Opportunities for Forestry and Woody Biomass Energy in the 2008 Farm Bill

Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008

ACES Conference
Naples, FL
December 2008
National Priorities for Private Forest Conservation

- Establishes three priorities for Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act (CFAA) programs – State and Private Forestry Redesign Themes
  - Conserve Working Forests
  - Protect Forests from Harm
  - Enhance Public Benefits
State Forest Resource Assessments

- Requires state assessments within two years
- States will identify priority areas and incorporate existing plans
- Requires a long-term strategy tiered to assessment
- Must coordinate with partners

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Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program

- Grants for purchase of community forests
- Program open to Tribes, local government, environmental orgs. – proposals submitted through States or Tribal governments
- Encourages working land, education, requires public access
- Subject to appropriations
Changes to Forest Resource Coordinating Committee (FRRC)

- Modifies and expands FRCC to include heads of FS, NRCS, FSA, CSREES, and non-fed reps
- FS Chief is chair of the FRCC
- FRCC will:
  - Provide direction and coordination on addressing the 3 national priorities
  - Clarify individual agency responsibilities
  - Provides advice on the allocation of competitive funds
Cooperative Forestry Innovation Partnership Projects

- May competitively allocate up to 5% of CFAA funds for innovative projects
- Funds available to states, Tribes, local government, land-grant, or private entities
- 50% cost-share (includes in-kind)
Emergency Forest Restoration Program

- Program available to Non-Industrial Private Forest (NIPF) owners to restore landscapes damaged by fire, drought, flood, & other natural disasters.

- Funding subject to appropriation, funds available until expended. Up to 75% cost share.

- Farm Service Agency lead

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Conservation (Title II)

- Formally opens several Conservation programs (EQIP, WHIP, etc.) to NIPF landowners by defining NIPF land for this Title
  - **EQIP** –
    - Continues eligibility of NIPF landowners.
    - Forest stewardship plans can be used for the conservation planning requirements.
  - **WHIP** –
    - Provides more opportunities for NIPF owners.
    - Allows for state, regional and national conservation initiatives.
    - Changes cost-share rate
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Conservation (Title II)

- **Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative** –
  - Addresses priorities involving agriculture and NIPF land and to encourage cooperation among producers

- **Conservation Stewardship Program** –
  - New, renamed program
  - Allows, on a national basis, for up to 10% of acreage to be NIPF.

- **Conservation Reserve Program** –
  - Allows for state, regional and national conservation initiatives.
  - Opportunity for cost-sharing thinning; producing biomass
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Conservation (Title II) cont.

- **Environmental Service Markets** –
  - Provision to aid development of private-sector market-based approaches for environmental goods and services.
  - Carbon markets to be initial emphasis.

- **Chesapeake Bay Watershed** –
  - New initiative to improve watershed health.
  - Authorizes up to $188 million total in CCC funds.

- **Voluntary public access program** –
  - Grant program for States and Tribes to encourage farm, ranch and forest land to make their land available for wildlife-dependent recreation.
  - Up to $50 million total in Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds.
Energy (Title IX)

- **Definition – Renewable Biomass** Inclusive of materials from federal lands. This definition applies only to Farm Bill Energy Title

- DOES NOT amend the Renewable Fuels Standard def. in HR6- Energy Independence and Security Act
Energy (Title IX) cont.

- **Forest Biomass for Energy** –
  - competitive research and development program to encourage use of forest biomass for energy.

- **Community Wood Energy** –
  - Grant program for state and local communities to plan, develop, and acquire community wood energy systems.

- **Biomass Research and Development** –
  - directs research into feedstock development, biofuels and biobased products development, and biofuels development analysis.
Energy (Title IX) cont.

- **Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) (FSA)** – assistance for establishment, production, harvest, storage and transport of renewable biomass

- Requires:
  - Establishment of BCAP project areas
  - Producer contracts with USDA: NIPF owners eligible

- Payments:
  - Contract payments to producers in BACP
  - Delivery payments for collect or harvest eligible materials delivered to conversion facility in BCAP project area.

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Other Titles

- **Horticulture and Organic Agriculture (X)**
  - **Pest and Disease Revolving Loan Fund** –
    - Low interest loans to local governments for equipment & contracts to aid in combating invasive species outbreaks.
    - May fund monitoring, removal, and disposal of infested trees.

- **Trade and Tax Title (XV)**
  - **Conservation Easements** –
    - Enhanced tax deduction for contributions of conservation easements extended through 2009
Other Titles, cont.

- **Trade and Tax (XV) cont.**
  - **Credit for Production of Cellulosic Ethanol**
    - $1.01/gallon production credit for cellulosic ethanol producers
  - **Comprehensive Study of Biofuels**
    - Directs Treasury to lead a study with USDA, EPA, DOE and the National Academy of Sciences.
    - Report will include a study of available biomass feedstocks from forests and farms.