

Colorado Forest Biomass Use Work Group: Minutes
Tuesday 30 August 2011 · 9AM – 2:30PM

In Attendance

Joe Duda, Susan Ford, Jan Hackett, Mike Eckhoff, Tim Reader, Doug Robotham, John Scahill, Phil Kastelic, John Stulp, Rob Davis, Kathryn Valdez, Leanne Arrant, Michelle Stermer, Joe Pandey, Sandyn Skudneski, Dave Ferrill

Welcome and Introductions

The Work Group meeting convened at 9:10. Joe Duda made several announcements:

- A working draft report will be disseminated to the Work Group by September 9th. Turnaround times for edits will have to be less than a week.
- The September 28 meeting will be split in half with the first half reserved for reviewing the draft report and the second half for participating with “For the Forest.”
- Reservations should be made for the night of the 27th at the Carbondale Comfort Inn. CSFS will reimburse your lodging expenses once you provide an original lodging receipt to Tim Reader.
- Lodging Contact Information:
Carbondale Comfort Inn
920 Cowen Drive (Highways 82 and 133)
Phone: (800) 473.5980
- We will be meeting at the Crystal River Café in Carbondale and provide small breakfast service and lunch.
- **Important:** Please RSVP your attendance at September’s meeting to Tim Reader by **Sep. 23rd**.
- We will meet at 8AM (Please note the time change!) at the Crystal River Café, 1374 Main Street (970-704.2612).
- For the Forest’s Regional Biomass Summit will run from 12:45pm - 04:30pm at the Carbondale Town Hall, 511 Colorado Avenue.

Richard Stem, Dean Rostrom and Kendric Wait (Evergreen Green Energy): Gypsum 10 MWatt Co-Gen Power Plant Construction and the Process So Far

The Evergreen Green Energy PowerPoint is on the document depot in PDF format.

Some take-home points:

- A 10MW plant will be constructed in Gypsum, CO in the first quarter of 2012.
- Power will be produced starting in the fourth quarter of 2013.
- Targeted fuel supply consists of forest thinnings.
- Projected supplies will be mostly private lands and landfills, with some public support.
- Legislative help could come in the form of long-term supply guarantees and contracts.

Kathryn Valdez (Xcel Energy): PSCo and Biomass

The Xcel Energy PowerPoint is on the document depot in PDF format.

Some take-home points:

- PSCo is involved with forest biomass energy projects.
- Initial attempts focused on stand-alone generation but did not progress.
- Additional utility-scale projects must overcome a number of barriers, including reducing fuel supply uncertainty and reducing risk among stakeholder groups.

- Clearing trees from rights-of-way poses a number of significant challenges.
- Barriers to address might include ways to make biomass more cost-competitive.

Joe Duda, Good Neighbor Authority

Joe gave a brief overview of the good neighbor authority. While the talk gave background, the information was used to explain why recommendations were included in the draft report.

Some take-home points:

- The authority began in 2000, when the USDA authorized the USFS to allow the CSFS to perform certain activities on USFS lands when performing similar activities on adjacent state and private lands.
- The GNA is set to expire on 30 Sep 2013.
- Typically, smaller projects work better with examples in Salida, Boulder, etc.
- Treatments are located in high-risk areas, in particular, the wildland-urban interface (WUI).
- Problems include funding limitations and the need to reauthorize GNA.

Additional Discussion on Additional Questions for Exploration (Think: barriers/recommendations)

Q6: Why is converting federal buildings to use forest biomass near impossible in Colorado?

A6: Many reasons exist.

- Title V permitting (regardless of innovation) is a barrier,
- Emissions could rile state standards.
- CO₂ in and of itself is a problem.

Q8: What are the components, including legal barriers at the local government level?

A8: Many of the factors have already been identified.

- Lack of access to a guaranteed supply.
- Lack of incentives, particularly for biomass (compared to other renewable)
- Location (ex. Voters may be in favor of biomass but NIMBY prevails)
- Lack of public education and understanding of the costs and benefits of biomass

Q9: On the Bottom-Up Economic Development Tour, why was biomass never mentioned?

A9: Many reasons exist.

- Biomass lacks visibility, popularity
- Possible ways to correct deficiencies:
 - PR Campaign (ex. "Life after the Bark Beetle)
 - Additional writing for misinformed and factually inaccurate editorials (ex. Summit Daily, etc.)
 - Check off for a support fund on sales tax forms
 - License plate
 - Tag lines ("Blue is green in Colorado;" "Be green, buy blue;" etc.)
 - Tout jobs (ex. Solar and wind provide jobs for install and occasional maintenance. Biomass needs more regular action so employment is more stable and of greater duration.)
 - Media blitz
 - Ask elected officials to request Governor Hickenlooper to star in ads for Colorado Forest Products program as he currently does for Colorado Proud program.

The draft report was then discussed at length. Changes to the drafts have been incorporated in the 9-Sep-2011 draft currently posted on the document depot.