

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Stories of the Forest: A Campaign to Put Forest History to Work

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Stories will continue to spring from the forest, offering us profound lessons of history and experience. If we pay close attention and value what we learn, we will enjoy a deeper connection to the forest today and a more advantageous position to encounter it tomorrow.

These are words from the case statement of the Forest History Society's fundraising campaign *Stories of the Forest: Putting Forest History to Work*. The goal of the campaign is to develop new endowment, annual funds, and programs that focus on both preserving these stories and engaging the wisdom they share in order to improve human welfare. In the stories of the forest thrives a heritage we must respect and protect, not only for the direct benefit of our many members, users, and affiliations, but also for the collective good of a world that needs responsible resource management.

With leadership from the Board of Directors and a stellar Campaign Leadership Team, the Society already has made substantial progress on this campaign—raising over \$5 million toward a \$9.5 million goal. You will hear more about this campaign during its public phase over the next five years, and we hope that you will join us. The generosity of our supporters has empowered the Society since its inception. We have learned that a robust funding base provided by private philanthropy enables the Society to attract additional funds for critically important programs. To ensure our leadership role in employing history to educate, alert and inspire, we seek to raise endowment funds for the following programs.

FOSTERING WORLDWIDE ACCESS

This priority will provide for digitization and outreach of the Society's Library and Archives, making its rich collections accessible to people around the world. It will support a photo archivist to preserve images of the past before they disappear.

ENHANCING SCHOLARSHIP

The Society will enhance its publications program to help shape understanding of forest history and environmental change for a wider and more varied audience. This priority will support a visiting scholar position, a distinguished lectureship, a seed money fund for publications, and a fellowship in forest and conservation history.



ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

In order to preserve the voices and stories of public, private, and corporate pioneers before they are lost forever, this priority will establish a Center for Oral History that will be the nexus for such efforts throughout North America. It will support an Oral Historian position that will, for the first time, pursue those interviews of the highest priority and expand the Society's ability to help other programs be established.

INFORMING PUBLIC OPINION

This priority will allow the Society to more comprehensively work with journalists, editors, and the greater media to bring a

historical context to articles, editorials, and documentaries. A Media Liaison position will provide journalists, policy-makers and involved citizens unbiased historical information about forest and conservation history in the most effective ways possible.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

This effort will help the Society bring forest and conservation history into the classroom through programs like our "If Trees Could Talk" curriculum that is gaining widespread acclaim. Based on primary materials in the FHS Library and Archives, our new educational efforts help children to understand how forests have affected their family's lives and to better evaluate where their information comes from.

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Our human story is forever one of progress and difficult decisions, and nowhere does this story unfold more dramatically than in the heart of the forest. We come to the forest for magnificence and bounty, to make more of ourselves than we can ever be without it. Whether we are asking for resources or refuge, the forest is where we struggle endlessly for balance. The Forest History Society helps people seek that balance as it objectively preserves the vital stories from the forests' past and supports unbiased exploration of the new stories that are unfolding today. When you are approached to help support the *Stories of the Forest* campaign, we hope you will join us toward these ends, for by understanding our past, we shape our future.