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### **Vermont to Offset Carbon Emissions Associated with Transport of Capitol Tree to DC**

RUTLAND, Vt. (Oct. 3, 2007) - The Capitol Christmas Tree Committee, bringing an old-fashioned holiday to the nation, is offsetting the carbon emissions associated with transporting the Capitol Christmas Tree to Washington, D.C.

The Committee will be purchasing offsets through the National Forest Foundation's new Carbon Capital Fund to offset the 3,000 gallons of fuel needed to transport the 55-foot balsam fir and the more than 80 companion trees that will accompany it to Washington D.C. in November.

"The Committee feels that education of conservation of our natural resources is the cornerstone of providing this tree and we are doing what we can to reduce our impact on the environment and our carbon footprint," said Meg Mitchell, committee member and Green Mountain National Forest Supervisor.

The new National Forest Foundation offset program, the Carbon Capital Fund, allows consumers to offset their carbon emissions by directly investing in carbon sequestration projects on National Forests. By planting trees in areas that have been impacted by natural disaster, the Carbon Capital Fund is able to sequester large amounts of carbon, while simultaneously improving water quality, increasing wildlife habitat, and improving the ecological condition of our National Forests and Grasslands.

"We're pleased to play a role in offsetting the carbon associated with delivery of the Christmas trees to the Capitol," said Bill Possiel, President of the National Forest Foundation. "The Carbon Capital Fund provides a unique opportunity to complete reforestation and restoration projects on National Forest lands, while offering a channel for individuals and businesses to offset their carbon emissions."

Forests are carbon "sinks," drawing large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> out of the atmosphere and storing it for long periods. The carbon accumulation potential in forests is large enough to offer the possibility of sequestering significant amounts of additional carbon.

The U.S. Forest Service estimates that the nation's forests sequester carbon at a rate that is equivalent to 10 percent to 15 percent of U.S. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. According to Forest Service scientists, we can raise that figure significantly by planting more trees.

The Capitol Tree Committee is comprised of representatives from the Bennington Chamber of Commerce, Central Vermont Public Service, the Vermont Congressional Delegation, Green Mountain "Bull Dawg" Chapter of the Antique Truck Club of America, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Vermont Dept. of Education, Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation, Vermont Dept. of Tourism & Marketing and the Green Mountain National Forest. The Committee is incorporating other green practices in their harvest and transportation of the Capitol Christmas Tree, including planting of four new trees to replace the Capitol tree harvested from the Green Mountain National Forest. The tree will also be wrapped in recycled burlap and the more than 80 companion trees that are provided by local tree growers will be replaced by young trees that will grow into future Christmas trees.

For more information on the Capitol Christmas Tree and future events please visit <http://www.capitolchristmastree2007.org/>. For more information on the National Forest Foundation's Carbon Capital Fund and how you can offset your own carbon emissions please visit <http://www.carboncapitalfund.org/>.