

CREE INC
Form S-3ASR
September 08, 2009

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on September 8, 2009

Registration No. 333-

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

CREE, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

North Carolina

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)

56-1572719

(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

4600 Silicon Drive

Durham, North Carolina 27703

Edgar Filing: CREE INC - Form S-3ASR

(919) 313-5300

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

John T. Kurtzweil

Executive Vice President Finance, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

Cree, Inc.

4600 Silicon Drive

Durham, North Carolina 27703

(919) 313-5300

(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

Copies to:

Gerald F. Roach, Esq.

Adam H. Broome, Esq.

Amy Batten, Esq.

Vice President Legal, General Counsel and Secretary

Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell &

Cree, Inc.

Jernigan, L.L.P.

4600 Silicon Drive

P.O. Box 2611

Durham, North Carolina 27703

Raleigh, North Carolina 27602-2611

(919) 313-5300

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after the effective date of the Registration Statement.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box.

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Edgar Filing: CREE INC - Form S-3ASR

Large accelerated filer

Accelerated filer

Non-accelerated filer (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)

Smaller reporting company

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of each class of securities to be registered	Amount to be registered	Proposed maximum offering price per unit	Proposed maximum aggregate offering price	Amount of registration fee
(1)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(3)
Common Stock, \$0.00125 Par Value (1)				

(1) Includes preferred share purchase rights. Prior to the occurrence of certain events, the preferred share purchase rights will not be exercised or evidenced separately from the common stock.

(2) Omitted pursuant to Form S-3 General Instruction II.E. An unspecified aggregate principal amount is being registered as may from time to time be offered and sold at indeterminate prices.

(3) Deferred in reliance upon Rules 456(b) and 457(r) under the Securities Act.

Prospectus

Cree, Inc.

Common Stock

From time to time, we may offer and sell shares of common stock in amounts, at prices and on terms described in one or more supplements to this prospectus.

This prospectus describes some of the general terms that may apply to an offering of our common stock. The specific terms and any other information relating to a specific offering will be set forth in a post-effective amendment to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part or in a supplement to this prospectus, or may be set forth in one or more documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus. We may also authorize one or more free writing prospectuses to be provided to you in connection with a specific offering. You should read carefully this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectuses that we have authorized for use in connection with a specific offering, as well as any documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, before you invest.

We may offer and sell shares of common stock to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and agents, or directly to purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis. If any agents or underwriters are involved in the sale of any of the common stock offered by this prospectus, their names, and any applicable purchase price, fee, commission or discount arrangement between or among them, will be set forth, or will be calculable from the information set forth, in the applicable prospectus supplement. The supplements to this prospectus will provide the specific terms of the plan of distribution. The net proceeds we expect to receive from sales by us will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market and is quoted under the symbol CREE. On September 2, 2009, the last reported sale price of our common stock was \$36.08 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves certain risks. You should review carefully the risks and uncertainties described under the heading Risk Factors on page 4 and those contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and in any related free writing prospectuses that we have authorized for use in connection with a specific offering and in our Securities and Exchange Commission filings that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is September 8, 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS	1
ABOUT CREE, INC.	2
SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS	3
RISK FACTORS	4
USE OF PROCEEDS	5
DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK	6
PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION	9
WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION	10
INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE	11
LEGAL MATTERS	12
EXPERTS	12

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of an automatic shelf registration statement that we filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, as a well-known seasoned issuer as defined in Rule 405 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, using a shelf registration process. By using a shelf registration statement, we may sell common stock from time to time and in one or more offerings as described herein. Each time that we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement to this prospectus that contains specific information about the securities being offered and the specific terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, you should rely on the prospectus supplement. Before purchasing any securities, you should carefully read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, together with the additional information described under the heading Where You Can Find More Information.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized any dealer, salesman or other person to give any information or to make any representation other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and the accompanying supplement to this prospectus. We will not make an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus and the prospectus supplement to this prospectus is accurate as of the date on its respective cover, and that any information incorporated by reference is accurate only as of the date of the document incorporated by reference, unless we indicate otherwise. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

When we refer to Cree, we, our and us in this prospectus, we mean Cree, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries, unless otherwise specified. Our principal executive offices are located at 4600 Silicon Drive, Durham, North Carolina 27703 and our telephone number is (919) 313-5300.

