

# National Policy and Working Forests

Oregon/Washington Joint Meeting 2011

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# Working Forest Coalition

American Forest Foundation  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Forest Landowners Association  
National Alliance of Forest Owners  
National Association of State Foresters  
National Wildlife Federation  
Pacific Forest Trust  
Society of American Foresters  
The Conservation Fund  
The Nature Conservancy  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, Inc.



Private working forests are a vital part of America's natural resources infrastructure, contributing significantly to the quality of life enjoyed by all Americans.

In addition to open space and aesthetics, private working forests provide important consumer products, clean water and air, energy, wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities, and strengthen rural economies, just to name a few of their many public benefits.

They are also key to addressing critical issues facing our nation today: increasing our use of renewable energy, offering solutions to address climate change, maintaining a healthy natural environment, and providing a stable source of jobs that support American families.



# Recognition for our Contributions

- consistent forest land base for 100 years
- provides six percent of US manufacturing GDP (same as automotive and plastics)
- U.S. forests support more than 2.9 million jobs
- twenty percent of US forestland is under some type of conservation program, which is almost twice the world average of eleven percent
- assessments of biodiversity on the nation's forests have found that the annual rate at which species are listed as threatened or endangered has declined fivefold.



# Recognition for our Contributions

- eighty percent of renewable biomass energy comes from wood
- \$4.4 billion in state income and severance taxes
- ten percent of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions is absorbed by forests
- eighty-six percent of forestland is available for recreation
- fifty-three percent of all freshwater in the U.S. originates on forestland





# How do we maintain this valuable contribution to American life?

- develop policies and programs that help working forests remain competitive with other land uses and thereby help sustain the many benefits they provided
- critical as we advance our efforts to meet our nation's growing need for renewable energy, climate change solutions, a healthier environment, and family-waged jobs in rural communities



# How do we maintain this valuable contribution to American life?

- steps to maintain traditional markets that provide sustainably produced consumer goods and services, such as housing materials, recyclable products and recreation.
- support for emerging and potential markets such as renewable energy and fuels, green building, and wood-based technologies.
- the promotion and development of markets for environmental services, such as climate change mitigation and carbon offsets, enhancement of water quality and quantity; endangered species conservation and other services



# How do we maintain this valuable contribution to American life?

- developing and improving tax provisions supporting forest conservation that apply to all classes of forest ownership.
- strengthening investments in public/private conservation partnerships that equitably benefit both forest owners and the environment and that demonstrate results
- supporting targeted and effective research and development and strengthening the workforce engaged in private forest management.





# How do we maintain this valuable contribution to American life?

- identifying and reforming policies that discourage private forest ownership or investment in private forest stewardship.
- developing mechanisms to align new and existing policies affecting private forests with the objective of sustaining private working forests over the long term.



# Success to date?

- America's Great Outdoors initiative
- Green Building Progress
  - Announcement by Department of Agriculture
  - Department of Defense Policy changed
  - Talking with General Services Administration
- Conservation Funding
  - Specifically Forest Legacy funding



# Climate Change

- Cap and Trade appears to be dead
- Unlikely to adopt a US Cap and Trade system without global action
- However, EPA is acting under the Clean Air Act, though they have postponed action in biomass energy
- Numbers for the voluntary market don't provide tremendous financial incentives
- (Un) intended consequences of political decisions are detrimental to the positive role forests can play in addressing climate change



