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June 28, 2006

Mr. Read Smith  
Mr. Bill Richards  
25 x '25 Alliance  
1225 Connecticut Ave. NW, #400  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Smith and Mr. Richards:

**The Society of American Foresters (SAF), representing over 15,000 forestry professionals across all segment of forestry, strongly supports the vision of Agenda 25 x '25.** This vision, to provide 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States from America's farms, forests, and ranches while continuing to produce safe, abundant and affordable food, feed, and fiber, is an ambitious yet achievable goal.

According to recent estimates by USDA and USDOE, the nation's forests alone, through increased utilization of forest biomass, could provide electricity for over 40 million households annually, on a sustained basis. In addition to providing a renewable source of energy, utilization of woody biomass helps address a number of forest health and forest management challenges across the country. Forest management practices needed to improve wildlife habitat and forest health, provide clean water, or reduce wildfire risk, can be expensive. Opening energy markets for low grade and otherwise unmerchantable wood, will give forest managers more opportunities to do these types of activities and ultimately improve forest conditions. Additionally, where private forestland owners are involved, these opportunities can ensure owning forestland is economically viable by increasing income possibilities.

We look forward to working with the partners in the Agenda 25 x '25 Alliance to address a number of issues currently preventing greater utilization of woody biomass. These issues include lack of infrastructure, lack of a reliable supply to enable investment in infrastructure, inaccessibility of material, and high costs and low profit margins. It is important too, that as we encourage greater utilization of woody biomass for energy, we continue to encourage production and use of other wood products, which by themselves have substantial energy and environmental benefits as compared to non-renewable alternatives.

Long-term sustainable forest management can provide environmental, economic, and social benefits, including expanding the nation's renewable energy resources. We strongly support this vision to ensure increased and continued use of renewable materials from forests to enhance the nation's energy security. We hope the action plan developed to implement this vision addresses the above issues and look forward to participating in its development.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Marvin D. Brown  
President