ABOUT CREE, INC.

Cree is a manufacturer of semiconductor materials and devices primarily based on silicon carbide, or SiC, gallium nitride, or GaN, and related compounds. We currently focus our expertise in SiC and GaN on light emitting diode, or LED, products, which consist of LED chips, LED components and LED lighting products. We also develop power and radio frequency, or RF, products, including power switching and RF devices.

We derive the majority of our revenue from sales of our LED products. We also generate revenue from sales of SiC and GaN materials, power and RF products, and we earn revenue under government contracts that support some of our research and development programs to the extent the contract funding exceeds our direct cost of performing those activities. We generate revenues from the following product lines:

LED products. We derive the largest portion of our revenue from the sale of our LED products. Our LED products consist of our LED chips, LED components, including our XLamp® LED components and high-brightness LED components, and LED lighting products.

Materials products. These products include our SiC and GaN wafers, which are used in manufacturing LEDs, RF and microwave devices, power devices and for research and development.

Power and RF products. These products include power switching devices made from SiC, which provide faster switching speeds than comparable silicon-based power devices, and also include RF microwave devices made from SiC or GaN, which allow for higher power densities as compared to silicon or gallium arsenide.

Contracts with government agencies. Government agencies provide us with funding to support the development of primarily SiC and GaN based new technology.

The majority of our products are produced at our production facilities located in North Carolina and China. In some circumstances, we also use contract manufacturers for certain aspects of product fabrication.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Information set forth in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement and the information they incorporate by reference may contain various forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act. All information relative to future markets for our products and trends in and anticipated levels of revenue, gross margins and expenses, as well as other statements containing words such as believe, project, may, will, anticipate, target, plan, estimate, expect and intend and other similar expressions constitute forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are subject to business, economic and other risks and uncertainties, both known and unknown, and actual results may differ materially from those contained in the forward-looking statements. Examples of risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from historical performance and any forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, the risks described in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, as well as any amendments thereto reflected in subsequent filings with the SEC. Given these risks, uncertainties and other factors, you should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. Also, these forward-looking statements represent our estimates and assumptions only as of the date such forward-looking statements are made. You should read carefully this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectuses that we have authorized for use in connection with a specific offering, together with the information incorporated herein or therein by reference as described under the heading Where You Can Find More Information, completely and with the understanding that our actual future results may be materially different from what we expect. We hereby qualify all of our forward-looking statements by these cautionary statements. Except as required by law, we assume no obligation to update these forward-looking statements publicly or to update the reasons actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in these forward-looking statements, even if new information becomes available in the future.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our common stock involves certain risks. Potential investors are urged to read and consider the risk factors and other disclosures relating to an investment in our securities described in any applicable prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus and in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended June 28, 2009, as updated by our subsequent filings under the Exchange Act, and other reports and documents we file with the SEC after the date of this prospectus and that are incorporated by reference herein. You should consider carefully those risks as well as other information contained in this prospectus, any applicable prospectus supplement, the documents incorporated by reference herein or therein, and in any free writing prospectuses that we have authorized for use in connection with a specific offering, before deciding whether to purchase any of our common stock. Each of the risk factors could adversely affect our business, operating results and financial condition, as well as adversely affect the value of an investment in our common stock, and you may lose all or part of your investment.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Except as described in the applicable prospectus supplement, we anticipate using the net proceeds from the sale of our common stock for general corporate purposes, including capital expenditures, working capital, acquisitions and other business opportunities. Although we currently have no commitments or agreements to acquire or invest in complementary businesses, technologies or other intellectual property, our management will have broad discretion as to the allocation of the net proceeds received in any offering and may use these proceeds for that purpose in the future.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following description of our capital stock is based upon our Articles of Incorporation, as restated, which we will refer to hereafter as our Articles of Incorporation, our Bylaws, as amended and restated effective August 19, 2009, which we will refer to hereafter as our Bylaws, and applicable provisions of law. We have summarized certain portions of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws below. The summary is not complete. The Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part. You should read the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws for the provisions that are important to you.

