

Collins Pine Co.:

A certified success



1941 photo of the Collins Almanor Forest, taken before sustainable forestry began,

shows the same healthy forest as can be seen today.

“**C**ERTIFIED forestry works, and harvesting our 2 billionth bd. ft. of lumber in the Collins Almanor Forest, an FSC-certified forest, proves it.” That’s the conclusion reached by Wade Mosby, senior vice president for The Collins Cos.

On Sept. 25, Collins Pine Co., in the northern Sierras of California, harvested a 126-year-old, 130-ft.-tall pon-

derosa pine, their 2 billionth bd. ft. of timber. And it was logged in the same mixed conifer stand near Humbug Valley where logging began in 1941. “This is the finest industrial forest in North America,” said Mosby. “Where else could you have 60 years of sustainable logging and still have as much timber as you started with and in all age classes?”

The original timberlands that became the 94,000-acre Collins Almanor Forest were acquired in 1902, but were not cut until 1941,

when the company began managing the land on an uneven-age, sustained yield basis, a forest management philosophy that continues to the present. According to Wally Reed, the company’s first forest mgr., now retired, “We developed a forest inventory system that tracks the growth of the forest through 576 1-acre plots. This enables us to remove the high risk trees and leave the healthy ones.”

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The results? When logging started in 1941, Collins had approximately 1.5 billion bd. ft. of standing timber. Today, after removing enough timber to build over 200,000 average-sized homes, the Collins Almanor Forest still holds 1.5 billion bd. ft. of timber. And the forest? It remains as it always has been—a biodiverse, multi-layered, canopied, self-sustaining forest supporting great blue heron rook-



BOARD chair (above) Maribeth Collins stands beside a 126-year-old ponderosa pine. At right, her late husband, sustainable forestry pioneer Truman W. Collins, stands beside the first tree cut in the Collins Almanor Forest in 1941.





CARETAKERS of the legacy: (At left, l-r) forest mgr. Jay Francis, senior v.p. Wade Mosby, president/ceo Eric Schooler, v.p.-resources Paul Harlan. (Above) Retired forest mgrs. Barry Ford, Wally Reed, Bill Howe with current forest mgr. Jay Francis.

eries, black bears, rubber boas, bald eagles and naturally healthy meadows, streams, rivers and a lake. As Seth Zuckerman wrote in the *Sierra Club* magazine, "This is a forest that has never known a clear cut...where foresters tell the mill how much timber it may have, and where the forest itself tells the foresters."

A family-owned business since 1855, the third generation, Truman W. Collins, articulated a vision of sustainable forestry in 1940, almost a half century ahead of its time. The goal was to create a truly sustainable forest that would in turn support a permanent community. As Maribeth Collins, currently Collins Cos. board chair and wife of the late Truman W. Collins, says, "It has been a rare privilege to follow Truman's dream and to have such dedicated forest managers and family who believed in sustainable forestry and were willing to work to see that dream come to fruition."

Forest managers have been few, and as Jay Francis, current head forester, remarks, "Lots of people talk about sustainability, but we've proven it by what we have on the ground today. And it's not just the fact that we have as much fiber, but it's also because we truly have forests that support the timber resources, the wildlife, clean water, productive soils, and the aesthetic values that people want."

That shared vision led Collins to become the first privately held forest products company in the U.S. to be comprehensively evaluated and independently certified by Scientific Certification Systems in accordance with the strict rules of the Forest Stewardship Council. Aiming to ensure consumers that the wood they

use comes from forests managed in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, the FSC is the only forest-certifying organization in the world endorsed by the World Wildlife Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, Wilderness Society, World Resources Institute and Rainforest Alliance. All of Collins' forests, including the Collins Pennsylvania and Collins Lakeview forests, are FSC-certified.

But Collins' commitment to the environment does not stop there. The company is now instituting the principles of The Natural Step into their manufacturing facilities as well as in their operation centers in Oregon, California and Pennsylvania. The Natural Step is an international environmental organization dedicated to shifting people and businesses away from linear, resource-wasting, toxic-spreading methods of materials handling and manufacturing toward cyclical resource-preserving methods.

Collins was the first North American forest products company to grow, manufacture and market FSC-certified lumber, particleboard and specialty plywoods, while implementing sustainable practices throughout their operations. That commitment has earned Collins a number of honors, including the Presidential Award for Sustainable Development from President Clinton and the Green Cross Millennium Award from Green Cross International president Mikhail Gorbachev. The Collins Almanor Forest itself has been lauded extensively in the national press, from articles in *The Washington Post* and *Christian Science Monitor* to features with Charles Kuralt on television.

Collins Pine Co., Chester, Ca.,

manages the Collins Almanor Forest and facilities. The forest is comprised of mixed ages and species including ponderosa pine, white fir, sugar pine, incense cedar and Douglas fir. Trees from the forest produce 30 million bd. ft. annually creating products that include FSC-certified CollinsWood and non-certified wood in appearance

grades, dimension, industrial, export and specialty lumber products, 1x4 through 1x12 and 2x4 through 2x12.

"We have a responsibility to use the high quality fiber from the forest to produce high quality products for our customers. We accept that challenge and take pride in the products that flow from the forest though our mill at Chester," said plant mgr. Dennis Gomez.

The facilities feature electric power cogeneration using manufacturing byproducts and forest biomass as fuel. With these renewable resources, Collins is able to provide all of the electricity used in their operations and sell additional power generation to PG&E, which distributes up to six megawatts per hour during peak periods to homes and businesses in Northern California. Also on site is a sawmill producing 77 million bd. ft. annually, dry kilns and a reman plant.

Collins Pine has 235 employees with an annual payroll of \$8 million plus payroll taxes and benefits. Additionally, the mill purchases about \$6 million annually from suppliers in the area. "Our goal is to support not only a community from generation to generation, but also to support and enhance a healthy forest ecosystem that is open to recreation, yet protects wildlife habitat with the same dedication as we protect our trees," summarizes forest mgr. Jay Francis.



CAKE commemorates Collins' harvesting of the 2 billionth bd. ft. from the FSC-certified Collins Almanor Forest in Chester, Ca.