



WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON FORESTRY

Jim Doyle, Governor

Reply to: PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921
Office: 608/261-7599
Fax: 608/266-6983
E-mail: fred.souba@storaenso.com

November 14, 2007

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Wisconsin Rapids

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Dear Fellow Council Members, Legislators and Interested Parties:

Since the release of the Council's *Recommended Policy through Legislation to Encourage the Production and Utilization of Woody Biomass*, questions have arisen regarding the definition of woody biomass contained within the document. To help alleviate confusion, I offer the following context.

The section in question includes the Council's recommended definitions for inclusion into the State Energy Policy which is contained within [Wisconsin State Statute 1.12\(1\)](#).

We offered the following definition:

1. Sustainable Woody biomass includes:
 - a. Trees grown for the purpose of energy production.
 - b. Trees or parts of trees that do not meet the utilization standards for pulpwood, posts, bolts, or sawtimber.
 - c. Brush, logging slash, or waste wood that is created by harvest, by precommercial timber stand improvement to meet silvicultural objectives, or by fire, disease, or insect control treatments, or watershed improvement.
 - d. Brush, trees, and other biomass harvested from within designated utility, railroad, and road rights-of-way.

The Council recommended this definition be codified because there was a strong sentiment that government should not provide incentives that would direct wood away from existing markets to energy. Where markets already exist, the Council believes the free market should determine the most appropriate use of wood, whether for energy or another use. The recommended definition suggests that government intervention to stimulate markets for biomass be focused on woody material for which markets don't already exist.

All woody material can be used for energy. The State should focus its efforts to stimulate use of woody biomass for energy on woody material not used for other products that support the forest products industry, a critical sector of Wisconsin's economy. We believe opportunities exist to both use woody material that is not already utilized by existing industry, and to develop and foster technologies that enable us to produce both energy and other value-added products. In addition, opportunities exist to increase the amount of forest land in Wisconsin, thereby creating opportunities for creating renewable energy, other forest products, as well as the full array of other public benefits our forests provide.

Woody biomass will be a key component of Wisconsin's renewable energy portfolio. I hope this letter provides the appropriate context for the woody biomass definition and further clarifies the Council's intent.

Sincerely,

Fred Souba, Chair