Authorized capital stock

Our Articles of Incorporation authorize us to issue 200,000,000 shares of common stock, par value of \$0.00125 per share, and 3,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value of \$0.01 per share. As of September 3, 2009, there were 90,644,199 shares of our common stock outstanding held of record by 649 shareholders and no shares of preferred stock outstanding.

Common stock

Subject to the rights specifically granted to holders of any outstanding shares of our preferred stock, our common shareholders are entitled to vote together as a class on all matters submitted to a vote of our shareholders and are entitled to any dividends that may be declared by our board of directors. Our common shareholders do not have cumulative voting rights. Upon our dissolution, liquidation or winding up, holders of our common stock are entitled to share ratably in our net assets after payment or provision for all liabilities and preferential liquidation rights of our preferred stock then outstanding. Our common shareholders have no preemptive rights to purchase shares of our common stock. The issued and outstanding shares of our common stock are not subject to any redemption provisions and are not convertible into any other shares of our capital stock. The rights, preferences and privileges of holders of our common stock are subject to those of the holders of our Series A preferred stock, described below, and any other shares of our preferred stock we may issue in the future.

Rights plan

In May 2002, we adopted a rights plan designed to ensure that any potential acquirer of Cree would negotiate with our board of directors and that all of our shareholders would be treated equitably in the event of a takeover attempt. At that time, we paid a dividend of one right for each outstanding share of our common stock. Similar rights are attached to each share of our common stock issued after June 10, 2002. Under the rights plan, the rights will not be exercisable until a person or group acquires beneficial ownership of 15% or more of our outstanding common stock, or begins a tender or exchange offer for 15% or more of our common stock. Additionally, until the occurrence of such event, the rights are not severable from our common stock and therefore, the rights will transfer upon the transfer of shares of our common stock. Upon the occurrence of such events, each right entitles the holder to purchase one one-thousandth of a share of our preferred stock at a price of \$110. The rights plan also provides that upon the occurrence of certain specified events, the holders of the rights will be entitled to acquire common stock (or, in certain circumstances, cash, property or other securities) of Cree or common stock of the acquiring entity, such interests having a market value of two times the rights exercise price of \$110. The rights expire June 10, 2012, and are redeemable in whole, but not in part, at our option prior to the time they become exercisable, for a price of \$0.001 per right. The rights have certain anti-takeover effects. The rights may cause substantial dilution to a person or group that attempts to acquire Cree on terms not approved by our board of directors. The rights should not interfere with any merger or other business combination approved by our board of directors.

Transfer agent and registrar

American Stock Transfer & Trust Company is the transfer agent and registrar for our common stock.

Stock exchange listing

Our common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market and is quoted under the symbol CREE.

Certain provisions of Cree's articles of incorporation and bylaws; director indemnification

Advance Notice of Proposals and Nominations. Our Bylaws provide that shareholders must provide timely written notice to bring business before an annual meeting of shareholders or to nominate candidates for election as directors at an annual meeting of shareholders. Notice for an annual meeting is timely if it is received at our principal office not less than 90 days and no more than 120 days prior to the first anniversary of the preceding year's annual meeting. However, if the date of the annual meeting is advanced by more than 30 days or delayed more than 60 days from this anniversary date, such notice by the shareholder must be delivered not earlier than the 120th day prior to the annual meeting and not later than the close of business on the later of the 90th day prior to such annual meeting or the tenth day following the day on which public announcement of the date of such annual meeting was first made. Our Bylaws also specify the form and content of a shareholder's notice. These provisions may prevent shareholders from bringing matters before an annual meeting of shareholders or from nominating candidates for election as directors at an annual meeting of shareholders.

Limits on Special Meetings. A special meeting of the shareholders may only be called by our board of directors or the Chairman of our board of directors. Our Bylaws do not grant shareholders the authority to request a special meeting.

