



3 July 2019



**SENT TO LSU AGCENTER/LOUISIANA FOREST PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT CENTER - FOREST SECTOR / FORESTY PRODUCTS INTEREST GROUP**

Rebuttal to NRDC/Dogwood Alliance Post:



## **Biomass101 Refutes Anti-Forestry Extremists with Facts, Science**

Posted by [Forest2Market](#) on April 2, 2019

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The most effective way to make a lie seem true is to simply repeat it again. And again. And again. And (if funding allows) again.

An opinion piece authored by The Dogwood Alliance and published by *The Hill* on March 21 relied on this tired tactic, as Dogwood made yet another attempt to change the global conversation about working forests based solely on fear. To rebut the misinformation, Biomass101 has compiled an excellent “redlined” [refutation](#) with actual evidence and science.

Dogwood instigates its attack by tapping into the current strain of fearmongering that is weaving its way through the political establishment. Dogwood begins, “The introduction of The Green New Deal resolution and the appointment of a House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, has propelled climate change back into the national policy debate. That’s why today, on the International Day of Forests, hundreds of citizens across the nation are urging members of Congress to stand up and protect America’s forests and to hold the US forest industry accountable for its contribution to climate change.”

Biomass101 concisely addresses these fabrications with the following facts:

- “Our ‘contribution’ to the forest includes growing two times more wood than is harvested annually, ensuring our forestland is growing, not shrinking, and pulling carbon out of the atmosphere.”
- “Good news! Our forests are already protected. In fact, there are 20% more trees in the U.S. today than there were in 1970.”

Dogwood then goes on to make a number of profoundly illogical silvicultural and economic comparisons, including, “The rate and scale of logging in the Southeastern U.S. alone is approximately four times that of South American rainforests. Protecting forests within this context is a challenge.” Which was followed by,

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“The U.S. manufactures approximately \$300 billion in wood products annually, accounting for about 4.5 percent of manufacturing GDP, on par with the nation’s automotive and plastics industries. Remember how the automotive industry helped killed the electric car back in the mid-1990s? It took nearly 20 years and the passage of new fuel efficiency standards to get an electric car back on the assembly line.”

Biomass101 again addresses these fabrications with the following facts:

- “U.S. Southern forests are thriving. They have grown 24% between 1997 and 2017 – all while the Southeast provides wood to produce paper and wood products needed to house families and provide useful paper, packaging and tissue essential for today’s busy consumers.”
- “Fortunately, the U.S. forest products industry has a strong and meaningful commitment to sustainability where companies certify their supply chains to external standards or adopt sustainable forestry plans.”

Further down in the op-ed, Dogwood predictably wades back into the wood pellet dispute with, “The latest example is a suite of government climate policies and subsidies that have facilitated a rapid expansion in the production of wood pellets as a ‘renewable,’ ‘carbon neutral’ fuel substitution for coal in electricity generation. Meanwhile, leading climate scientists warn that burning wood will exacerbate climate change, releasing even more CO<sub>2</sub> per unit of energy generated than coal and further degrade vital forest carbon sinks.”

Biomass101 combatted with the following facts:

- “First of all, over 100 forest scientists representing more than 80 top research universities have twice written to the EPA supporting the carbon neutrality of biomass, saying that using forest bioenergy is a positive for addressing climate change.”
- “Secondly, comparing carbon emissions at the moment of combustion ignores one half of the natural carbon cycle of trees and forest products. Trees and plant matter emit carbon through decay and absorb it through growth. A real scientific assessment would not view half of the carbon cycle completely out of context.”

Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Dogwood’s willingness to repeat blatant lies about forest health in the US demonstrates a remarkable level of cognitive dissonance. Forest2Market’s own [research](#) unequivocally proves that growth in demand for forest products (i.e., lumber, paper, packaging and wood pellets) has led to greater forest productivity and a significant increase in the amount of forest inventory available for storing carbon.

In the end, it is difficult to discern what Dogwood Alliance’s solution is to the problems they construct with faulty logic. Are they calling for the eradication of the forest products industry, a move that would leave rural communities without jobs and home builders using building materials that are far less carbon



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friendly than wood? Do they understand that most forests in the south are privately owned? If so, are they advocating for the eradication of certain private property laws? Are they in favor of an outright forceful possession of American forests from private owners? These questions can only be answered by another question: if those in the Dogwood Alliance truly believe their own arguments, shouldn't they be focusing on solutions instead of repeating specious arguments in opinion pieces and courtrooms year after year without ever effecting real change?

Topics: [forest sustainability](#), [biomass sustainability](#), [forest management](#), [forest inventories](#), [working forests](#), [forest policy](#), [healthy forests](#), [renewable energy](#)

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