

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY VILSACK HIGHLIGHTS RECOVERY ACT PROJECTS FOR WOOD-TO-ENERGY AND BIOMASS UTILIZATION PROJECTS AT WESTERN GOVERNOR'S ASSOCIATION MEETING

Highlights Projects Being Funded in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon and Washington

PARK CITY, Utah, June 15, 2009 – At the Western Governor's Association meeting today, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack highlighted several projects being funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for wood-to-energy and biomass utilization. These 30 projects, funded at \$57 million - \$49 million for wood-to-energy grants and \$8 million for biomass utilization - are located in 14 states. Twenty-three of the projects, totaling nearly \$39 million, are located in states represented at the WGA meeting, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon and Washington.

"President Obama understands the importance of decreasing our dependency on foreign oil and this is helping to do so by providing this funding for biomass and wood energy projects," said Vilsack. "These projects will not only advance the Administration's energy goals, but also stimulate the economy and create jobs by creating new industries."

Vilsack joined several other senior Obama Administration officials in a discussion with Western Governors of ways to tap into renewable energy opportunities in the West.

The ARRA grants highlighted by Vilsack not only support the shared goal of developing innovative sources for energy, these funds will help create markets for small diameter wood and low value trees removed during forest restoration activities. This work will result in increased value of biomass generated during forest restoration projects, the removal of economic barriers to using small diameter trees and woody biomass, and generation of renewable energy from woody biomass. These funds will also help communities and entrepreneurs turn residues from forest restoration activities into marketable energy products.

Biomass utilization also provides additional opportunities for removal of hazardous fuels on Federal forests and grasslands and on lands owned by State, local governments, private organizations, and individual landowners.

Projects were nominated by Forest Service regional offices and selected nationally through a competitive basis on objective criteria. A listing of the state-by-state breakdown of the wood-to-energy and biomass utilization projects can be found below. For information about specific projects please call the Forest Service or go to: <http://fs.usda.gov>.

Wildland Fire Management - Biomass and Wood-to-Energy Projects by State

Biomass Projects

State Number of Projects Estimated Amount to Accomplish (\$1000)

Arizona Total 2 500.00

Idaho Total 2 6500.00

Oregon Total 2 750.00

Washington Total 1 250.00

TOTAL 7 \$8,000.00

Wood to Energy Projects

State Number of Projects Estimated Amount to Accomplish (\$1000)

Arizona Total 1 1400.00

California Total 2 4748.00

Colorado Total 4 1000.00

Idaho Total 2 3250.00

Kentucky Total 2 2000.00

Maine Total 1 11424.00

Minnesota Total 1 250.00

Missouri Total 1 6000.00

North Dakota Total 1 237.00

New Mexico Total 1 2500.00

Nevada Total 1 620.00

Oregon Total 4 11100.00

Pennsylvania Total 1 400.00

Washington Total 1 4000.00

TOTAL 23 \$48,929.00