Indemnification of Directors, Officers and Employees. Our Bylaws provide that we shall indemnify, to the fullest extent permitted by law, any person who is made, or is threatened to be made, a party to any threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, investigative or arbitrative action, suit or proceeding and any appeal therein (and any inquiry or investigation that could lead to such action, suit or proceeding), whether or not brought by or on behalf of Cree, seeking to hold him liable by reason of the fact that he is or was acting in his capacity as a director or officer of Cree, or at the request of Cree is or was serving as a director or officer for any other foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, limited liability company, joint venture, trust employee benefit, or other enterprise, or as a trustee or administrator under any employee benefit plan of Cree or a wholly-owned subsidiary of Cree, against (i) reasonable expenses, including without limitation all attorneys fees actually and necessarily incurred by him in connection with any such action, suit or proceeding; (ii) all reasonable payments made by him in satisfaction of any judgment, money decree, fine (including an excise tax assessed with respect to an employee benefit plan), penalty or settlement for which he may have become liable in such action, suit or proceeding; and (iii) all reasonable expenses incurred in enforcing the indemnification rights provided in our Bylaws. Pursuant to our Bylaws, this indemnification may, at our board of directors' discretion, also include advancement of expenses related to such action, suit or proceeding.

Certain anti-takeover effects of North Carolina law

The North Carolina Shareholder Protection Act, or the Act, generally requires the affirmative vote of 95% of a corporation's voting shares to approve a business combination with any entity that is the beneficial owner, directly or indirectly, of more than 20% of the voting shares of the

Edgar Filing: CREE INC - Form S-3ASR

corporation (or ever owned, directly or indirectly, more than 20% and is still an affiliate of the corporation) unless the fair price provisions and the procedural provisions of the Act are satisfied.

Business combination is defined by the Act as (i) any merger, consolidation or conversion of a corporation with or into any other corporation or any unincorporated entity, (ii) any sale or lease of all or any

substantial part of the corporation's assets to any other entity, or (iii) any payment, sale or lease to the corporation or any subsidiary thereof in exchange for securities of the corporation of any assets having an aggregate fair market value equal to or greater than \$5,000,000 of any other entity.

The Act contains provisions that allowed a corporation to opt out of the applicability of the Act's voting provisions within specified time periods that generally have expired. The Act applies to Cree since we did not opt out within these time periods.

This statute could discourage a third party from making a partial tender offer or otherwise attempting to obtain a substantial position in our equity securities or seeking to obtain control of us. It also might limit the price that certain investors might be willing to pay in the future for our shares of common stock and may have the effect of delaying or preventing a change of control of us.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the offered securities from time to time:

- through agents;
- through underwriters or dealers;
- directly to one or more purchasers;
- through a combination of any of these methods of sale; or
- through any other methods described in a prospectus supplement.

We will identify the specific plan of distribution, including any underwriters, dealers, agents or direct purchasers and their compensation in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If we use underwriters in the sale, the securities will be acquired by the underwriters for their own account and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions, including:

- negotiated transactions;
- at a fixed public offering price or prices, which may be changed;
- at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;
- at prices related to prevailing market prices; or
- at negotiated prices.

Unless otherwise stated in a prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase any securities will be conditioned on customary closing conditions and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of such series of securities, if any are purchased.

We may sell the securities through agents from time to time. The prospectus supplement will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of the securities and any commissions we pay to them. Generally, any agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment.

Underwriters and agents may be entitled under agreements entered into with us to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribution with respect to payments which the underwriters or agents may be required to make. Underwriters and agents may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us and our affiliates in the ordinary course of business.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy and information statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy materials that we have filed with the SEC at the SEC public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the public reference room. Copies of reports, proxy and information statements and other information from us are available on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. Such filings are also available at our website at <http://www.cree.com>. Website materials are not a part of this prospectus.

We have filed a registration statement, of which this prospectus is a part, covering the securities offered hereby. As allowed by SEC rules, this prospectus does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement and the exhibits, financial statements and schedules thereto. We refer you to the registration statement, the exhibits, financial statements and schedules thereto for further information. This prospectus is qualified in its entirety by such other information.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The following documents filed with the SEC are hereby incorporated by reference in this prospectus:

- (a) Cree's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended June 28, 2009, filed with the SEC on August 18, 2009;
- (b) Cree's Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on August 11, 2009 and August 21, 2009;
- (c) The description of Cree's Common Stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed on January 29, 1993, and any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating such description; and
- (d) The description of the rights attached to Cree's Common Stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed on May 30, 2002, and any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating such description.

