

## **Senator Wyden discusses Congressional priorities for forests and renewable energy**

Moving forward with the development of sustainable wood-based bioenergy is a key component in the Congressional strategy to expand renewable energy production, mitigate climate change, and improve the nation's energy security, says Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR,) new chairman of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests.

Speaking at the Forum on Climate Change, Forests and Bioenergy at the Library of Congress on January 26, Wyden said both public and private forests will play an important role in decreasing petroleum imports by as much as 40 percent from current levels. Citing the recent announcement of a new biomass energy plant in Lakeview, Oregon, Wyden asserted that "right sizing" wood-based bioenergy facilities can improve sustainable forest management, contribute to economic development in local communities, and help reduce the dependence on foreign oil.

Wyden urged faster progress by federal land management agencies in capitalizing on the growing market for woody biomass to expedite hazardous fuels treatments on federal lands at high risk for wildfires, and pledged Congressional support for addressing funding uncertainties and other policy barriers to timely action.

The Forum on Climate Change, Forests, and Bioenergy was sponsored by the Congressional Research Service and the Pinchot Institute for Conservation. The Forum is part of the Pinchot Institute's annual Outlook series on future developments in sustainable forest management.