

## **Van Eck Forest Project CO2 Emissions Reductions**

### **– Questions and Answers –**

#### **What is the Van Eck Forest Project?**

The *Van Eck Forest Project* is the first emissions reduction (ER) project to be produced under California's rigorous accounting standards, known as the "Forest Protocols." Under this project, approximately 500,000 more tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) will be removed from the atmosphere than otherwise would occur over the next 100 years. These emissions reductions are being achieved through the permanent conservation and sustainable forest management of a 2,200-acre working redwood forest in Humboldt County, CA that is owned by the Fred M. van Eck Forest Foundation for Purdue University.

#### **Who sets the standards for a carbon project like this?**

The forest carbon measurements are made according to the Forest Protocols that were developed by the California Climate Action Registry (CCAR) and that have been adopted by the California Air Resources Board as an authorized means to achieve the state's aggressive greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals. Actual emissions reductions are calculated each year and reported to the CCAR by the Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) on behalf of the landowner. Scientists, foresters, climate experts and other stakeholders developed these rules for CCAR over the course of several years in an open process directed by legislation passed in 2002. These Forest Protocols are recognized as state of the art for addressing international tests for emissions reductions in a credible, transparent and scientific fashion.

#### **Does the Van Eck Forest Project meet the key international standards for ERs?**

Yes. The Forest Protocols ensure registered ERs meet the key international elements required to generate a valid credit. They measure against a clear and consistent baseline of "business-as-usual" activity. They calculate specific actions that generate emissions reductions that are additional to what the forest would normally provide. They require reporting of leakage or shifting of emissions resulting from project activity. They provide assurances that the emissions reductions are permanent. Further, they require independent certification of the reported emissions reductions.

#### **Is the project accounting independently verified?**

Yes. The accuracy of PFT's measurements for actual carbon stored so far and for projections over the 100-year project lifetime have been reviewed and verified by state-licensed, independent third-parties. The *Van Eck Forest Project* was verified by a SGS, a global leader in verification, and Scientific Certification Systems, the leading U.S. independent forestry certifier. The forest is monitored every year for compliance and annual reports to CCAR are similarly independently verified. Project data is publicly available through CCAR.

#### **How does the Van Eck Forest Project remove more CO<sub>2</sub> out of the atmosphere than other forests?**

The Van Eck Forest is managed under standards more strict than California's tough forestry regulations. Under the Project's activities, trees are being grown older and therefore larger, allowing more CO<sub>2</sub> to be absorbed more quickly than by young forests or tree planting – and much more than would occur if the forest were managed at the "business-as-usual" baseline. The amount of timber harvested from the property will always be less than the new volume of carbon accumulated.



**Is the Van Eck Forest ever logged? Will the climate management displace demand for wood products and just increase emissions elsewhere?**

This is an actively managed forest, where a variety of sustainable forestry practices enhance carbon storage, maintain forest health, improve habitats and produce wood products and jobs. Over the lifetime of the project, about the same volume of wood will be harvested from this forest under climate management as under conventional management, thereby assuring that displaced demand for wood products will not increase emissions elsewhere.

**How do we know this CO2 won't be released again?**

The Van Eck Forest is subject to a permanent conservation easement that prevents the forest from ever being developed and also guides forest management to assure permanent gains in CO2 stores or "sequestration." Through thinning, selective harvesting, restoration and other sustainable forest management activities, PFT expects to enhance forest resilience to fire, pests and other natural disturbances, helping to prevent future losses. In addition, ERs marketed from this property are less than those being produced, securing a conservative backup reserve against risk of loss.

**Are there other environmental benefits of the Van Eck Forest Project?**

In addition to being managed to store more CO2, the Van Eck Forest is also managed to restore biodiversity, improve old growth characteristics, and provide habitat for threatened and endangered species including the Northern Spotted Owl and Coho Salmon.

**What are the costs of a climate project like this? Where is any revenue gained through the sale of certified emissions reductions going?**

Proceeds from *Van Eck Forest Project* ER sales go toward managing the forest for its climate benefits and toward measuring, monitoring and verifying changes in the the forest's carbon stocks. Any net proceeds remaining after paying these costs support the Van Eck Foundation's beneficiary, Purdue University.

**What is the role of the Pacific Forest Trust?**

The Pacific Forest Trust manages the forest on behalf of the Van Eck Foundation and also holds the conservation easement on the property. PFT is the only organization in the U.S. solely dedicated to conserving the public benefits of private forests and is the nation's leading advocate for the climate benefits of forests. PFT is promoting the *Van Eck Forest Project* to illustrate the significant contributions working forests can make toward healing our climate.

**Why include forests in the fight against global warming?**

Forests are both part of the problem and part of the solution. Forest loss is second only to fossil fuels as the largest contributor to climate change. Globally, forest loss and poor management account for an estimated 25% of global CO2 emissions today and close to 50% historically. Nevertheless, today's forests remain one of the largest atmospheric CO2 sinks on Earth and their climate benefits are readily expandable.

**Isn't forest loss a problem mostly in the tropics?**

In the U.S., forest loss to conversion is happening at a rate not seen for 100 years. Approximately 1.5 million acres – 4,000 acres a day! and twice that of farmland loss – are lost to development annually.

**Can forest carbon projects really make a difference for global warming?**

Conserving existing forests and managing them to increase carbon sequestration creates significant CO2 improvements, now, when they are most urgently needed. By preventing forest loss through permanent conservation agreements and managing forests to enhance forest carbon stores, considerable CO2 reductions can be achieved.

