



PRESS RELEASE:

LESSER SLAVE REGION, ALBERTA ISSUED BDO ZONE 'BBB' RATING FOR WOODY BIOMASS

– Boosting Regional Economic Growth and Fostering Local Business Development in Indigenous Communities –

December 4, 2024



[First Indigenous Energy Services Inc.](#), [Ecostrat](#) and the [BDO Zone Initiative](#) are pleased to announce the issue of an investment grade BDO Zone 'BBB' Rating for the Lesser Slave Region, Alberta. The BDO Zone rating for 155,000 oven dry tonnes per year of woody biomass is North America's first BDO Zone Rating based in an Indigenous region, extending within a 150-km radius from Kinuso, AB.

The rating was supported by funding from Natural Resources Canada's Clean Fuels Fund. The Lesser Slave Region BDO Zone is supported by FIND Energy and key regional partners, who are committed to advancing biobased project development within the BDO Zone.

The Lesser Slave Region's 'BBB' rating indicates a good prospective capacity to support new biobased plant operations, with a low risk associated with Feedstock Supply and Infrastructure (FS&I) in the Zone. The region features a strong, historically performing forest industry, a lack of competitors within the BDO Zone, and promising long-term wood supply prospects from dedicated thinning operations for wildfire prevention. The Mitsue Industrial Park, a key regional forest industry hub, offers a development parcel zoned for heavy industry and ideally suited for biobased projects requiring a reliable supply of biomass.

"The 'BBB' rating underscores the significant opportunity for increased Indigenous participation in the forestry and bioenergy sectors, driving economic development, job creation, and skills training in the region," said **Melissa Minks, President of First Indigenous Energy Services Inc.** "We foresee a national ripple effect as this increased involvement sets the stage for more Indigenous-led bioenergy projects across the country."



“Forestry residuals are a valuable resource that can be utilized to create employment and benefit communities in the Lesser Slave Region. The 'BBB' BDO Zone Rating validates this potential and will lead to better utilization of the mountains of biomass currently wasted in this area.” **Mike Daniels, former owner-operator of M&M Logging.**

“The 'BBB' BDO Zone Rating highlights the great opportunity to utilize forestry residuals in the Lesser Slave Region from forestry operations, including from private landowners. This rating is set to attract investments that will benefit the entire community.” **Toso Bosis, President of ATTS Group.**

“Utilizing and collecting forest residuals for bioenergy and electrical power generation is imperative for sustainable forest management in the Lesser Slave Lake Region. The BDO Zone Rating reinforces this importance and will accelerate such initiatives.” **Pat Guidera, Treespective Forestry Consulting.**

“This BDO Zone Rating will create significant opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to collaborate on bioenergy projects, driving economic growth and sustainability in the region.” **Albert Klyne, COO FIND Energy.**

Jordan Solomon, Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative, added, “The Lesser Slave Region's 'BBB' rating marks a significant milestone as North America's first BDO Zone Rating based in an Indigenous region. This designation underscores the immense potential for Indigenous-led bioenergy projects, and will serve as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth, fostering local business development, and creating new opportunities in Indigenous communities.”

To see the full BDO Zone Rating for the Lesser Slave Region, AB, please click [here](#), or visit www.bdozone.org.

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About First Indigenous Energy Services Inc (FIND Energy)

Established in 2018, FIND Energy's Biomass-to-Clean Energy Partnerships pioneer economic empowerment, diversity in job creation, increased employment & training, and generational economic benefits while achieving a cleaner environment. FIND Energy custom-selects thermal conversion technologies and recent proven innovations to match the partnering Indigenous community's prerequisites and the available feedstock resources in the area.

Our ultimate aim is to transform each facility into an Indigenous-based Employment Hub, fostering economic growth and empowerment. For more information on **FIND Energy**, visit www.findenergy.ca.



About *The BDO Zone Initiative*

The BDO Zone Initiative certifies regional readiness for bio-based manufacturing, creates global connections with project developers, and ignites an influx of clean energy opportunities.

A BDO Zone rating is an internationally recognized standards-based technical risk assessment of biomass feedstock, supply chain, and infrastructure risk with respect to the development potential of new biofuel, renewable chemical, biogas, and bioproduct plants. Investment grade ratings attract new bio-based manufacturing plants to the areas where they are most likely to succeed-- and create jobs.

For more information on the BDO Zone Initiative, contact info@bdozone.org. To view all BDO Zone ratings, visit www.bdozone.org. Check out the BDO Zone [LinkedIn](#) page for news and updates.

Ecostrat is the North American leader in biomass due diligence for biofuels, renewable chemicals, biogas, and bio-product project development and finance.

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