

Wildfire Reduction Market Expansion Act Summary

This legislation updates the Renewable Fuel Standard's (RFS) definition of “renewable biomass” to make woody biomass broadly eligible for RFS compliance and RIN generation.

The bill expands the definition of renewable biomass to include a broad range of forest-derived materials from private, federal, tribal, and wildfire-risk reduction activities.

Eligible Feedstocks

(II) Forest Products Manufacturing Residuals

The bill broadly adds materials generated during forest products and wood products manufacturing, including wood residuals, paper residuals, sawdust, wood chips, bark, shavings, and paper recycling residuals.

(IV) Trees, Shrubs, and Forest Management Residuals

The bill broadly makes eligible trees, shrubs, and parts of trees or shrubs (“forest-based woody biomass”) from the following sources:

(A) Non-Federal Land

The bill makes eligible forest-based woody biomass from non-federal lands that are:

- Managed under a recognized forest or logger certification program;
- Classified by state or local governments as forestland, timberland, or land in forestry use;
- or*
- Managed for long-term timber production, as attested by the landowner.

(B) Federal Land

The bill makes eligible forest-based woody biomass from National Forest System and Bureau of Land Management lands when the material:

- Results from commercial or noncommercial land management activities, including fuel reduction treatments, ecological restoration projects, and pre-commercial thinning;
- Is not reasonably suitable for use as a sawlog; and
- Is harvested in compliance with applicable federal laws and management plans.

(C) Tribal Land

The bill makes eligible forest-based woody biomass from Tribal lands, including tribally owned lands, Tribal trust lands, and lands subject to federal restrictions on alienation.

(V) Wildfire Risk Reduction and Community Protection Activities

The bill makes eligible vegetation removed through:

- Defensible space activities conducted within 100 feet of homes, infrastructure, and other occupied areas; and
- Wildfire risk reduction projects conducted within the wildland-urban interface (WUI).

Additional Conditions and Safeguards

Certification Procedures

The bill establishes a streamlined certification process for certain eligibility determinations under the legislation. Certifications may be provided in the form of a letter submitted as part of the RIN generation process and include:

- For non-federal lands managed for long-term timber production, certification by the landowner;
- For federal lands, certification by the appropriate USDA or Department of the Interior office that the statutory eligibility requirements have been satisfied; and

Savings Clause

The legislation clarifies that an otherwise authorized forest management project does not need to expressly identify renewable fuel or biomass energy production as an intended end use in the applicable forest plan or resource management plan in order for the resulting material to qualify as renewable biomass under the Renewable Fuel Standard.