

County of Placer

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For immediate release

July 30, 2012

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PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OPENS FOR CABIN CREEK BIOMASS PROJECT

The draft environmental impact report for a proposed Placer County two-megawatt wood-to-energy biomass facility has been publically released. Coinciding with the report's release date of July 27, 2012, is the opening of the public comment period, which will run through Sept. 10, 2012.

The proposed project will use gasification technology to convert woody biomass gathered from area forests into energy. The site for the proposed facility is the county's Eastern Regional Materials Recovery Facility and Transfer Station at Cabin Creek, along State Route 89 between Lake Tahoe and Truckee. The entire Eastern Regional MRF and Transfer Station site is approximately 292 acres and the proposed facility would be on a 3.7-acre site in the southernmost area of the property. The site is in unincorporated Placer County.

The proposed project would include construction of an approximately 11,000 square-foot, two-story structure that would house the power generating and emissions control equipment, two 400-square-foot pads to potentially accommodate transformer and phase-shifting equipment, and about a one-acre material storage area. The storage area would include a 7,000 square-foot open-air pole barn structure to allow materials to dry before use in the energy generation process.

"The county's pursuit of an innovative biomass facility has been an open and thorough process," said Jennifer Montgomery, Chair of the Board of Supervisors whose Fifth District includes the proposed project area. "We are at an important juncture now, considering the viability of this facility at our Cabin Creek location. A biomass facility here in the Sierra Nevada will offer an environmentally-friendly way to deal with a huge amount of woody material choking our forests."

A public hearing on the Draft EIR will be held on Thurs., Aug. 30, 2012, at 1:00 p.m. in the Granlibakken Resort at 725 Granlibakken Rd., Tahoe City. The purpose of the hearing is to receive comments on the Draft EIR for the project. Comments related to the merits of the project will be considered at a later hearing.

Comments on the adequacy of the EIR should be submitted in writing at the earliest possible date, but no later than 5:00 pm Sept., 10, 2012, to Maywan Krach, Placer County Community Development Resource Agency, Environmental Coordination Services, 3091 County Center Dr., Suite 190, Auburn, CA 95603, by fax (530)745-3080 or by email: cdraecs@placer.ca.gov. Comments regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR not presented during the public review period may not be considered at subsequent hearings.

A copy of the Draft EIR is available for review during normal business hours at two county offices: Community Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Dr., Auburn, and at 775 North Lake Blvd., Tahoe City; the Tahoe City Library at 740 North Lake Blvd., Tahoe City; and Truckee Library, 10031 Levone Ave., Truckee.

Electronic copies of the EIR can be downloaded from the county's website at:

<http://www.placer.ca.gov/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/EnvCoordSvcs/EIR/CabinCreekBiomass.aspx>

Gasification systems generate electricity by transforming solid woody biomass into a synthetic (syngas) gas and combustion of the syngas in an internal combustion engine or turbine. Gasification is the thermochemical conversion of woody biomass into a syngas under controlled temperature and oxygen conditions; woody biomass materials are not burned in a gasification system.

In addition to the improvements the project area mentioned above, other onsite improvements would include eight parking spaces, a paved vehicle circulation area, new driveways on Cabin Creek Road and the access road to Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART) and County Department of Public Works (DPW) facilities located on the site, a paved haul road south of the material storage area, stormwater treatment facilities, including an infiltration trench and detention basin, retaining walls, and utility improvements/extensions.

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