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U.S. Forest Service: Wood should be a major component in green building

WASHINGTON, DC (Sept. 29, 2011) – The Binational Softwood Lumber Council today applauded a U.S. Forest Service study finding that wood should factor as a primary building material in green building.

Study authors advocate for greater use of life cycle analysis in building codes and standards as an environmental benefit. Advancement in life cycle analysis, combined with “new technologies for improved and extended wood utilization are needed to continue to advance wood as a green construction material,” according to a Forest Service release announcing the agency’s study titled, “Science Supporting the Economic Environmental Benefits of Using Wood and Wood Products in Green Building Construction.”

“We appreciate Sec. Vilsack’s support for the wood products industry, which creates important jobs and supports hundreds of local communities, many of them rural,” said Cees de Jager, executive director of the Binational Softwood Lumber Council. “The Forest Service study reaffirms that wood is a renewable and responsible choice that helps reduce our carbon footprint.”

“This study confirms what many environmental scientists have been saying for years,” the Forest Service release quotes Vilsack as saying. “Wood should be a major component of American building and energy design. The use of wood provides substantial environmental benefits, provides incentives for private landowners to maintain forest land, and provides a critical source of jobs in rural America.”

Wood costs less—economically and environmentally—while delivering more in terms of its beauty, versatility and performance. It meets code requirements in a wide range of low- and mid-rise building types, and can be used as a low carbon alternative to steel, masonry and concrete in many applications. Innovative new technologies and building systems have enabled

longer wood spans, taller walls and higher buildings, and continue to expand the possibilities for wood use in construction. Wood is more than a building material; it's a renewable and responsible choice.

The U.S. forest products industry supports more than one million direct jobs and contributes more than \$100 billion in gross domestic product.

About Binational Softwood Lumber Council

The Binational Softwood Lumber Council, a nonprofit organization, was established in 2006 by the Canadian and U.S. governments. The council is leading the effort to increase the use of wood products as part of the shift to green building. Sustainably harvested wood products from North America create jobs in rural communities, sequester significant amounts of carbon and help reduce the overall environmental footprint of a home or building. Council's effort includes initiatives that bring together expertise from various disciplines to promote the use of North American wood products in green building. It is an excellent example of the council's ability to bring together landowners, private businesses and government agencies from Canada and the U.S. to achieve a common goal. For more information, visit www.softwoodlumber.org.