# Unintended (?) Consequences Associated with Biomass Energy

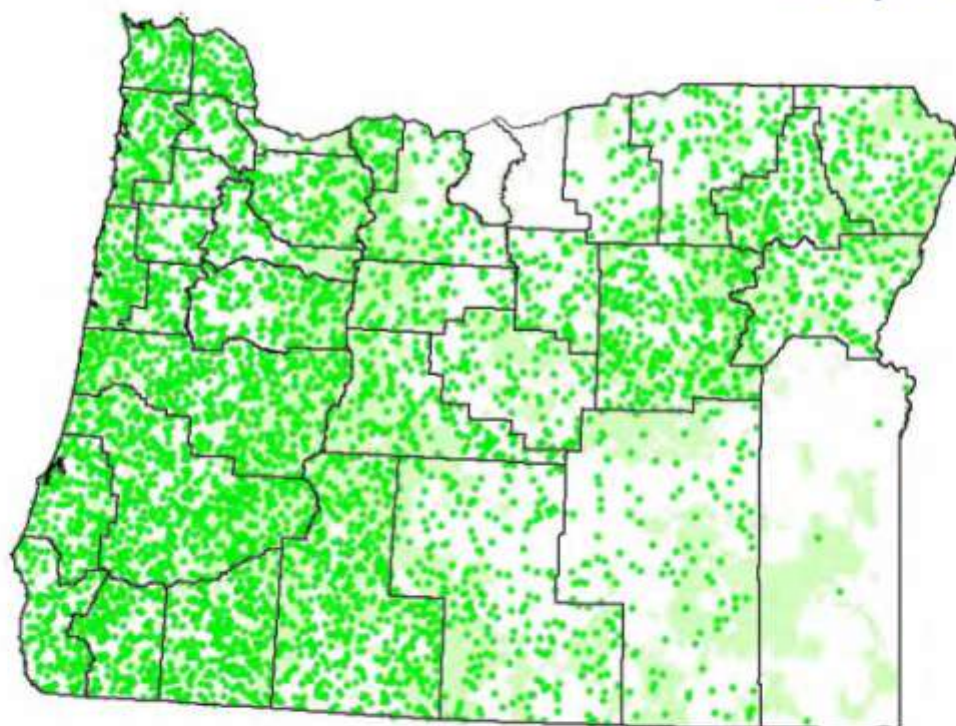
- Some have suggested that the accounting for biomass CO<sub>2</sub> and fossil fuel CO<sub>2</sub> should be the same.
- This fails to recognize the important role of the biomass carbon cycle and could result in facilities switching from forest-based fuels to fossil fuels.
  - This is because fossil fuels often yield more usable energy per ton of CO<sub>2</sub>, primarily due to the higher water content of biomass fuels.
- US forest sector is world leader in biomass energy production and use.





# Oregon Timberland Qualifying as "Renewable Biomass" under 2008 Farm Bill

## 25,000,000 Acres



NOTE: These maps do not estimate the amount of volume that would be removed for biomass, but simply show the acreage of forests that are eligible under each definition.

