

CA ad hoc Forest Biomass Working Group – eNewsletter 19/2020

New Publication tackles the Economics of Forest Management and Biomass. It's easy in the midst of a pandemic to forget that we are just a few short months from fire season. But wildfire doesn't care that humans are social distancing and California can't afford to ignore that our overstocked forests need immediate intervention. With the mounting costs of wildfire suppression and facing the enormous expense of rebuilding in the wake of destructive fires, it is imperative that California finds ways to improve forest and watershed health quickly and economically. Researchers from the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment have done precisely that in a new publication, "[Paying for Forest Health: Improving the Economics of Forest Restoration and Biomass Power in California.](#)" This report outlines the ways in which utilizing the by-products of forest management can not only reduce the costs of improving fire and climate resilience, but can be a constructive force for rebuilding disadvantaged rural economies by creating jobs—all while helping the state reach its goal of carbon neutrality by 2045.

Report highlights Importance of Bioenergy to reach Carbon Neutrality. Earlier this year the Lawrence Livermore National Lab (LLNL) released a [groundbreaking report](#) on the importance of carbon negative emissions to achieve California's climate goals. The report's overall message is very positive: California can achieve carbon neutrality by mid-century with existing technologies. The catch is that we cannot eliminate 20 to 30 percent of our climate emissions and so need to offset those emissions with carbon negative actions. The report focuses on the biggest opportunities for carbon negative emissions: bioenergy, biochar and carbon sequestration, natural and working lands, and carbon capture and storage. In addition to highlighting the importance of bioenergy to meet the state's climate goals, the report also recommends significantly increasing investments and policies to accelerate negative emission projects.

Free Online Prescribed Fire Webinar Series every Wednesday in May and the first Wednesday in June. Are you interested in using prescribed fire as a vegetation or fire fuel management tool? Would you like to learn more about options for prescribed fire on private lands, laws and permits, and community-based Prescribed Burn Associations (PBA)? If so, this online training series is for you! This training is designed for landowners, land managers, and anyone interested in learning more about fire ecology, how to plan and implement prescribed fire. The [webinar](#) will highlight successes from other counties, including the PBA model that is currently gaining momentum in counties across California. Whether you live in a mixed conifer forest, oak woodland, chaparral or grassland habitat, returning prescribed fire to California can be part of a well-managed property. This training will be conducted completely online in five 1-1/2-hour moderated sessions. The webinar sessions will be held online every Wednesday in May and the first Wednesday in June at 10:00 to 11:30 am. The cost is free, but [registration is required](#). Session 1 — Fire Ecology; Session 2 — Permitting; Session 3 — Prescribed Fire Planning; Session 4 — Resources for Burning; Session 5 — Benefits of Cultural Burn & PBA Next Steps Discussion. [Webinar Flyer and complete Agenda.](#)

Webinar: Biochar - from Forest to the Farm. [This webinar is the third presentation](#) in an 11-part monthly webinar series sponsored by the USDA Forest Service. The webinar is scheduled for [May 21, 2020 8:00 am PDT.](#)

NCRP Round 2 Solicitation for Demonstration Projects and Processes. The North Coast Resource Partnership has released an [RFP for Round 2 of the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Grant for Demonstration Projects and Processes](#) that contribute to goals of fuel load reduction, long term forest and ecosystem health, support for local infrastructure, and other related objectives. Biomass utilization

and energy projects, including energy modeling, design development, and permitting assessments, are specifically eligible. They expect to award several projects from \$25k - \$250k, with no match required. Eligible applicants include most entities, and the application deadline is May 22, 2020. There appears to be an opportunity for community-scaled biomass microgrids across the state, and this kind of funding could be an effective way to identify the most viable projects and position them for implementation dollars. Communities/entities in the North Coast region that are looking to move forward with a wood energy, combined heat and power (CHP), or combined cooling, heating and power (CCHP) project are encouraged to consider this opportunity to apply for forest biomass related grant funding.

Biomass Utilization Fund in Tuolumne County. Under a National Disaster Resilience (NDR) grant—an effort to help build Tuolumne County resilience as it continues to recover from the devastation of the 2013 Rim Fire—Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) have launched a **new \$17 million fund** that will provide loans to small businesses, nonprofits and public entities including federally recognized Tribes located or locating in Tuolumne County that will increase the use of low/no value wood from the surrounding forests and provide an alternative to pile burning of forest waste. HCD and SNC have entered into an agreement with RCAC to manage the Biomass Utilization Fund. More information, program background, contact information and application materials are available at www.rcac.org/BUF. RCAC and SNC will host a webinar for interested parties to learn more about the program and the application process on May 12 at 10 am. Click on [this link](#) to register, or contact RCAC Events staff at (916) 447-9832 ext. 1429, or email registration@rcac.org.

DID YOU KNOW? There is no toilet paper shortage. It isn't really about hoarding. And there isn't an easy fix. It's just that we are wiping in different places. [Read on...](#)