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Governor Schwarzenegger to Reduce Carbon Footprint Using Emissions Offsets from Forest Conservation Project

Climate Benefits of Working Forests are Key to Combating Global Warming

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger plans to offset the carbon dioxide emissions generated by his jet travel by supporting the Pacific Forest Trust's *Van Eck Forest Project* – a forest conservation and stewardship project that will permanently reduce approximately 500,000 tons of CO₂ emissions over a 100-year period. This is the first emissions reductions project registered with and following the rigorous standards of the California Climate Action Registry.

"California is a leader in the fight against global warming. I look forward to working with organizations like the Pacific Forest Trust because it is important that we continue to focus on innovative ways to reduce our society's carbon footprint," says Governor Schwarzenegger.

Owned by the Fred M. Van Eck Forest Foundation, the 2,200-acre Van Eck Forest in Humboldt County is a working redwood forest conserved and managed by the Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) to increase carbon stores, restore biodiversity and provide habitat for endangered species. In addition to helping cool the climate, the *Van Eck Forest Project* helps protect wildlife habitat, safeguard clean water and sustain rural communities and jobs for the benefit of all Californians.

Forests like Van Eck provide climate benefits by absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere and storing it as carbon in trees for hundreds of years. Because older forests store more carbon than do younger forests, managing the Van Eck Forest to store additional carbon will result in substantially greater stores of carbon than could be achieved by planting trees or from conventional management practices.

"To successfully address climate change, we must complement the major focus on fossil fuels with actions for forests," says PFT President Laurie Wayburn. "We, therefore, applaud the Governor's leadership in backing the conservation and carbon management of working forests."

The Governor will pay the Van Eck Forest Foundation from his own personal funds to acquire the forest carbon emission reductions. The Pacific Forest Trust will represent the landowner.

Schwarzenegger's commitment to offset the impact his air travel has on global warming expands upon similar efforts by other high-ranking California officials and demonstrates growing, bi-partisan support for forests and their climate benefits.

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Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez (D), who shares the Governor's desire to see California lead the climate change movement, has worked with PFT to use Van Eck forest carbon emission reductions to offset travel to climate-related events including his recent trip to Washington D.C. to testify before the Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee.

"Forests are one of the amazing environmental treasures California holds in trust for the future and carbon offsets are an important new tool in our fight against climate change," says Speaker Núñez. "Lowering our carbon footprint and lessening global warming at the same time we're boosting our forests and their benefits is an easy win-win for California and the world."

Secretary Linda Adams of the California Environmental Protection Agency and her deputy secretary, Eileen Tutt, also used emission reductions from the *Van Eck Forest Project* to offset the CO₂ emissions generated by their trip to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Kenya.

"This is a new concept that we are pioneering in California with the Pacific Forest Trust," says Secretary Adams. "This is something the Governor personally feels is the right thing to do."

Van Eck forest carbon emission reductions are highly credible, high-quality offsets because:

- The *Van Eck Forest Project* follows the rigorous, standardized accounting requirements called for in the California Climate Action Registry Forest Protocols, including third-party verification and yearly monitoring
- Their permanence is assured by a conservation easement that guides long-term forestry and prevents the forestlands from being developed or converted
- The sustainable forestry practiced on Van Eck will result in more carbon being sequestered than could be attained through conventional, "business as usual" management practices

Studies by Oregon State University scientists Mark Harmon and Olga Krankina show that forests managed to achieve increased carbon storage could lead to an additional 25 billion metric tons of carbon stored globally over the next 50 years.

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The Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) is the leading non-profit organization dedicated to protecting America's vital working forests for all their public benefits – wood, water, wildlife and a well-balanced climate. Through the *Working Forests, Winning Climate* initiative, PFT is working with and advising state governments and federal leaders about the inclusion of forest conservation and sustainable management in climate policies, markets and best-practices. To learn more about the Pacific Forest Trust, please visit <http://www.PacificForest.org>.

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