

PRESS RELEASE:

RICHLAND PARISH, LOUISIANA ISSUED BDO ZONE 'A' RATING FOR WOODY BIOMASS

– 'A' Rating to Support Biomass-Based Clean Energy Development –

March 12th, 2024



The BDO Zone Initiative has issued a BDO Zone 'A' rating for Richland Parish, Louisiana for 677,000 bone dry tons per year of woody biomass.

The [Richland Parish Chamber of Commerce](#) and [Ecostrat](#) are pleased to announce the issue of a new Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone designation for woody biomass. The BDO Zone encompasses a 75-mile drive distance from the center point in Rayville, LA, and is the first BDO Zone 'A' rating in Louisiana for Pulpwood, Forest Residues and Sawmill Residuals.

The Richland Parish BDO Zone has earned a *'high quality'* investment-grade 'A' rating, which speaks to the robust forest products industry, reliable biomass supply, and well-established supply chains. The region's industrial and transportation infrastructure, pro-business community, and cost-effective operations enhance its appeal. Richland Parish is home to many Louisiana Economic Development Certified Industrial Sites that provide convenient access to rail, water, power, and natural gas, located near Interstate 20 and US Highway 183, offering a stable base for large-scale bioeconomy projects.

"This is a novel achievement not only for the Fifth District but for the entire state," added **Congresswoman Julia Letlow**. "Bringing a BDO Zone to Richland Parish will create widespread opportunity - from job creation and economic stimulation, to new energy projects. I am excited to see the benefits for decades to come."

Scott Franklin, Director and Former Chairman of the Richland Chamber stated, "This is well over a year of hard work coming to fruition for our Parish. Richland Parish is the first BDO Zone in the state of Louisiana, which is quite an accomplishment for a volunteer service organization. Our former Chairman Lee Thomason and myself started this project with a three-day deadline and no playbook as to how to make this happen. The Richland Chamber has yet again shown its resilience and limitless potential."

Jordan Solomon, Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative stated, “677,000 dry tonnes of biomass can support a variety of bio-based project development or at least one major biorefinery. The Richland Parish BDO Zone presents a significant opportunity for project developers seeking a reliable and substantial supply of verified low-risk feedstock, coupled with the robust infrastructure capacity.”

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

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About Richland Parish

Richland Parish is located in the heart of the I-20 corridor and Louisiana’s namesake “Sportsman’s Paradise”. With significant Interstate access, KCS rail running throughout the parish, and five Louisiana Economic Development Certified Industrial Park sites, this is often viewed as the next breakthrough location for industrial expansion. Home to the largest cotton gin in the state of Louisiana and the largest sweet potato processing facility in the world, Richland Parish is a prime location for advanced manufacturing, food processing and bio-energy creation.

Led by the vibrant Richland Parish Chamber of Commerce, and home to the last three US Congressional representatives, this forward thinking and pro-business community takes a very active and hands-on approach to economic development. Low cost of living and significant access to some of the best small game hunting and freshwater fishing in the country makes Richland Parish an ideal place for relocation from increasingly unaffordable urban lifestyles.

For more information about the **Richland Parish Chamber of Commerce**, visit www.facebook.com/richlandparishchamber. The BDO Zone Local Development Leader (LDL) is **Scott Franklin, Director of the Richland Chamber** (scottfranklinjr@gmail.com).

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**, 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](#) which were subsequently used in the development of the [CSA W209:21 Biomass supply chain risk National Standard of Canada](#).

Ecostrat's Advisory Group combines the BSCR Standards with powerful predictive analytics to understand and minimize supply chain risk. It's 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 can be reached at jordan.solomon@ecostrat.com. For more information about **Ecostrat**, visit the company's website at www.ecostrat.com or check out the Ecostrat [LinkedIn](#) page for all news and updates.