ACR will also work with Pinchot to develop and/or approve new applicable methodologies for carbon offsets, as well as for the measurement of health-related co-benefits of the initiative.

Pinchot has kicked off the pilot phase with family forest landowners in Columbia County, Ore., who will develop projects to store additional carbon in their forests using ACR's Family Forests IFM methodology. The FHHH pilot project will be among the first to use the new ACR methodology that was developed specifically with family forest owners in mind.

"We're very excited about the prospects of this new program," said Scott Russell, a Columbia County landowner and head of the local chapter of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association. "It is the first time that carbon seems like it could make sense for smaller forest landowners and the fact that credits will be used for health care is very attractive."

There is a huge potential to build on the Oregon pilot and expand the FHHH initiative since family forest owners manage 264 million acres, or 35 percent, of all U.S. forestland. Pinchot will work with project development partners to scale the initiative and demonstrate the links between forest health and human health at the regional and national levels.

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About the American Carbon Registry

The nonprofit **American Carbon Registry** (ACR), an enterprise of Winrock International, is a leading carbon offset program recognized for its strong standards for environmental integrity. Founded in 1996 as the first private voluntary registry in the world, ACR has 15 years of experience in the development of rigorous, science-based carbon offset standards and methodologies as well as in carbon offset issuance, serialization and transparent online transaction and retirement reporting.

About the Pinchot Institute for Conservation

The mission of the Pinchot Institute is to strengthen forest conservation thought, policy and action by developing innovative, practical, and broadly-supported solutions to conservation challenges and opportunities. Pinchot Institute accomplishes this through nonpartisan research, education and technical assistance on key issues influencing the future of conservation and sustainable natural resource management.

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