

# San Francisco International Airport

San Francisco, California USA



When Joint Venture Architects started designing the main public area of San Francisco International Airport's new 1.7 million-square-foot International Terminal, they decided that the rich tones of cherry wood paneling could add warmth and color to the steel-and-glass structure. But the project called for some 20,000 square feet of architectural paneling, and raised the question, "Could such a large volume of wood be procured in a forest-friendly way?"

The Joint Venture design team – a collaboration of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Del Campo & Maru and Michael Willis & Associates – was aware of the benefits of Forest Stewardship Council certified wood, but they were skeptical about whether they could procure the required volume of architectural-grade

wood from certified forests. Through discussions with the Certified Forest Products Council, the North American arm of the Global Forest and Trade Network, they learned that the volume requirement for the high-profile installation was a welcomed challenge. Joint Venture specified paneling made from FSC-certified veneers, and the challenge was on.

The panel installation, completed in November 1999, represented the largest installation in the United States to date of FSC-certified veneers.

"There's about 20,000 square feet of paneling installed in the airport. All of it had to come from FSC-certified forests, and all of it had to meet very high requirements for consistency and quality," said Markus Burggraf, project

manager for Architectural Forest Enterprises (AFE), which manufactured and finished the panels for the installation in its Brisbane, California facility.

The wall of FSC-certified cherry veneer consists of 956 panels (most measuring 10 feet by 30 inches) that together create a dramatic horizon 20 feet above the terminal floor.

The installation is 650 feet long and more than 30 feet high. Each individual panel is installed in an aluminum framework that integrates the wood into the overall design of the terminal.

"The real challenge for this project was finding a very large amount of consistent, high quality wood," says Burggraf. "We were really looking for about 1 percent of our supplier's cherry

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production - each log had to be 10 feet long, clear, straight, and certified."

The FSC-certified cherry logs used for the project were harvested from the Collins Pennsylvania Forest for Kane Hardwood. The Freeman Corporation of Winchester, Kentucky sliced the veneer and Architectural Forest finished the panels. All of these companies have been certified according to the rules of the Forest Stewardship Council system.

"It's extremely important that the airport installation was specified with certified veneers from the beginning, almost five years ago, and that when the ribbon's cut on the new terminal, the installation will have been completed as it was originally specified, with 100 percent certified veneers," says Ward Harris, certified veneer sales manager for The Freeman Corporation. "Kane, Architectural Forest, and The Freeman Corporation - we all are responsible for making that happen and sustaining our focus on delivering a great finished product, with sustainable certified veneer."

Although it took time to accumulate the volume of certified cherry needed to meet the project's high standards, using FSC certified cherry wood did not increase the cost of the installation for the airport.

"Supplies are quite good for certified cherry in the U.S., but this project really put the market to the test," says Burggraf. "The success of this large-scale certified veneer installation demonstrates the scale of what can be done with certified materials today."

"We're very pleased with the quality of the certified materials and the high level craftsmanship

that Architectural Forest and Freeman brought to this project," says Keith Boswell, associate partner with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and project director for Joint Venture Architects.

### **Project Summary** **"The Great Wall"**

San Francisco International Airport  
International Terminal Ticket Lobby

### **Certified Wood Suppliers**

**Architectural Forest Enterprises**  
Certification Reg. No: SCS-COC-00005  
(Wall Panel Fabrication)

### **The Freeman Corporation**

Certification Reg. No: SCS-COS-00019  
(FSC-Certified Veneer)