

CA ad hoc Forest Biomass Working Group – eNewsletter 35/2021

Can Renewable Gases help reduce Wildfire Risks and GHG Emissions? 2020 was one of the worst wildfire seasons in history and now 2021 is shaping up to be even worse. Climate change has drastically altered forest health and requires bold new strategies for conservation and sustainable management. The production of renewable gases from forest biomass presents both a means of reducing hazardous fuel loads and providing much needed resources for more sustainable forest management. A [free webinar on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 10 a.m. PDT](#) will feature speakers from the Governor's Office of Business Development (GO-Biz), the California Natural Resources Agency, The Nature Conservancy, and Bloom Energy. The webinar will focus on the potential for forest biomass conversion to renewable gas (biogas and hydrogen) to reduce wildfire risks and emissions, and is part of a [series of educational forums](#) that illuminates the critical role renewable gases can play in helping states reduce GHGs, improve air quality, enhance energy reliability and resilience, and achieve sustainable economic growth.

Innovations in Forest Operations and Biomass Utilization in the Southwest. Can we realize value-added products from Southwest small-diameter trees? Can we make forest operations and transportation more efficient and cost effective? Find answers to these pressing questions at the [Innovations in Forest Operations & Biomass Utilization in the Southwest](#) Seminar in Albuquerque, NM - November 17th – 18th 2021. Topics of interest are: Value-added products from small-diameter and low-value wood; In-woods forest thinning operations: machines, practices, and costs; Railroad transportation of woody biomass; Federal and state agency contracting; and Challenges and opportunities for Southwest forestry contractors. [Registration is open now.](#)

Request for Proposals for FY 2022 Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Grant Program. The Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) program provides USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry (S&PF) competitive grants focused on promoting collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes and on furthering priorities identified in State Forest Action Plans. [Proposals are now being accepted for the fiscal year \(FY\) 2022 cycle.](#) LSR projects must be cross-boundary, include a combination of land ownerships, and prioritize funding towards one or more of the following objectives: Reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfires; Improve fish and wildlife habitats, including those of threatened and endangered species; Maintain and improve water quality and watershed function; Mitigate invasive species, insect infestation, and disease; Improve important forest ecosystems; Measure ecological and economic benefits, including air quality, soil quality, and productivity. Projects can be for up to \$300,000 and can last for 3 years. The deadline to submit grant proposals will be September 15, 2021. [For more information please see the announcement.](#)

USDA Forest Service issues Brief related to Insurance and Wildfires. Wildfires continue to cause significant damage, especially in the western United States, and are being described as larger and more destructive than they were previously. However, a [recent report from The Nature Conservancy](#) highlights the use of ecological forest management practices, including forest thinning and prescribed burning, to drastically reduce risk to homes and businesses. By cutting that risk, the report finds that insurance companies can offer more affordable rates to customers who serve those areas. The USDA Forest Service has posted a [concise explanation of the study's findings.](#) The report was funded in part by an [Innovative Finance for National Forests](#) grant from the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, National Forest Foundation, and the USDA Forest Service.

Softwood Lumber Board and the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities launch Initiatives for increased Carbon and Sustainability Transparency in Wood Products. The [Softwood Lumber Board](#) and the [U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities](#) have announced [funding for carbon transparency projects](#). The funds will support coordinated research for the creation of resources and tools to enhance expertise and data across the wood product value chain. Three priority projects will address questions from the architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) sector to show how wood products and forests mitigate carbon emissions and the impacts of climate change.