

Utilization of Forest Biomass to Restore Forest Health, Improve US Energy Security, and Promote Rural Economic Development

Position

The American Loggers Council (ALC) supports policies that promote utilization of forest biomass,¹ together with those that assist communities, forest owners, public forest managers, and local entrepreneurs in accomplishing urgent wildfire prevention and forest health improvement projects. Expanded opportunities to increase utilization of forest biomass are needed to help reduce the accumulation of hazardous fuels and restore healthy forest conditions. Increased utilization of forest biomass can also improve forest conditions thru the creation of additional markets for low quality trees that will enable forest managers to improve the quality of hardwood forests and reduce the overstocking in coniferous forests. America's forests provide watershed protection, wildlife habitat, and numerous forest products, as well as employment and recreational opportunities that our citizens depend on and enjoy.

ALC supports strategies and policies, including those authorized in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003, that promote development of economically viable forest biomass production, delivery, and processing capabilities. Breakthroughs in technologies to convert forest biomass to transportation fuels such as methanol, ethanol and biodiesel are making it possible to make substantial gains in the commercialization of forest biomass to transportation fuels, thereby reducing our dependence on foreign oil and traditional fossil fuels. The ALC supports research and projects that will take projects off of the bench and put them into "commercial" volume scale, thus improving US energy security.

The ALC remains concerned that the trend of the loss of infrastructure in the pulp and paper manufacturing capacity in the United States will continue due to global competition and related artificial constraints on the industry and that non-traditional markets must be created in order to ensure markets for low-grade forest products will exist to offer incentives to both public and family forest landowners to keep our forested acres forested. Solid wood products infrastructure in Western States which are dominated by federal lands has been disappearing as well. To properly manage these forests, low-grade and small diameter trees must be removed from the forests. We will support policies and incentives that will help to stimulate and create those markets.

The ALC supports biomass opportunities that will support rural economic development in affected communities that are dependent on the forest industry by utilizing the renewable natural resources that are abundant in their communities.

¹Forest biomass: Trees, chips, slash and timber harvesting residues that are products of silvicultural operations that are removed to reduce hazardous fuels, to reduce or contain disease or insect infestations, or to promote and/or restore forest health .

ABOUT THE AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL

The American Loggers Council is a national association made up of state and regional professional logging associations, representing over 12,000 professional timber harvesters in 29 States throughout the United States and their 50,000+ employees. The ALC was established in 1994.

The mission of the American Loggers Council is to enhance the logging profession, provide a unified voice on logging issues; and cooperate with public, industrial and private timberland owners to further sustainable forestry practices.

The Council is committed to enhancing the logging profession, establishing a more level playing field for professional loggers and providing accurate information about the logging profession to the forest products companies, landowners and the public. It serves as a national network and communications center linking local, state and regional organizations around the country.

The Council's headquarters are located at P.O. Box 966, Hemphill, TX, 75948. The Council maintains a website at www.americanloggers.org that offers a free electronic newsletter, "*Logger-On-Line*," and can be contacted at 409-625-0206.