

PRESS RELEASE:**NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI ISSUED BDO ZONE 'AA' RATING FOR WOODY BIOMASS**

– 'AA' Rating Signals Exceptionally Low-Risk Bio-Based Project Development Opportunities –

May 11, 2023



The BDO Zone Initiative has issued an 'AA' rated BDO Zone designation for Natchez, Mississippi for 4.1 million bone-dry tons per year of woody biomass.

Natchez Inc. and Ecostrat are pleased to announce the issuance of a new Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone designation for woody biomass.

The Natchez BDO Zone is rated **'AA'**, or **very low risk**, based on numerous positive indicators such as a strong surplus of available biomass, a large number of potential anchor suppliers, and a healthy forestry labor market. Approximately 4.1 million bone dry tons per year of woody biomass is generated in the Natchez BDO Zone, defined by a 100-mile radius of Natchez.

Natchez's Rating for Forest Residues, Pulpwood & Sawmill Residuals is the second ever **'AA'** rating issued in North America. The **'AA'** Rating issue indicates that Natchez merits strong consideration as a location for new bio-based project development that requires stable, long-term supplies of woody biomass.

"Natchez, Inc. is excited for Adams County's official certification as a **'AA'** rated BDO Zone, which opens up new possibilities for the development of woody biomass projects. Our region is privileged to be situated in close proximity to abundant natural resources and a strong transportation system. We are eager to see this designation act as a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity in our community whilst providing us with a competitive edge in the forestry products market." states **Chandler Russ, Executive Director of Natchez, Inc.**

"It gives us great pleasure to announce that Natchez has earned a **'AA'** BDO Zone Rating, a distinction that has been awarded to only a select few in North America," said **Jordan Solomon, Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative**. "This significant achievement is a result of Natchez undergoing rigorous and extensive due diligence, utilizing standardized, transparent, and validated risk indicators based on the [BSCR Standards for biobased investment](#). We commend Natchez for their commitment and effort in promoting the growth of a greener, more prosperous economy that benefits future generations."

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

About the City of Natchez and Adams County

Natchez is the oldest city on the Mississippi River where preservation and progress go hand in hand. Adams County is positioned in direct access to roads, rail service, an active port facility and airport. With a population of approximately 32,000 county-wide, this area serves as a hub for Southwest Mississippi. Natchez also boasts a lower-than-average cost of living, steadily declining crime rate, quality healthcare and a booming cultural scene which make it an attractive destination for both businesses and residents.

The forestry and wood processing industry sectors in the Natchez BDO Zone have a long history of performance, dating back to the 19th century, and are one of the major industries within the Region. The vast majority of timberlands (77 %) in the Zone are privately owned and are being properly managed in order to support the industry with feedstock availability.

The Natchez – Adams County area provides exciting opportunities for businesses including an abundant labor force, excellent transportation network, readily available land and buildings for business relocation and expansion, as well as a strong economic development plan. Natchez has four industrial sites which are located near the Mississippi River – (1) 214-acre Belwood site on River Terminal Road; (2) 37.65-acre Majorca site located adjacent to River Terminal and Port Road; (3) 270-acre Mississippi River Energy Complex located at Carthage Point Road; and (4) Riva Ridge site located near to Lower Woodville Road. Transportation via highway, water and rail is easily accessible to all four sites.

About Natchez Inc.

Natchez, Inc. is Natchez and Adams County's lead economic and community development agency. Their mission is to serve existing and new businesses and industries – all with the goal of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of area residents.

For more information about **Natchez Inc.**, visit www.natchezinc.com. The BDO Zone Local Development Leaders (LDL) are **Chandler Russ, Executive Director** (cruss@natchezinc.com) and **Aimee Guido, Project Manager** (aguido@natchezinc.com).

About *The BDO Zone Initiative*

The BDO Zone Initiative is an economic development platform that enables local communities to deploy powerful economic development tools – BDO Zone Ratings – to drive, accelerate, and catalyze biobased investment and commercial project development in BDO Zones.

A BDO Zone rating is a standards-based technical risk assessment of biomass feedstock, supply chain, and infrastructure attributes of a region with respect to the feasibility and development potential of new biofuel, renewable chemical, biogas, bioproduct, or clean hydrogen plants.

BDO Zone ratings help regions and communities attract new biobased project development and participate in the growing global bioeconomy by demonstrating the maturity of local biomass supply chains and whether or not they are developed enough to support biobased manufacturing without excessive risk.

For more information on the **BDO Zone Initiative**, please contact info@bdozone.org. To view all current and upcoming BDO Zone designations, visit www.bdozone.org or check out the BDO Zone [LinkedIn](#) page for all news and updates.

About Ecostrat

Ecostrat is the North American Leader in supplying biomass due diligence for biofuels, renewable chemicals, biogas, and bio-product project development and finance. Ecostrat led the USDOE/BETO funded project to develop the new investment [Standards and Ratings for Biomass Supply Chain Risk](#).

The Advisory Group combines the BSCR Standards with powerful predictive analytics to understand and minimize supply chain risk. The Biomass Supply Group has 25 years of experience in sourcing and supplying more than 5 million tons of biomass feedstock for bioenergy, biofuel, and biochemical projects across North America.

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

Jordan Solomon can be reached at jordan.solomon@ecostrat.com. For more information about **Ecostrat**, visit the company's website at www.ecostrat.com/standards or check out the Ecostrat [LinkedIn](#) page for all news and updates.