Developing Woody Biomass Supply Projections on Predominately Public Forest Landscapes for Bio-energy and other Bio-products Development

By Catherine M. Mater[1] and Edmund Gee[2]

ABSTRACT: A critical factor in utilizing large amounts of woody biomass is to ensure that there is a reliable and predictable supply of feedstock within a landscape where conservation values are also important. Public forestlands have always played a central role in our nation's forests, but questions regarding consistent, reliable access to biomass supply within a sustainable forest management regime have hampered public forestlands from being considered as a major player in the biomass supply discussion. The **coordinated resource offering protocol (CROP)** developed for the USFS offers an opportunity for a levelized and coordinated supply of biomass between all the land management agencies based on believed ability to perform removal (vs potential to remove based primarily on inventory). Ability to perform occurs at landscape scale in a transparent environment. The CROP protocol works best at securing alignment between local government, non-governmental organizations, line officers, and rural and environmental community stakeholders. Investors now have easy access to an interactive volume data tool not available before when conducting due diligence for project development.

Key Words: coordinated resource offering protocol (CROP), Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA); Timber Products Output (TPO), biomass, coordination, levelization.

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) allocating ~$ 800 billion to – among other goals – enhances energy independence. On March 9, 2009 Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) had started to receive and distribute the first of $28 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. It was announced that the Forest Service would provide $1.15 billion for projects focused on hazardous fuels reduction, forest health protection, rehabilitation, and hazard mitigation activities on federal, state and private lands. In anticipation of the passage of the ARRA, the US Forest Service released a capacity statement to effectively deploy a *Green Jobs* program to help reinvigorate America's economy, restore the country's forest and rangelands, reduce the threat of wildfire, and develop energy independence using wood. Some important highlights of the capacity statement:

- Over 30 million acres of hazardous fuels reduction will occur … no small matter as one catastrophic forest fire on 200,000 acres in a few days can emit as much carbon dioxide into the atmosphere as is released by the City of Los Angeles *in an entire year*! In 2007, wildfires burned ~750,000 acres in Oregon, emitting the greenhouse gas equivalent of ~ 11 million cars driven for an entire year (Dubrasich, 2008)[i]. Los Angeles freeways handle ~12 million cars per day and emit ~18 million tons of carbon per year. [ii].

- 90,000 *Green Jobs* would be created through land restoration work over the next five years; 13,000 of those anticipated jobs would be highly skilled positions to help grow a long-term *Green Industry*.

[1] Catherine M. Mater is president of Mater Ltd. and Senior Fellow of the Pinchot Institute for Conservation. She developed the CROP model for the USFS and has been project leader on all CROP projects undertaken across the US. Corvallis, Oregon 97333; catherine@mater.com, (541) 753-7335.

[2] Edmund Gee is immediate past-Chair of the Woody Biomass Utilization Group & Partnership Coordinator for the collaborative effort for Biomass to Bio-Energy Initiative sponsored by the USDA, DOI, and DOE. Washington DC eagee@fs.fed.us; (202) 690-5813.