

Climate-Smart Wood Group An Overview

Purpose

The goal of the Climate-Smart Wood Group is to help building owners, developers, architects, builders and other purchasers understand, locate and use climate-smart wood products. This includes products from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified forests and restoration projects designed to lower wildfire risk, reduce vulnerability to pests and pathogens, and increase forest diversity, resilience, and carbon storage.

Supporting Building Project Teams

The Climate-Smart Wood Group is managed jointly by Ecotrust, Sustainable Northwest, Northwest Natural Resources Group, Washington Environmental Council, and the Forest Stewardship Council to help building project teams successfully identify, access, and use climate-smart wood. The group will help communicate efficiently with suppliers, aggregate demand, and advance incentives for green building projects to use climate-smart wood.

The group is new, and we will fine-tune it to meet the needs of participants. Initially we plan to focus our efforts on the following ways to support building projects:

- Understand and make the case for use of climate-smart wood products.
- Help project teams source wood from FSC-certified forests and restoration treatments.
- Explore ways to increase the supply of climate-smart wood products in the marketplace.

Because we hear from project teams on a near-daily basis, we know there are many people trying to do the right thing in their wood specifications and purchases. Our goal is to help you be more successful, and to grow the market so others can succeed as well.

Background

Mass timber, including cross-laminated timber, and tall wood buildings are capturing imaginations. While there are many reasons to use wood in construction, climate change is increasingly cited as a primary motivator. When sourced from a responsibly managed forest, wood can reduce carbon emissions, especially compared to concrete and steel.

But all wood is not the same. Forest management affects carbon storage, human communities, water, and habitat. Climate-smart forestry – which relies on actions such as selective harvesting, longer rotation lengths and tight restrictions on hazardous chemicals – can store more carbon than commonly practiced forestry.

In the pulp and paper sector, large companies have influenced forest management and supply chains through their purchasing policies. The construction sector is less vertically integrated, with many smaller players working independently. The Climate-Smart Wood Group is a way to bring these players together to share what works, provide support efficiently, aggregate demand information, communicate a consistent message to the supply chain, and identify incentives to support green building projects use of climate-smart wood.

How to Get Involved

If you are interested in getting involved with the Climate-Smart Wood Group, please email Brad Kahn (b.kahn@us.fsc.org).