

POSITION: Federated Women in Timber (FWIT) urges Congress to recognize the essential role that healthy forests and forest products play in mitigating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Healthy forests are essential to:

- Reduce the intensity of wildfires, a major contributor to Green House Gas.
- Provide forest biomass to replace fossil fuel based energy, another major contributor of Green House Gas.
- Sequester Green House Gas from the atmosphere in growing trees and wood products

BACKGROUND: There are concerns in the scientific community that the Earth's climate is changing in response to higher concentrations of carbon dioxide and other Green House Gas in the atmosphere from human activities such as burning fossil fuels. Carbon sequestration is the capture and storage of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Through a tree's natural biological processes, carbon is absorbed from the atmosphere and stored in its roots, branches and trunk. When a tree is harvested, carbon dioxide continues to be stored in wood products made from that tree. Conversely, carbon is emitted to the atmosphere as a tree decays and dies, or is consumed by fire.

RATIONALE: Healthy forests are less susceptible to catastrophic wildfires that release high amounts of carbon dioxide into the air, kill wildlife and their habitat, and degrade watersheds.

The use of forest biomass fuels, a renewable source of energy can offset the use of fossil fuels. At the same time, it can provide economic opportunity by supporting rural economies with new bio-based industries.

Substituting wood for fossil fuel-based products addresses climate change in several key ways. The use of wood products avoids the emissions from substituted manufactured products like steel and concrete, and continues to store carbon. Wood products from sustainable managed forests can also be replenished continually, providing a continuous supply of both trees and wood products while supporting other forest values such as clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

CONCLUSION: Federated Women in Timber supports the proactive management of our nations forests to ensure they are healthy and resilient. Healthy forests and the forest products industry are an important part of the solution in mitigating climate change. Our national forest plans must be implemented, their timber programs fully funded, and catastrophic wildfires eliminated.

Forests are the miracle renewable resource that provide us with beautiful solid wood products capable of storing carbon, bio-fuels for energy, and products that are both recyclable and biodegradable. Healthy forests are the answer.