

Effects of Bioenergy Production on Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat: An Overview of the Forthcoming TWS Technical Review and Implications for Forestry in the Southeast

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Abstract: The production of bioenergy “feedstocks” (i.e., plant-based material used for transportation fuels, heat, and power) has been expanding rapidly in recent years. Unfortunately, there are considerable gaps in our knowledge base about implications of this industry expansion for wildlife. This information deficit is likely to grow as the industry expands and rapidly evolves in new directions in the coming years. In response, The Wildlife Society (TWS) Council charged a special committee to develop a TWS Technical Review about the effects of bioenergy production on wildlife and wildlife habitat. The scope of the review includes all types of bioenergy, with a heavy emphasis on cellulosic forms of bioenergy for heat and ethanol production. The Review takes an ecosystem approach and focuses on the current state of knowledge about the impacts to wildlife from growing, managing and harvesting feedstocks for bioenergy. We will describe the review process, preview the organization and content of the forthcoming Review, summarize the main findings, and focus on forest biomass in the Southeast as a case study.

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