

## **Federated Women In Timber – “Biomass & Renewable Energy”**

**POSITION:** Federated Women in Timber (FWIT) urges Congress and federal land managers to aggressively pursue actions to produce renewable energy from forest biomass harvested from actively managed public and private forestland. Renewable energy generated with forest biomass will increase the nation’s energy independence as well as improve the health of our nation’s forests and rural communities, creating jobs and securing the infrastructure of our timber supplying states.

**BACKGROUND:** Increased independence from foreign energy sources, reduction of green house gases, management of the active carbon cycle, reduction of hazardous fuel loads in our public and private forests, and stabilization of rural economies are all current national priorities. All of these issues can be partially addressed by development of infrastructure and technology to turn biomass from private and public forestlands into renewable energy sources for our nation. Using existing technology such as Combined Heat and Power biomass generation facilities allows us to immediately benefit from the conversion of forest biomass into renewable energy while continuing to develop forest biomass to liquid fuel technology to open new doors for national energy independence.

**RATIONALE:** Using forest biomass harvested from public and private forests to generate renewable energy meets economic, social and environmental goals in the following ways.

- Renewable energy from forest biomass is widely recognized as carbon neutral qualifying for renewable energy credits in almost all renewable energy certification systems.
- Forest biomass renewable energy technology helps the nation meet energy independence goals without jeopardizing agricultural capacity.
- Healthy, fast growing forest stands achieved through thinning, sequester significantly more carbon than unmanaged, overstocked forests. These younger, thriving forests will eventually produce durable lumber products, extending the sequestration of the carbon.
- Carbon released from decomposition of dead trees and carbon monoxide released from wildfires is roughly 25 times more damaging as greenhouse gases, than the carbon dioxide released from controlled combustion of the same material to generate electricity.
- Community based renewable energy from forest biomass provides local jobs and economic stability while meeting national objectives of energy independence and forest health.
- According to the USFS, 28 million acres of forest could benefit from some type of mechanical treatment to reduce hazardous fuel loading. Development of markets

for currently unmarketable forest biomass will significantly reduce the cost of fuel treatment on private and public lands.

- Risks associated with current federal land management policies severely limit stability of forest biomass fuel supply and limit opportunities for development of new forest biomass infrastructure.

**CONCLUSION:** Federated Women in Timber supports development of a competitive, diverse forest biomass renewable energy infrastructure in the nation. The United States has the land, the economic resources, and the agricultural infrastructure to shift a large portion of our energy requirements to the biomass sector. This is a win-win solution for our nation as it creates jobs, puts people back to work, offsets carbon, and utilizes the non-commercial and over crowded trees that create a fire hazard on our forestlands. Using solely electricity is not efficient and the cost is on the rise. The development of co-generation plants of both heat and power are more feasible, both environmentally and economically.

In conclusion, Federated Women in Timber would like to see the support of Congress and the Senate to help create healthy forests and healthy communities in producing these co-generation facilities through:

- Production of more tax credits.
- More Fuel incentives programs.
- Parity with other renewable energy.
- Low interest rate loans for building them.

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