In addition, all documents subsequently filed by Cree pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 and 15(d) of the Exchange Act, prior to the filing of a post-effective amendment which indicates that all securities offered have been sold or which deregisters all securities then remaining unsold, shall be deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus and to be a part hereof from the date of filing of such documents. However, any documents or portions thereof, whether specifically listed above or filed in the future, that are not deemed filed with the SEC, including without limitation any information furnished pursuant to Item 2.02 or 7.01 of Form 8-K or certain exhibits furnished pursuant to Item 9.01 of Form 8-K, shall not be deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

Any statement in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein shall be deemed to be modified or superseded for the purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained herein or in any other subsequently filed document which also is incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein modifies or supersedes such statement. Any statement so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

We will furnish without charge to you, upon written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference herein, other than exhibits to such documents that are not specifically incorporated by reference therein. All such requests should be in writing and sent to the attention of the Corporate Secretary, Cree, Inc., 4600 Silicon Drive, Durham, NC 27703.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of our common shares issuable hereunder will be passed upon for Cree by Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P., Raleigh, North Carolina. As of the date of this prospectus, certain current individual attorneys with Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P. beneficially own an aggregate of 3,110 shares of Cree's common stock.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Cree, Inc. appearing in Cree, Inc.'s Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended June 28, 2009 and the effectiveness of Cree, Inc.'s internal control over financial reporting as of June 28, 2009 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

PART II

INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS

Item 14. Other expenses of issuance and distribution

The fees and expenses to be paid in connection with the distribution of the securities being registered hereby are estimated as follows:

SEC registration fee	\$	*
Accounting fees and expenses		125,000**
Legal fees and expenses		140,000**
Printing fees		25,000**
Miscellaneous		50,000**
 Total	 \$	 340,000**

* Deferred pursuant to Rules 456(b) and 457(r).

** As an indeterminate amount of securities is covered by this registration statement, the expenses in connection with the issuance and distribution of the securities are not currently determinable. The amounts shown are estimates of expenses payable by us in connection with the filing of this registration statement and one offering of securities hereunder, but do not limit the amount of securities that may be offered.

Item 15. Indemnification of directors and officers

Cree currently has provisions for limitation on the personal liability of directors in its Articles of Incorporation, as restated (the Articles of Incorporation), and provisions for indemnification of directors and officers in its Bylaws, as amended and restated effective August 19, 2009 (the Bylaws).

Article VII of the Articles of Incorporation provides that no director of Cree shall have personal liability arising out of an action whether by or in the right of Cree or otherwise for monetary damages for breach of his or her duty as a director. Consistent with Section 55-2-02 of the North Carolina Business Corporation Act (the NCBCA), the Articles of Incorporation do not limit or eliminate the personal liability of a director with respect to (i) acts or omissions not made in good faith that such director at the time of such breach knew or believed were in conflict with the best interests of Cree, (ii) any liability under Section 55-8-33 of the NCBCA or any successor provision, (iii) any transaction from which such director derived an improper personal benefit, or (iv) acts or omissions occurring prior to the date of the effectiveness of Article VII of the Articles of Incorporation. In the event that Section 55-2-02 or any other provision of the NCBCA is amended or enacted to permit further limitation or elimination of the personal liability of a director, Article VII provides that the personal liability of our directors shall be limited or eliminated to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law.

Article IX, Section 3 of the Bylaws provides that we shall indemnify, to the fullest extent permitted by law, any person who is made, or is threatened to be made, a party to any threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, investigative or arbitral action, suit or proceeding and any appeal therein (and any inquiry or investigation that could lead to such action, suit or proceeding), whether or not brought by or on behalf of Cree, seeking to hold him liable by reason of the fact that he is or was acting in his capacity as a director or officer of Cree, or at the request of Cree is or was serving as a director or officer for any other foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, limited liability company, joint venture, trust employee benefit, or other enterprise, or as a trustee or administrator under any employee benefit plan of Cree or a wholly-owned subsidiary of Cree, against (i) reasonable expenses, including without limitation all attorneys' fees actually and necessarily incurred by him in connection with any such action, suit or proceeding; (ii) all reasonable payments made by him in satisfaction of any judgment, money decree, fine (including an excise tax assessed with respect to an employee

benefit plan), penalty or settlement for which he may have become liable in such action, suit or proceeding; and (iii) all reasonable expenses incurred in enforcing the indemnification rights provided in the Bylaws. Pursuant to the Bylaws, this indemnification may, at the discretion of our board of directors, also include advancement of expenses related to such action, suit or proceeding.

