



## Inland Empire Society of American Foresters

*serving eastern Washington and northern Idaho*

May 20, 2009

Honorable Jay Inslee  
United States House of Representatives

Dear Rep. Inslee:

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce Committee is currently debating the American Clean Energy Security Act of 2009, or ACESA. This bill has many facets, but the one of most interest to and within the expertise of members of the Inland Empire Society of American Foresters (IESAF) concerns the use of woody biomass for the production of energy.

Currently woody biomass provides 2.6% of the energy consumed in the U.S., more than any other renewable energy source, and the potential to provide a larger share is great. While the ACESA creates a Renewable Energy Standard (RES), the bill still excludes most woody biomass from federal lands from counting towards the standard's goals. The Committee has improved the definition compared to the original draft bill, especially with respect to private lands.

The region we work in has millions of acres of national forests with the potential to contribute to national energy goals. However, if 'mature stands' on federal lands are excluded from meeting the RES, U.S. Forest Service managers will be denied most of their opportunities to reduce risks from insect and disease infestations and wildfires burning in uncharacteristically heavy fuel loads. Analysis by the Western Governors' Association, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, shows that byproducts from hazardous fuel treatments on currently road-accessible public forests in our Inland Empire region could provide a sustainable supply exceeding 500,000 dry tons of biomass per year that could be used to produce renewable, carbon neutral energy. Many other areas of the country would also benefit if 'mature stands' on federal lands would count towards the RES.

If we are going to meet our renewable energy goals — whether for thermal energy to heat schools and other public buildings, electric power, or advanced liquid biofuels — wood must be allowed to make its full contribution. Limiting the full use of renewable forest biomass harms land conservation efforts, costs consumers, and hinders climate change mitigation strategies. We should promote rather than discourage the use of renewable forest biomass from our vast federal forests.

IESAF members stand ready to help Congress create legislation that will make full use of forests from all ownerships to meet our national renewable energy goals.

Sincerely,

Britton Pettit, Chair  
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