



PRESS RELEASE:

BARNWELL COUNTY DESIGNATED BIOECONOMY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY ZONE

-- 'A' RATING FOR LOCAL FOREST AND SAWMILL RESIDUALS EXPECTED TO DRIVE NEW BIOBASED MARKET DEVELOPMENT TO BARNWELL COUNTY --

January 17, 2022, 10:00 am eastern daylight time

SouthernCarolina Regional Development Alliance and Ecostrat are pleased to announce the issuance of a new Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone (BDO Zone) designation for Barnwell County, South Carolina. The 'A' Rating for forest and sawmill residuals is expected to drive new market development for bioeconomy projects that can utilize the region's more than 12.1 million green tons per year of woody biomass.

"We have known for years that our region is perfect for the growth of forest product manufacturing, which is already a key sector of our economy. However, the new BDO Zone rating provides an assurance through third-party certification that the 75-mile region centered by Barnwell County has the available bio feedstock, anchored suppliers and the strong infrastructure needed for manufacturers, including those that are investing in multimillion dollar facilities, creating hundreds of jobs," said **John Fleming, Director of Development for SouthernCarolina Alliance**. "In short, it's an indication that the due diligence has been completed, and our region is primed for success in this type of manufacturing, removing much of the uncertainty for investment."

Jordan Solomon, President of Ecostrat, states: "A BDO Zone rating signals that a region has undergone rigorous and extensive due diligence using over 100 standardized, transparent, and validated risk indicators based on the [BSCR Standards for biobased investment](#). "A" and "AA" BDO Zone Ratings identify areas in the country best positioned for low-risk bioeconomy project development.

BDO Zones do three key things: they help project developers identify new project locations easier and faster; they help investors more quickly deploy capital in these regions; and they help communities create new clean energy jobs. Oftentimes, small communities don't have the platform or the credibility to promote themselves as great areas for future biobased development. BDO Zone designations change that, and raise the flag over these communities as some of the best areas in the country to build the next bio-based plant."

American biomass provides an economic development engine with the potential to create 160,000 jobs and nearly \$15 billion of economic benefit. The BDO Zone Initiative can help the U.S. realize this potential by supporting new market development for American bioenergy, advanced biofuels, biobased heat and power, bio-materials, and clean hydrogen.



For more information on the Barnwell County, SC BDO Zone, or to read the full Risk Rating report, visit www.bdozone.org.

About Barnwell County

Barnwell County, South Carolina is located in the Southwestern corner of the state. Bordering the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, the county is located close to the ports of Charleston and Savannah with well-planned, buffered industrial sites and state-of-the-art infrastructure. Forest products are key to the regional economy surrounding Barnwell County, where major forest product manufacturers like Swiss Krono and Cascades Paper Products have invested nearly one billion dollars in manufacturing operations.

About SouthernCarolina Regional Development Alliance

SouthernCarolina Alliance is the non-profit regional economic development organization representing Barnwell, Bamberg, Allendale, Hampton, Colleton, Jasper and Beaufort Counties. The organization has facilitated over 2 billion dollars in private capital investment and almost 10,000 jobs in the region through new and expanding industries.

For more information on SouthernCarolina Alliance, visit www.southerncarolina.org. To connect directly with Kay Maxwell, Vice President of Marketing, please email kmaxwell@southerncarolina.org.

About The BDO Zone Initiative

The BDO Zone Initiative (www.bdozone.org) is an economic development platform that enables local communities to deploy powerful economic development tools – BDO Zone Ratings—to achieve the goal of driving, accelerating and catalyzing biobased investment and commercial project development in BDO Zone designated regions for new biofuel, renewable chemical, biogas and bioproduct plants. BDO Zone ratings do this by carrying out credible technical evaluations on feedstock and infrastructure risk, and then enabling communities to effectively and easily signal and promote key feedstock and infrastructure “success” characteristics valued by biobased developers and investors around the world.

‘AA’ or ‘A’ rated BDO Zones identify the best areas for low-risk bioeconomy project development. BDO Zone ratings enable distressed communities to add capacity to support deployment of innovative technology and infrastructure, and this drives regional economic development to areas where poverty has been persistent for generations, harnessing natural resources to support biobased manufacturing and renewable energy production.

BDO Zones have the ability to move the needle on job creation, decarbonization, and social justice. By achieving the goal of 1,000 BDO Zones in four years across the U.S., this Initiative has the potential to



create over 160,000 clean jobs, reduce green house gas (GHG) emissions by 2.59%, and provide \$30,000,000/year into the local economy.

For more information about the BDO Zone Initiative, please visit www.bdozone.org.

About Ecostrat

Ecostrat led the USDOE/BETO funded project to develop the new investment [Standards and Ratings for Biomass Supply Chain Risk](#). Its Biomass Supply Group has over 25 years of experience in sourcing and supplying over 5 million tons of biomass feedstock for bioenergy, biofuel, and biochemical projects across North America. Its Advisory Group combines the BSCR Standards with powerful predictive analytics to understand and minimize supply chain risk.

Jordan Solomon is Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative and President of Ecostrat. He has overseen development and operation of biomass supply chains for over 5,000,000 tons of feedstock over two decades for bioenergy, biofuel, and biochemical projects.

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For more information on Ecostrat, visit the company's website at www.ecostrat.com/standards.