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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thyfault to speak at Pacific 2012 International Maritime Conference in Australia; REAP Grants open now

Cindy Thyfault, Founder and CEO of Westar Trade Resources, will be speaking on "Finance Sector: Aggregating Capital for Scale Up Projects" at the Pacific 2012 International Maritime Conference, Sustainable Maritime Fuels Program in Sydney, Australia, February 1, 2012. Pacific 2012 IMC provides a unique opportunity for people involved in maritime and naval affairs around the world to discuss the latest developments in design, naval architecture, engineering, science and technology, with over 15,000 attendees worldwide.

"It is an exciting time to be traveling to Australia - the government has worked diligently with the private sector to create a new energy policy to develop long-term sustainable fuels and electricity production," Ms. Thyfault opined. "I am looking forward to working with developers and investors internationally to create and establish financial structures that can bring these new advanced technologies to the commercial stage worldwide."

Three themes-prosperity, security, and sustainability-underpin the Australian government's approach to energy policy. The government has undertaken a comprehensive review of its energy policies and approaches, and has developed a long-term framework to ensure that a sustainable energy advantage is utilized for the benefit of all Australians.

REAP Program Update

On January 20, 2012, the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) issued a Notice of Funding Availability in the Federal Register. The Notice also announced acceptance of applications for the program.

REAP is a core program under the USDA Rural Development Energy Programs intended to increase U.S. energy independence and develop greater energy efficiency. The REAP program provides financial assistance to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to finance a variety of energy production and conservation projects, including renewable energy systems, energy efficiency improvements, feasibility studies, energy audits, and renewable energy development assistance.

This year, funding for the REAP program is just over \$60 million with approximately \$12.5 million in allocations to the grant program and \$48.5 million to the guaranteed loan program. REAP grants cover up

to 25% of eligible project costs up to \$500,000 for energy systems and \$250,000 for energy efficiency projects. The maximum REAP loan amount is 75% of the total project cost up to \$25 million.

All applications must be submitted to USDA Rural Development State offices. Most applications are due March 30, 2012 (no later than 4:30 pm local time). Additionally, projects over \$200,000 require a feasibility study with the application package. It is important to start early to ensure a complete application is submitted on time!

Deadlines:

- For energy audits and renewable energy development assistance applications: February 21, 2012.
- For renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement grant applications and combination grant and guaranteed loan applications: March 30, 2012.
- For renewable energy system feasibility study applications: March 30, 2012.
- For renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement guaranteed loan only applications: On a continuous basis up to June 29, 2012.

Westar has helped clients receive over \$2.1 million in REAP grants, loans and combined applications. Southwest Energy & Feed (Seminole, Texas) was successful in obtaining a \$500,000 grant and a \$1.1 million loan guarantee for a 1.6 million gallon per year biodiesel plant. Zurix Biodiesel (Thomaston, GA) also received a \$500,000 grant for a \$5 million biodiesel project through this program in 2008. Last year, Mississippi Moonshine (Clarksville, MO) also received a \$20,000 grant for an ethanol fueling station.

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For more information, please contact Westar Trade Resources for a free consultation:

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