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STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL BIOMASS REMOVAL FROM FORESTS

Santa Fe, N.M. — One of the few things presidential candidates agree on is the need for domestically-produced renewable energy, including energy from woody biomass. What hasn't been discussed is how to extract woody biomass from forests in a sustainable and cost effective manner. A new report released by the Forest Guild, *Synthesis of Knowledge from Biomass Removal Case Studies*, does just that.

The report highlights successful strategies from biomass removal projects from across the country. Through funding from the Joint Fire Sciences Program and help from the U.S. Forest Service, the Guild collected over 45 case studies of biomass removal from public, tribal, conservation, and private lands. The report analyzes the themes, strategies, and lessons learned from these examples. Forest managers, landowners, entrepreneurs, and industry partners can access the Guild's new report and in-depth case studies on the web at biomass.forestguild.org.

Technically, the term woody biomass includes all the trees and woody plants in forests, woodlands, or rangelands. In practice, woody biomass usually refers to vegetation removed from the forest, usually logging slash, small diameter trees, tops, limbs, or trees that can not be sold as higher value products.

"I'm amazed at the breadth of reasons and methods to remove woody biomass," says Dr. Zander Evans, Forest Guild Research Director and the report's author. "Harvesting biomass from forests isn't just about reducing our dependency on oil. Habitat improvement, smoke management, forest-stand improvement, and ecological restoration are all important reasons to remove low-grade trees and material from the forest."

Interest in woody biomass from forests has increased dramatically because of rising energy costs, concerns about greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels, and the need for forest restoration. However, getting woody biomass from the forest to the consumer presents economic and logistical challenges. The Guild's new report identifies the building blocks of success in meeting these challenges: early and substantial public involvement, partnerships with efficient contractors, existing markets with favorable prices, and mechanization where appropriate to the forest type. Of course, the specific solutions for successful biomass removal are as varied as the forest where projects occur or the objectives land managers seek to achieve.

"The health and future of our nation's forests will be bolstered by the Forest Guild's work," says Jerry Payne, Biomass Utilization Specialist, U.S. Forest Service. "In this time of dwindling oil supplies and rising prices, it is of utmost importance to ensure the protection of our forests while making the most of our renewable fuel sources." In addition to this biomass case study research, the Guild is actively engaged in the development of biomass removal guidelines to protect multiple forest values and in on-the-ground projects that provide clean energy from biomass.

The Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) was created by Congress in 1998 as an interagency research, development, and applications partnership between the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Funding priorities and policies are set by the JFSP Governing Board, which includes representatives from the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Geological Survey, and five representatives from the Forest Service.

The Forest Guild, headquartered in Santa Fe, New Mexico, is a national organization of more than 600 foresters, allied professionals, and supporters who manage forestlands in the United States and Canada and advocate for ecologically sound forest practices. The mission of the Forest Guild is to practice and promote ecologically, economically, and socially responsible forestry—“excellent forestry”—as a means of sustaining the integrity of forest ecosystems and the human communities dependent upon them. The Guild maintains a presence nationwide with staff and volunteer coordinators in 12 states and nearly all major forest regions of the country.

INTERVIEWS AND IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

The report, *Synthesis of Knowledge from Biomass Removal Case Studies*, is available at:
biomass.forestguild.org

www.forestguild.org
www.firescience.gov

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