



NEWS RELEASE

USDA FOREST SERVICE • FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NR # 20110308-01

March 8, 2011

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USDA Forest Products Laboratory Director to Retire

MADISON, Wis.— After a 35-year career, USDA Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory (FPL) Director Dr. Christopher Risbrudt has announced his retirement effective April 1, 2011.

Risbrudt was named director of FPL in September, 2001. Under his direction, research at FPL focused on improving forest health and promoting the wise use of wood and wood products. Risbrudt streamlined the Laboratory's work into five broad future-oriented areas (biorefining, nanotechnology, advanced structures, advanced composites, and underutilized woody biomass) and encouraged collaborative research efforts and technology transfer activities.

Risbrudt said his time at FPL has been especially gratifying. "The last 10 years have been among the most rewarding of my career," says Risbrudt. "While there is probably never a good time to retire, this feels like the right time because FPL seems well-positioned to move forward."

Risbrudt came to FPL with an extensive background in planning and management both in the Forest Service headquarters in Washington, D.C., and in the field. He was also familiar with FPL, having begun his Forest Service career as a research forester there in 1978.

Risbrudt's career is marked by many accomplishments. Perhaps the most notable at FPL is the new Centennial Research Facility (CRF), a dynamic 87,000-square-foot facility designed to consolidate research activities and allow for maximum collaboration between scientists and with outside partners. Risbrudt was also instrumental in developing new legislation that allows private start-ups or other entities to rent space and equipment at FPL, pilot-test new processes, and then sell any resulting products. His success in garnering support for this facility and for the new legislation is a testament to Risbrudt's vision for the Forest Products Laboratory and unwavering belief in the Laboratory's mission.

Developing the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS), a collection of databases that contain biological, social, and economic information, is also a stand-out achievement for Risbrudt. He and other colleagues consolidated the contents of 600 databases into just six that now make up the NRIS, a vital tool for forest planning and other analyses in the National Forest System.

In 2004, Risbrudt's efforts and achievements were recognized when he was named Laboratory Director of the Year by the Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer.

The Forest Service Chief and Deputy Chiefs are responsible for selecting the director of the Forest Products Laboratory. There has been no announcement on Risbrudt's replacement.

The USDA Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory was established in 1910 in Madison, Wisconsin, with the mission to conserve and extend the country's wood resources. Today, FPL's research scientists work with academic and industrial researchers and other government agencies in exploring ways to promote healthy forests and clean water and improve papermaking and recycling processes. Through FPL's Advanced Housing Research Center, researchers also work to improve homebuilding technologies and materials. Information is available at FPL's Web site: www.fpl.fs.fed.us.

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EXTRA:

In 1980 Risbrudt was assigned to the Forest Service's Washington, D.C., office as an economist with State and Private Forestry staff. He then served as a research project leader at the North Central Forest Experiment Station in St. Paul, Minnesota. from 1983 to 1985, when he returned to Washington as director of Policy Analysis. He later was named deputy regional forester for the Forest Service's Northern Region, headquartered in Missoula, Montana.

Risbrudt returned to Washington as director of Ecosystem Management in 1995. He was named director of Strategic Planning and Resource Assessment in 2001, and later that year, acting deputy chief, Programs and Legislation. He was also designated to assist the transition for the new administration. Risbrudt serves on the National Forest Foundation board and served as department coordinator for IUFRO's Forest Products division for five years.

After graduation from the University of Minnesota in 1972, he served in the Peace Corps as a forest planner in Morocco. After returning to the United States, he attended Michigan State

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University, where he earned a master's degree in forest administration and a Ph.D. degree in forest economics.