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## Staples and Dogwood Alliance Form Unlikely Forestry Offset Partnership

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OAKLAND, CA — Former foes Staples Inc. and the nonprofit Dogwood Alliance are joining forces for a pilot project meant to give landowners in the southern U.S. the chance to earn money by conserving their forests and changing their management practices.

The project, called the Carbon Canopy, aims to increase the carbon stock of the world's most prolific paper-producing region. At the same time, it will introduce privately held lands in the South to the standards developed by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and also offer a potential revenue stream to landowners in the form of forestry carbon offsets.

The announcement comes at a time of growing debate over the role of forestry in the fight against climate change. An increasing number of experts contend that tackling deforestation is a critical element of any comprehensive strategy to address climate change. Deforestation produces nearly a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions.

A report published this week by the bipartisan Commission on Climate and Tropical Forests advised the U.S. to work toward halving emissions from tropical forestation by 2020 and zero net deforestation emissions by 2030, which would strengthen national security. It called for mobilizing private sector investment of

\$9 billion annually by 2020 to reduce tropical emissions, often cited as a cost-effective means of addressing climate change.

For the Carbon Canopy project, Staples and Interface will pay landowners for the carbon they're going to store and sequester as a result from the changes to their management practices, such as eliminating large-scale clear-cutting. Pacific Forest Trust will manage the project's development.

Other partners in the Carbon Canopy include Columbia Forest Products, Rainforest Alliance, Green Press Initiative, Domtar, The Home Depot, Environmental Defense, The Forestland Group and The Keystone Center.

The project will also follow the carbon accounting standards of the Voluntary Carbon Standard and the Climate Action Reserve in order to create a credible, replicable model, Dogwood Alliance Executive Director Danna Smith said during a conference call with reporters Thursday.

Many landowners are reportedly interested in participating; several thousand acres will likely be covered under the pilot project with a number of different owners in western North California, northeast Tennessee and southwest Virginia.