

NOTES: SOFAR Biomass Work Group and Landscape Vision Committee held Oct. 28, 2021

Meeting in Brief

The county's consultant Greg Stanton is conducting research and developing a plan to present to the Board of Supervisors for establishing a biomass facility in the region. The Biomass Work Group will work with Greg and others that he identifies to inform the work underway.

Next Meeting: December 2, 2021, 12:30–1:30

Facilitator Gina Bartlett and County Consultant Greg Stanton will connect to plan that meeting.

Recent Activities and Funding Update

County Hires Consultant

Supervisor George Turnboo introduced consultant Greg Stanton who will work on developing a biomass facility. The county is working with community development funds via CDAC. The county is also working on easements and other issues associated with all the fire debris.

SMUD Project on Feasibility: Calfire did not accept the Great Basin Institute proposal that included the SMUD biomass feasibility

County Efforts to Advance Biomass Facility with Greg Stanton, County Consultant

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Greg retired from the county last May and has come back part time to support the county in its efforts to advance a biomass facility in the area. While at the county, Greg worked on state-mandated diversions for solid waste and also found solutions for green waste. He does not have specific expertise in biomass but has jumped in and is conducting research.

Greg has been investigating Cabin Creek, a 2MW project on a regional landfill outside of Truckee that has still not been built. He's also been understanding the potential benefit of the county receiving credit with the state if Pioneer Energy was purchasing the energy. Greg is also investigating the Sierra Institute's work, and Craig Thomas offered to introduce him to Jonathan Kusel. Locally, Chris Pain and Rob Pimental have a site that they would like to have considered for this purpose. Greg is planning to gather information and the return to the Board of Supervisors with feasibility and seek direction for next steps.

Feedback

Camponville Community Partnership and Freeman Powerplant could be helpful for lessons learned. They helped fund studies and community partnerships. (Chris Dallas, SNC)

[Link](#) to All Meeting Materials

Turning biomass into liquid fuels, rather than electricity, is another option.

Lots of plants have been “mothballed,” and not having access to rail is a significant limitation.

Norma Santiago is forwarding resource information to Greg. She reminded the group that relying on energy revenue is insufficient for financial viability. Generating multiple by-products is the best way to make it work financially.

Mobile technology is gaining traction and might be a candidate for this region. Other emergent technologies should also be considered, including biofuels, green wastes and solid waste technologies, and a demonstration plan in Las Vegas.

The conservation community has mixed attitudes about biomass so working with the SOFAR work group members could be advantageous to creating widespread support. Craig Thomas helped develop a letter with the conservation community called “*Right Scale, Right Place, Supportive,*” which might be instructive.

In 2020, The Nature Conservancy together with a consulting firm, Bain & Co. published a report examining wood products infrastructure and marketability related to accelerating forest restoration in the TCSI footprint (which includes SOFAR). [Here is a link to that 2020 report.](#)

Local mill owner Jeff Holland is processing small diameter logs.

The Sierra Institute is a strong demonstration of the triple-bottom line approach. As systems age-out, replacing propane or heating mechanisms in public buildings may be a viable opportunity.

Heavenly Ski Resort is looking at alternative energy for their ski resorts.

Congressman McClintock is helping request funding for this work.

Someone expressed frustration with the lack of support for funding for these initiatives when compared to the \$5 billion spent on fire suppression.

The Forest Service has existing agreements and would be open to committing to providing feedstock for this effort.

The wood supply analysis conducted by Mason Bruce and Gerrard would probably be of interest to this group.

Next Steps

The SOFAR Collaborative would like to support Greg’s efforts. As he identifies other partners, he would bring them to the biomass work group. Greg and Facilitator Gina Bartlett would work together to craft the agenda for these work group meetings.

[Link](#) to All Meeting Materials