

NEWS RELEASE



USDA Forest Service

State & Private Forestry

Technology Marketing Unit

Located at the Forest Products Laboratory

Madison, WI 53726-2398

Contact: Jean Livingston (608) 231-9242

E-mail: jmlivingston@fs.fed.us

August 6, 2007

Forest Service Announces Grants for State Wood Energy Programs

*Helping to jump start statewide programs that implement
woody biomass as a renewable, domestic energy source*

MADISON, WISCONSIN —\$800,000 for a one-time grant program has been awarded to State Foresters to support the development of projects that will help jump start statewide programs that implement wood-to-energy-technology.

“Our goal is to provide financial assistance through State Foresters that will accelerate the adoption of woody biomass as a renewable, domestic energy source while maintaining or restoring forest health” said USDA Forest Service Dave Atkins, coordinator for this grant initiative.

Woody biomass includes small trees, tree limbs, tops, needles, and other woody plants that are byproducts of forest improvements, ecological restoration, and hazardous fuel reduction treatment activities.

The grant process was lead by the Forest Service Technology Marketing Unit (TMU), located at the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin.

Atkins explained that “forest management can provide income, employment, and renewable energy that contribute to the economic health and diversity of rural communities. Many communities across the United States have already begun to utilize biomass byproducts for generating energy, such as steam and electricity.”

Individual grants were between \$25,000 and \$75,000. All grant recipients matched the federal portion by at least 50% of the total project cost.

Atkins emphasized that “This grant program will help State Foresters provide education, technical, and financial assistance to launch or strengthen a wood-to-energy program in their state.”

In total, 35 applications were submitted by 24 states, proposing almost \$5 million in projects. The following 13 states received awards for 15 projects:

Alaska	\$75,000
Arizona	\$63,000
Colorado	\$64,645
Idaho	\$52,750
Michigan	\$60,320
Minnesota	\$75,000
Missouri	\$40,235
Nebraska	\$37,000
New Hampshire	\$75,000
New York	\$50,000
Oregon	\$32,050
Oregon	\$25,000
Vermont	\$75,000
Wisconsin	\$75,000

##

Summaries of Grantees:

Alaska \$75,000 The state of Alaska, through the efforts of the Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group, has been assisting communities, schools, tribal entities, local governments, and nonprofit organizations to pursue woody biomass as a viable fuel for heating applications. The task group solicited and received 63 Statements of Interest in wood heating projects with the potential to displace nearly 888,000 gallons of fuel oil, nearly 50,000 gallons of propane, and 30,000 cubic feet of natural gas per year. From the 63 proposals, 34 were selected for follow-up. This project will cover the feasibility assessment of some of the projects, as well as the engineering and design of some others.

Arizona \$63,000 To ascertain the merits of embracing a statewide biomass thermal heating component for public buildings and school facilities by conducting a feasibility assessment at four selected locations in Northern Arizona. When completed, these assessments will enable administrators to make informed decisions about installation of biomass thermal heating systems.

Colorado \$64,645 Project is to lead an effort in providing wood-to-energy education, promotion, and investment by delivering credible woody biomass supply information and providing detailed information on wood-to-energy technologies, economic feasibility, and policy and legislative initiatives through a 2-week short course.

Idaho \$52,750 This project is aimed at jump starting an already successful "Fuels for Schools" program to reach a broader audience, such as institutional facilities that can use woody biomass fuel 24/7. Although the economics of installing woody biomass heating systems in schools makes these systems worthwhile, the real economic advantage comes from using woody biomass fuel in larger facilities that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days of the week, year round, such as hospitals, prisons, and universities. Work under this project will promote and help facilitate the use of woody biomass energy systems in these facilities. They will analyze the state boiler database to determine the most likely candidates for conversion, as well as the potential for new construction.

Michigan \$60,320 Purpose of this project is to estimate Michigan's available wood energy biomass and biomass supply to provide the State Forester with an essential tool to share with potential investors, communities, state agencies, and other policy and decision makers. The project will produce estimates and maps of standing biomass, annual growth, and current annual removals by species, ownership, product, and county using GIS databases.

Minnesota \$75,000 Obtain critical information on woody biomass demand through a survey of biomass-using facilities; develop a procedure for assessing potential supply of biomass from brush lands for a pilot area in Minnesota; train foresters, loggers, and landowners in the application of the newly developed woody biomass harvesting guidelines.

Missouri \$40,235 Project will evaluate the interest and feasibility of building long-term partnerships among key stakeholder groups in three regions of the Missouri Ozarks that have been identified as having the highest potential for a wood-to-energy conversion facility. The primary purpose of this project is to provide assistance to these regions to help them make informed decisions if a wood-to-energy project is right for them.

Nebraska \$37,000 Document amount of wood waste currently being produced in urban and wildland-urban interface and characterize its current disposal/use; identify and maintain database documenting the amount of wood waste generated and available for wood-to-energy conversion from non-industrial private forestlands; inventory and identify potential institutions that could utilize wood energy; and develop a replicable methodology that could be adopted by other states as a model for identifying and documenting the above information.

New Hampshire \$75,000 Currently, New Hampshire has 7 wood-to-energy plants producing 120 MW and using 1.7 million tons of woody biomass. Although this is impressive, the use of smaller, community-scale wood energy systems for heating has been limited. This project will encourage and promote the use of small, community-scale wood energy systems for schools and other municipal buildings, thereby increasing energy conversion efficiency, reducing energy costs, using locally grown renewable energy resources, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and further utilizing the state's abundant supply of low quality wood.

New York \$50,000 In conjunction with a wide variety of experienced cooperators, the New York State Forester's office proposes to plan, manage, and implement a woody biomass alternative energy jump-start program in the 14-county Adirondack region of the state. The project's ultimate goal is to provide individualized woody biomass pre-conversion feasibility analysis to at least 10 public facilities/institutions in the region.

Oregon \$32,050 In central Oregon, many managers of public buildings and manufacturing facilities are ready to adopt biomass boiler technology. Developing a cluster of

biomass-fired boilers to provide building heat for public agencies and process heat for industrial facilities can help central Oregon communities reduce the cost of hazardous fuels treatments on private forest lands, improve forest health, create opportunities for employment and income, reduce dependence on imports of non-renewable energy sources, and keep more money circulating in the local economy.

Oregon \$25,000 This is a feasibility and market research/development study. The purpose of this study is to assess the potential commercial opportunities and challenges in retrofitting or replacing existing boilers in Oregon with wood-fueled boilers.

Vermont \$48,310 Work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and others on particulate emissions concerns and databases necessary for establishing proper emission rules for particulates for small- to medium-scale wood combustion systems.

Vermont \$26,690 Complete detailed case study of North Country Hospital's wood-fired combined heat and power project in Newport, Vermont. Deliverables include set of outreach materials, outreach plans, strategies, and a list of potential audiences. The outreach plan will be used to target rural hospitals in Vermont as potential wood-to-energy sites. The findings will also be used to assess legislative and policies that hinder wood-to-energy facilities.

Wisconsin \$75,000 Develop an implementation plan for a commodity exchange program as a means to increase the efficiency of the supply chain that provides biomass to the existing biobased fuels industries, particularly for the emerging concept for biorefineries. Such an exchange will also be leveraged for the future trade of closed-loop energy crops, such as willow, poplar, and switch grass and as an offset to CO₂ emissions through synergies created with other regulated exchanges, such as the Chicago Climate Exchange.