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IN



Report: Wood Bioenergy And Soil Productivity Research

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Timber harvesting can cause both short- and long-term changes in forest ecosystem functions, and scientists from USDA Forest Service (USDA FS) have been studying these processes for many years. Biomass and bioenergy markets alter the amount, type, and frequency at which material is harvested, which in turn has similar yet specific impacts on sustainable productivity. The nature of some biomass energy operations provides opportunities to ameliorate or amend forest soils to sustain or improve their productive capacity, and USDA FS scientists are leading the research into these applications. Research efforts to sustain productive soils need to be verified at regional, national, and international scope, and USDA FS scientists work to advance methods for soil quality monitoring and to inform international criteria and indicators. Current and future USDA FS research ranges from detailed soil process studies to regionally important applied research and to broad scale indicator monitoring and trend analysis, all of which will enable the USA to lead in the sustainable production of woody biomass for bioenergy.

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