

**USDA's announcement to embrace wood as a green building material  
applauded as a "triple win"**

**Washington, DC — March 30, 2010** — Mr. Cees de Jager, Executive Director of the Binational Softwood Lumber Council, applauded an announcement today by USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack that embraces wood as a green building material. Mr. de Jager described today's announcement as a "triple win"—"This will create new jobs in rural communities, reduce energy use in buildings, and lower overall construction costs in buildings."

"USDA is taking a leadership role in the U.S. to put people back to work in rural communities and help our environment. What USDA proposes to do is what we are seeing already in Europe, the U.K., Canada and New Zealand. Internationally, thousands of multi-story buildings are being built entirely of wood. New technologies for wood beams, floors, walls and roofs render them equal in strength to steel or concrete but with a carbon-positive result and at a savings in overall cost. Builders are discovering that switching to wood for framing can save 10 to 15% in material costs and time to build. One recently built 6-story apartment complex in British Columbia saved 12%--\$4.8 million—in construction costs by using wood framing. In British Columbia, due to the growing success of the Province's Wood First Initiative, nearly 100 six-story wood-frame buildings are either under construction or consideration in 2011."

Across the U.S., wood product businesses support over 1 million jobs and provide billions in economic growth in rural communities. A typical wood-frame house stores enough tons of carbon to offset seven years of emissions from an average car. Sustainably managed

forests ensure that the carbon-absorbing role of forests is preserved. With strong wood products markets, forest owners are able to keep their forests as forests.

The Binational Softwood Lumber Council, a non-profit 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:**

Cees de Jager

T. 604 536 7730

[dejager@softwoodlumber.org](mailto:dejager@softwoodlumber.org)

**For more information on the Binational Softwood Lumber Council:**

<http://www.softwoodlumber.org>