

SOUTHWEST COLORADO ISSUED BDO ZONE 'BBB' RATING FOR WOODY BIOMASS

– 'BBB' Rating Will Support Timber Industry Expansion and Job Creation –



June 24th, 2025 – [Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado, Inc. \(Region 9 EDD\)](#), [Ecostrat](#) and the [BDO Zone Initiative](#) are pleased to announce the issue of an investment-grade BDO Zone 'BBB' Rating for Southwest Colorado. The BDO Zone is rated for 61,600 bone dry tons per year of woody biomass and extends within a 75-mile driving distance from the center point, Mancos, Colorado.

Southwest Colorado's 'BBB' rating indicates good prospective viability of Feedstock Supply and Infrastructure and low current expectations of default risk in the Zone. The capacity to support new biobased plant operations is considered adequate. The region features existing logging and grinding equipment capacity sufficient to supply rated biomass quantities, with limited competing uses for available biomass resources. A 30-acre industrial site in Mancos offers co-location opportunities with existing forest products operations, with access to low-cost utilities and shared infrastructure to expedite permitting and operations.

"Our 'BBB' rating validates the forest resource potential of Southwest Colorado as a reliable source of biomass for biobased manufacturing," stated **Laura Lewis Marchino, Executive Director, Region 9 EDD**. "With strong existing wood product operations and several co-location and scattered site opportunities, we're positioned to diversify our rural economy through woody biomass partnerships that add value to our forest resources while creating new economic opportunities throughout our region. We greatly appreciate the thorough work of the BDO Zone Initiative, in which more than 25 stakeholders were interviewed."

Veronica Medina, Archuleta County Commissioner, advocated for Southwest Colorado's BDO Zone Rating and stated, "With the increasing presence of beetle-killed pines and rising wildfire risks, we're presented with a unique opportunity to turn dead and excess biomass into renewable energy and usable products. For decades, our economy was supported by natural resource industries like ranching, mining,

and timber. In the 1970s, wood products alone made up 30% of the county's total income, generating over \$7.4 million in earnings over the following two decades. Though manufacturing declined with the fall of the timber industry, accounting for just 2% of employment by 2015 (2016 CEDS), we now have a chance to revitalize that sector.

In April 2025, the Forest Health Council visited Archuleta County, where we proudly showcased state-of-the-art equipment capable of transforming forest byproducts into energy and high-demand materials. These materials can support everything from local job creation to the production of affordable housing, meeting one of our community's most urgent needs. This demonstration was more than just impressive—it was a signal that this industry is ready to turn the page."

Jordan Solomon, Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative, stated, "Southwest Colorado's BDO Zone 'BBB' rating for woody biomass, combined with its strategic location at the intersection of four states and extensive development-ready industrial space, creates favorable conditions for companies looking to establish cost-effective biobased operations that can leverage existing forest product infrastructure."

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

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About *The BDO Zone Initiative*

The Biofuel Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone Initiative certifies 'regional readiness' for bio-manufacturing, creates global connections and ignites an influx of new energy opportunities for farmers, economic developers, and rural businesses. A BDO Zone rating is an internationally recognized, standards-based technical risk assessment of a region's feedstock, supply chain, and infrastructure risk with respect to the development potential for new biofuel plants. BDO Zone ratings are *site location bullseyes* for bio-project development. Investment grade ratings are force-multipliers for attracting new manufacturing plants to the areas where they are most likely to succeed, drive investment 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. **Jordan Solomon** is Chairman of the *BDO Zone Initiative* and President of Ecostrat (www.ecostrat.com). He can be reached at jordan.solomon@ecostrat.com.