



# PELLET FUELS INSTITUTE

IN ALLIANCE WITH THE HEARTH, PATIO & BARBECUE ASSOCIATION

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## **PELLET FUELS INSTITUTE MEMBER TESTIFIES BEFORE CONGRESS**

### ***Confluence Energy's Mark Mathis Asks Congress to open Mount Pine Beetle Kill Trees to Biomass Industry***

**June 19, 2009**, (Arlington, VA) - Mark Mathis, president of Confluence Energy, Kremmling, CO, and member of the PFI's Government Affairs and Commercial Fuel Committees, testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources' Subcommittee on Water and Power and its Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands on June 16 to ask Congress for access to dead and dying timber caused by the Mount Pine Beetle kill.

Joining Mathis in testifying were members of Congress from western states, representatives from the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior, state and local government officials, and business owners from Colorado, Montana and Wyoming.

"The biomass industry is in need of better access to this type of feedstock," he stated. "The dead, dying, downed and diseased wood in our forests could be put to beneficial use. The pellet industry, along with other biomass industries, could utilize this feedstock in a sustainable manner, while also helping with forest fire mitigation and suppression."

In testimony given by Congressman Jared Polis (D-CO), he stated that the Mount Pine beetle kill is "the biggest in recorded history" and demanded proactive attention including thinning the forests for renewable biomass use.

In Mathis' testimony, he urged Congress to act quickly, noting the limited shelf life of dead and dying trees and the need to harvest those trees quickly and by doing so would create jobs, produce renewable energy and economic development in rural areas.

"The pellet industry is part of the solution to the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation," Mathis said. "The pellet industry can use this un-merchantable wood and put it to a beneficial use."

The message conveyed in Mathis' testimony was very well-received by members of the subcommittees, as well as in additional meetings Mathis and PFI Government Affairs Manager, Seth Voyles, had with congressional leaders and staffers.

**The Pellet Fuels Institute**, located in Arlington, Virginia, is a non-profit trade association dedicated to promoting the use of wood pellets and other biomass fiber fuels. For more information about pellet heat, contact the Pellet Fuels Institute at (703) 522-6778 or [www.pelletheat.org](http://www.pelletheat.org).