Sections 55-8-50 through 55-8-58 of the NCBCA permit a corporation to indemnify its directors, officers, employees or agents under either or both a statutory or nonstatutory scheme of indemnification. Under the statutory scheme, a corporation may, with certain exceptions, indemnify a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation who was, is or is threatened to be made, a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative and whether formal or informal, because of the fact that such person was or is a director, officer, agent or employee of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of such corporation as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise. This indemnity may include the obligation to pay any judgment, settlement, penalty, fine (including an excise tax assessed with respect to an employee benefit plan) or reasonable expenses incurred in connection with a proceeding (including counsel fees), but no such indemnification may be granted unless such director, officer, employee or agent (i) conducted himself in good faith, (ii) reasonably believed (a) that any action taken in his official capacity with the corporation was in the best interests of the corporation or (b) that in all other cases his conduct was at least not opposed to the corporation's best interests, and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. Whether a director has met the requisite standard of conduct for the type of indemnification set forth above is determined by a majority vote of a quorum of the board of directors who are not parties to the proceeding in question, a duly designated committee of directors if a quorum of the full board cannot be established, special legal counsel selected by the board or duly designated committee of directors, or the shareholders (excluding shares owned or controlled by directors who are parties to the proceeding in question) in accordance with Section 55-8-55 of the NCBCA. A corporation may not indemnify a director under the statutory scheme in connection with a proceeding by or in the right of the corporation in which a director was adjudged liable to the corporation or in connection with any other proceeding charging improper personal benefit in which a director was adjudged liable (whether or not involving action in his official capacity) on the basis of having received an improper personal benefit.

Sections 55-8-52 and 55-8-56 of the NCBCA require a corporation, unless its articles of incorporation provide otherwise, to indemnify a director or officer who has been wholly successful, on the merits or otherwise, in the defense of any proceeding to which such director or officer was, or was threatened to be, made a party because he is or was a director or officer of the corporation against reasonable expenses incurred by him in connection with the proceeding. Unless prohibited by the articles of incorporation, a director or officer also may make application for and obtain court-ordered indemnification if the court determines that such director or officer is (i) entitled to mandatory indemnification under Section 55-8-52, in which case the court will also order the corporation to pay the director's or officer's reasonable expenses incurred to obtain court-ordered indemnification, and (ii) fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnification in view of all relevant circumstances, whether or not he met the standard of conduct set forth in Section 55-8-51 or was adjudged liable as described in Section 55-8-51.

In addition to, and notwithstanding the conditions of and limitations on, the indemnification described above under the statutory scheme, Section 55-8-57 of the NCBCA permits a corporation to indemnify, or agree to indemnify, any of its directors, officers, employees or agents against liability and expenses (including attorneys' fees) in any proceeding (including proceedings brought by or on behalf of the corporation) arising out of their status as such or their activities in such capacities, except for any liabilities or expenses incurred on account of activities that were, at the time taken, known or believed by the person to be clearly in conflict with the best interests of the corporation. Additionally, Section 55-8-57 of the NCBCA authorizes a corporation to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of an individual who is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation against certain liabilities incurred by such a person, whether or not the corporation is otherwise authorized by the NCBCA to indemnify that person. Cree has purchased and maintains such insurance.