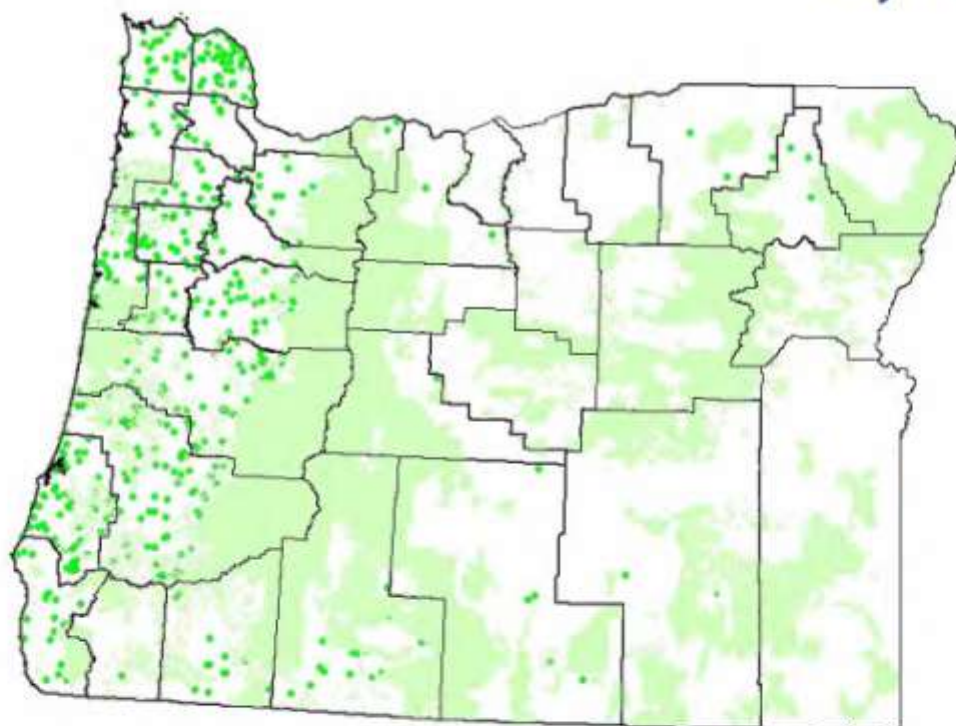
● One dot represents 5,000 acres

■ Federal Land



# Oregon Timberland Qualifying as "Renewable Biomass" under 2007 Energy Act

## 3,000,000 Acres



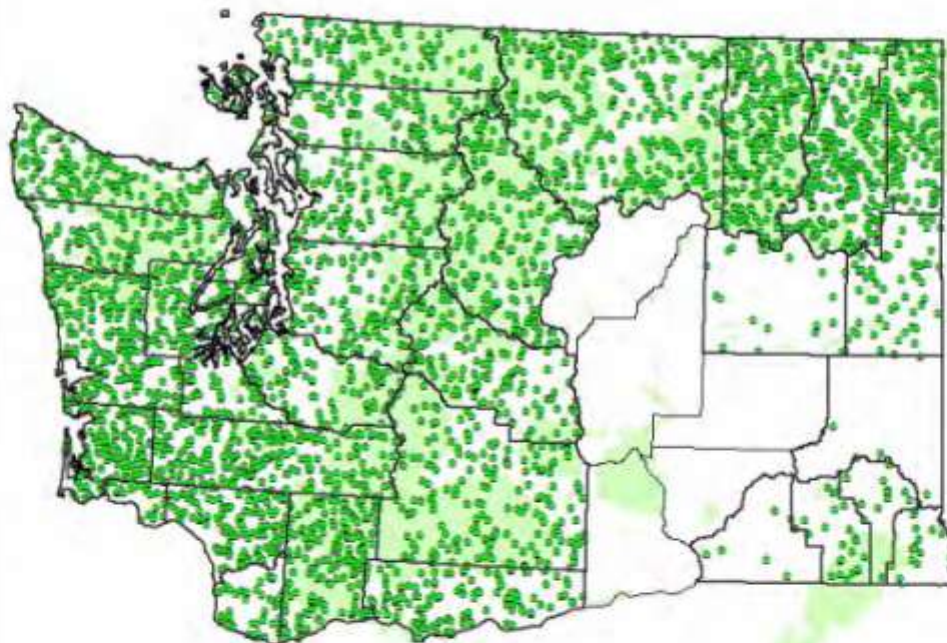
NOTE: These maps do not estimate the amount of volume that would be removed for biomass, but simply show the acreage of forests that are eligible under each definition.

● One dot represents 5,000 acres

■ Federal Land

# Washington Timberland Qualifying as "Renewable Biomass" under 2008 Farm Bill

## 18,000,000 Acres



NOTE: These maps do not estimate the amount of volume that would be removed for biomass, but simply show the acreage of forests that are eligible under each definition.

