

NEWS

WALK IN THE WOODS ENGAGES PUBLIC ON ISSUES OF FOREST STEWARDSHIP

U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, Greenville, SC

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE (May 23, 2017)

Just as any walk in the woods offers surprises around the bend in the path or over the next hill, learning how to become more flexible and interactive in how we talk about forests is a journey full of wonder. More than two years of discussions and research has yielded a first-of-its-kind pathway for the people who steward or enjoy North America's forests to actively engage with their families, neighbors, friends, and others in talking about the importance of the continent's forests and their many values.

["Walk in the Woods"](#) uses the power of social media for those who work in, make a living from, care about, or benefit from forests – *that's all of us* – to share their own experiences and views about the bounty of forests and their myriad uses," said Carlton Owen, President & CEO of the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities (Endowment).

The Endowment has partnered with over 110 organizations, including state and federal natural resources agencies, forest products producers, conservation organizations, and universities, to create the North American Forest Partnership (NAFP). The Partnership seeks to have all within the greater forest sector engaged by highlighting their experiences and knowledge about forests. In addition to the Walk in the Woods website, NAFP seeks to have participants share via various social media platforms.

The initiative was born from research about attitudes and perceptions of North America's forest resources. The research uncovered differences in understanding among those in the forest sector and the general public around key topics such as deforestation, forest management, and the sustainability of forest resources.

"We learned that while people care deeply about forests, they often come to a conversation about what happens in them with only part of the story. This notion of a 'Walk in the Woods' is a way to explore the 'why' behind what happens in the forest and build a broader understanding for the many important roles that forests play in our everyday lives," said Colin Moseley, NAFP Board Chairman and Chairman of Green Diamond Resource Company. "That's why it's critically important that we come together to communicate our work and the social, environmental, and economic values that forests provide."

There are many challenges in attempting something like Walk in the Woods. Among them, those of the Boomer and earlier generations are not as comfortable with, nor as frequent users of, social media as are younger generations. Too, many organizations, whether private forest products companies or natural resources agencies, have firm policies about who may speak about topics before answers vetted internally can be shared publicly. It will indeed be an interesting "walk in the woods."

To learn more join us for a Walk in the Woods at <https://www.walkinthewoodswith.us/> and follow Walk in the Woods on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

#

For more information contact:

Carlton N. Owen, President & CEO, 864-233-7646, carlton@usendowment.org

The **U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities** (the Endowment) is a not-for-profit public charity working collaboratively with partners in the public and private sectors to advance systemic, transformative, and sustainable change for the health and vitality of the nation's working forests and forest-reliant communities – www.usendowment.org