Item 16. Exhibits

Exhibit No.	Description
1.1	Form of Underwriting Agreement (1)
4.1	Articles of Incorporation, as restated (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2002, as filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on August 19, 2002)
4.2	Bylaws, as amended and restated effective August 19, 2009 (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Current Report on Form 8-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on August 21, 2009)
4.3	Specimen Common Stock Certificate (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2002)
4.4	Rights Agreement, dated as of May 30, 2002, between the Company and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, including the form of Rights Certificate and the Summary of Rights to Purchase Preferred Stock, attached thereto as Exhibits B and C, respectively (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 4.01 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 30, 2002)
4.5	Amendment No. 1 to Rights Agreement, dated as of October 16, 2006, between the Company and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.02 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form 8-A/A filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 16, 2006)
5.1	Opinion of Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P.
23.1	Consent of Ernst & Young LLP, Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm
23.2	Consent of Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P. (Contained in Exhibit 5.1)
24.1	Power of Attorney (Contained on signature page)

(1) To be filed by amendment or as an exhibit to a current report on Form 8-K and incorporated herein by reference, if applicable

Item 17. Undertakings

(a) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

(1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:

(i) to include any prospectus required by section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;

(ii) to reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the Calculation of Registration Fee table in the effective registration statement; and

(iii) to include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement;

provided, however, that paragraphs (1)(i), (1)(ii) and (1)(iii) do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the Commission by the registrant pursuant to section 13 or section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in the registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement.

(2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

(4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:

(A) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and

(B) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.

(5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:

(i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;

(ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;

(iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and

(iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.

(b) That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to section 13(a) or section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934) that is incorporated by reference in the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(c) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing this Registration Statement on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Durham, State of North Carolina, on September 8, 2009.

CREE, INC.

By: /s/ CHARLES M. SWOBODA
Charles M. Swoboda

Chairman, Chief Executive Officer and President

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS that each individual whose signature appears below constitutes and appoints Charles M. Swoboda and John T. Kurtzweil, and each of them, his true and lawful attorneys-in-fact and agents with full power of substitution and resubstitution, for him and in his name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, to sign any and all amendments (including post-effective amendments) to this Registration Statement, and to file the same, with all exhibits thereto, and all documents in connection therewith, with the Securities and Exchange Commission, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done in and about the premises, as fully to all intents and purposes as he might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that said attorneys-in-fact and agents, or their substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this Registration Statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

Name	Title	Date
/s/ CHARLES M. SWOBODA Charles M. Swoboda	Chairman, Chief Executive Officer and President (Principal Executive Officer)	September 8, 2009
/s/ JOHN T. KURTZWEIL John T. Kurtzweil	Executive Vice President Finance, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer (Principal Financial Officer and Principal Accounting Officer)	September 8, 2009
/s/ CLYDE R. HOSEIN Clyde R. Hosein	Director	September 8, 2009
/s/ ROBERT A. INGRAM Robert A. Ingram	Director	September 8, 2009
/s/ JOHN W. PALMOUR, PH.D. John W. Palmour, Ph.D.	Director	September 8, 2009

Edgar Filing: CREE INC - Form S-3ASR

Name	Title	Date
/s/ FRANCO PLASTINA Franco Plastina	Director	September 8, 2009
/s/ DOLPH W. VON ARX Dolph W. von Arx	Director	September 8, 2009
/s/ HARVEY A. WAGNER Harvey A. Wagner	Director	September 8, 2009
/s/ THOMAS H. WERNER Thomas H. Werner	Director	September 8, 2009

II-7

EXHIBIT INDEX

Exhibit No.	Description
1.1	Form of Underwriting Agreement (1)
4.1	Articles of Incorporation, as restated (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2002, as filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on August 19, 2002)
4.2	Bylaws, as amended and restated effective August 19, 2009 (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Current Report on Form 8-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on August 21, 2009)
4.3	Specimen Common Stock Certificate (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2002)
4.4	Rights Agreement, dated as of May 30, 2002, between the Company and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, including the form of Rights Certificate and the Summary of Rights to Purchase Preferred Stock, attached thereto as Exhibits B and C, respectively (incorporated herein by reference to Exhibit 4.01 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on May 30, 2002)
4.5	Amendment No. 1 to Rights Agreement, dated as of October 16, 2006, between the Company and American Stock Transfer & Trust Company (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.02 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form 8-A/A filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on October 16, 2006)
5.1	Opinion of Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P.
23.1	Consent of Ernst & Young LLP, Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm
23.2	Consent of Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P. (Contained in Exhibit 5.1)
24.1	Power of Attorney (Contained on signature page)

(1) To be filed by amendment or as an exhibit to a current report on Form 8-K and incorporated herein by reference, if applicable