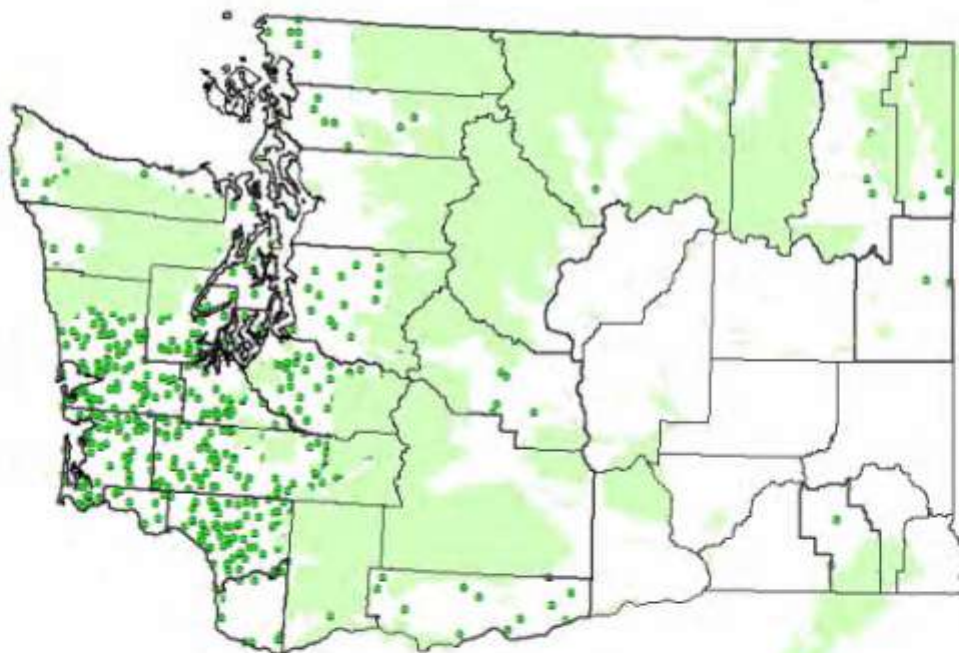
● One dot represents 5,000 acres

■ Federal Land



# Washington Timberland Qualifying as "Renewable Biomass" under 2007 Energy Act

## 3,000,000 Acres



NOTE: These maps do not estimate the amount of volume that would be removed for biomass, but simply show the acreage of forests that are eligible under each definition.

● One dot represents 5,000 acres

■ Federal Land

# **EPA not regulating emissions from biomass energy**

- Scientific/academic letter (113 signatories)
- SAF Task Force were both efforts to convince EPA of the need to revisit this aspect of the Tailoring Rule
- The Rule did go into effect on Jan. 3, 2011, but the action taken by EPA today will not regulate biomass energy for three years
- Forestry community rallied to work on this and were ultimately successful



# SAF Task Force

- Task Force on Forest Climate Change Offsets and Use of Forest Biomass for Energy





# Water Regulatory Issues

- EPA is currently revisiting its 1976 designation of silviculture as a nonpoint source of pollution
- TMDL's could be back in play
- Burdensome permitting discourages investment in private forests that are already under pressure
- In southern Louisiana a new, broad interpretation of the 1899 Rivers and Harbors Act to include silvicultural activities is having a negative impact on forestry in the region, and could spread



# Federal Lands Issues

- Stewardship Contracting needs to be permanently reauthorized
- Planning Rule (working with the 1982 rule)
  - SAF comments are being finalized today
- Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Act



# 2012 Farm Bill

- Commodity subsidies are a major target (especially since prices have remained high)
- Ag community will want to 'protect the money'
- Conservation programs may have an opportunity
- Food security will always be an issue (commodity prices may not remain high)
- Traditionally not a lot of money for forestry, opportunities with private sector matching programs or other 'ecosystem services' projects



# Congressional Outlook

- Budget issues are going to bog down Congress
- 2012 budget outlook is grim
- Forestry is not on the top of the priority list, but that doesn't mean there aren't opportunities
- Tax issues should be a priority (estate tax in particular)



# SAF Updates

- In the black in 2010, small profit, but much better than the loss in 2009
- Two associate directors of forest policy John Barnwell and Kelsey Delaney, led by Mark Rey as a part time contractor
- Hawaii 2011 shaping up to be very exciting, registration available now including listing of tours, workshops, keynote speakers and more
- Council making important decisions on dues, a 'hedgehog' strategy, additional accreditation opportunities, and more





# Rings

- Ring ceremonies are occurring across the country
- Very positive reaction from students
- I have some available for purchase

