

## CA ad hoc Forest Biomass Working Group – eNewsletter 5/2022

### **Webinar: Economic Tradeoffs and the Future of Forest Bioenergy in Climate Change Mitigation.**

Silvicultural treatments for forest restoration and fuels management generate woody biomass in the form of tops, branches, foliage, small trees and unmerchantable logs. These materials are often burned on-site to reduce wildfire risk and improve site conditions but can be used to produce bio-based heat, power, fuels, chemicals, biochar, and other bioproducts. Use of these materials can contribute to rural economic development, enhance regional energy security, reduce the net cost of forest management, reduce risks associated with severe wildfire, and help mitigate climate change. This [presentation](#), hosted by the USDA Forest Service, Research & Development, in cooperation with the USDA Climate Hubs, will provide an overview of forest bioenergy, its challenges and opportunities from an economic perspective, and explore mechanisms for overcoming major barriers to bioenergy's expansion to support a vibrant bioeconomy and sustainable forest management. [Friday, February 4, 2022, 10am Pacific](#). The presentation will follow an update on USDA Forest Service and Climate Hub activities.

**Business and Workforce Development Grants Virtual Workshop.** CAL FIRE's Wood Products and Bioenergy team recently opened their Business and Workforce Development Grants solicitation. Up to \$24 million is available for eligible business development and workforce development projects. An additional \$4 million is available for improvement or development of native tree nurseries. The Wood Products Team held a virtual workshop on January 26 to share more about this new and exciting grant opportunity. The [virtual workshop was recorded](#) and is now posted to the [Wood Products webpage](#). It is strongly encouraged that viewers review the [Business and Workforce Development Grant Guidelines](#) as well. For information about the workshop or solicitations, visit the [Wood Products webpage](#). Please direct any questions to [woodproducts@fire.ca.gov](mailto:woodproducts@fire.ca.gov)

**How a Forest Disappears: Conversion of Forest to Non-forest Vegetation following Wildfire.** Scientists are seeing an increase in cases where forest resilience is pushed beyond a breaking point. Within the last few decades, wildfires in the western United States have increasingly burned so severely that some forests are unlikely to return to their pre-fire state and may convert to different forest types or even to non-forested systems like grassland or shrubland. Research ecologist Sean Parks (with the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute housed within the Rocky Mountain Research Station [RMRS] in Missoula, Montana) is collaborating with scientists and managers to understand why, when, and where severe wildfires are likely to occur and how they may lead to forest conversion. The evidence shows wildfire severity has increased over the last three decades and the trend is expected to continue into the future with changing climate. Forest conversion and loss is most likely along the lower-elevation trailing edges of forests in the western United States where conditions are becoming increasingly warmer and drier. Catalyzed by high-severity fire that eliminates tree cover, conversion becomes increasingly probable without viable seedlings. Wet years that are more favorable for seedling establishment are projected to become less frequent in dry forests. Read more about it in this [Science You Can Use Bulletin](#), a publication of the USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station.

Past Bulletins are archived here <https://www.fs.usda.gov/rmrs/science-you-can-use>.

**Science You can Use Spring 2022 Webinar Series.** The USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS) is offering a [Science You Can Use Spring 2022 Webinar Series](#) (times are Mountain Time!). Join the webinar series featuring seven land-manager focused webinars presented by Rocky Mountain Research Station scientists and collaborators. These one-hour sessions will begin with concise

presentations followed by Q&A and discussion. Webinars will be hosted on Zoom. Recordings will be posted on [the program page](#) as soon as they are available. Continuing credits for SAF and The Wildlife Society will be available.

**Council of Western State Foresters Infrastructure Law Briefer.** The Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) conducts research and publishes information for use by members, forestry professionals, policymakers, and all others who wish to deepen their understanding of the critical issues and opportunities facing Western and Pacific island forests. [Policy and legislative updates are found on the CWSF webpage](#) and one can review their publications using search filters based on issue area and publication type. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) ([link to CWSF briefer](#)) is continuing to work towards implementation, with federal agencies working to complete the spending plans required to Congress by the February deadline. The USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) released a 10-year strategy aimed at addressing the escalating wildfire crisis. This provides a framework for the IIJA and other funds to strategically target areas of high risk across landscapes. Utilizing this strategic framework, funding included within the last Continuing Resolution (CR) will target post-fire and hurricane recovery efforts and new projects were selected under the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership.