

**Statement of
John Twiss, Supervisor Black Hills National Forest
Forest Service
United States Department of Agriculture
Before the
United States Senate
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**

**Concerning:
The Black Hills National Forest's Experience with Bio-diesel Fuel
July 6, 2001**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the Black Hills National Forest's experience with bio-diesel fuel.

On July 1, 1999, the Black Hills National Forest became the first forest in the nation to use B-20 bio-diesel fuel. This fuel, which we mix, consists of 20% soybean oil and 80% diesel fuel. There are several advantages to using the B-20 mix including: decreased emissions and an increase in its cetane rating, which makes it a more efficient and cleaner burning fuel that is more favorable to the environment.

Since the beginning of this program, the Black Hills National Forest has used over 19,000 gallons of B-20 bio-diesel. The equipment has varied from dozers, motor graders, and heavy trucks that are used for construction and maintenance of our infrastructure, to lighter pick-ups used for firefighting and administration of the Forest. At no time during the last two years of use have we noticed any adverse effects to the equipment. Our scheduled maintenance has remained unchanged.

The only downside that we have noticed while using the bio-diesel fuel is that it costs approximate twenty percent more than conventional diesel fuel. I understand the cost of the soybean oil has decreased since our last purchase and this may translate into lower prices in the future. The Black Hills National Forest will conclude its pilot test at the end of this month and so far all results have been very positive.

This concludes my testimony and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.