

## CA ad hoc Forest Biomass Working Group – eNewsletter 5/2024

**2024 North American Biochar Conference.** The US Biochar Initiative will host the [2024 North American Biochar Conference](#) in Sacramento on **February 12 - 15, 2024**. Under the theme “Climate Action with Biochar for Economic and Ecosystem Resilience”, the conference is set to convene thought leaders, innovators, policymakers, and practitioners from diverse sectors, all committed to a climate-resilient future. Discover the latest trends and innovations in biochar, from market opportunities to climate solutions, at the North American Biochar Conference, the premier event for networking with industry leaders and innovators. At the conference, you will have the unique opportunity to connect with fellow biochar leaders, sharing insights and experiences in the ever-evolving field of biochar. This conference serves as a pivotal platform for engaging with experts and peers, fostering valuable connections that can lead to future collaborations, partnerships, and career advancements. The event provides a powerful platform for networking, brand exposure, and discovering new market opportunities, helping to expand a business's reach and impact in the biochar sector.

**CAL FIRE Wildfire Resilience Block Grants.** CAL FIRE is announcing up to \$8 million in funding for Wildfire Resilience Block Grants. This funding supports California’s goals of improved forest health, resilience to climate change, and reduced forestland impacts due to devastating wildfires in line with the goals of the [California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force](#). CAL FIRE will accept proposals starting January 29, 2024, with proposals due no later than **February 26, 2024, 5 PM PST**. Additional application information including grant guidelines, eligibility requirements and deadlines can be found on the [Forest Resilience Program website](#). All grant work must be completed by December 31, 2027. The purpose of the Wildfire Resilience Block Grant is to address several action items outlined in the [Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force Action Plan](#) including increasing technical assistance, improving outreach supporting forest health and maintenance treatments, and establishing emergency forest restoration teams. Block grants will be awarded to eligible entities who have the capacity to deliver forestry-based technical and financial assistance programs to non-industrial forest landowners ranging in size from three to 5,000 acres. Eligible entities must be capable of acting as lead agency for California Environmental Quality Act projects. In addition, \$1 million of the \$8 million in funding will be allocated specifically for forest stewardship education.

**CAL FIRE Business and Workforce Development Projects.** CAL FIRE is soliciting applications for California business and workforce development projects that support healthy resilient forests and the people and ecosystems that depend on them. Competitive projects will sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A total of \$20 million in funding is available. Applications will be accepted until midnight on **March 8, 2024**. To apply, go to the [Wood Products and Bioenergy webpage](#) for a link to start your application. CAL FIRE’s Wood Products and Bioenergy Program supports the creation of a robust and diversified wood products industry to facilitate the economic and sustainable management of California’s forests. This grant funding will create financial incentives for industries to invest in clean technologies, develop innovative ways to process wood products, and support the growth of a strong forest-

sector workforce. A virtual pre-recorded workshop is available to explain the grant process and requirements. Please check the Wood Products and Bioenergy webpage to view the workshop. Questions can be directed to [WoodProducts@fire.ca.gov](mailto:WoodProducts@fire.ca.gov). Projects that receive funding from this grant program are designed to complement the [California Forest Carbon Plan](#), [California's Natural and Working Lands Implementation Plan](#), [California's Wildfire & Forest Resilience Action Plan](#), [California's Strategic Plan for Expanding the Use of Beneficial Fire](#), and [AB 32 Climate Change Scoping Plan](#).

**How Bioenergy contributes to a sustainable Future.** Bioenergy is one of the important and necessary elements in combating climate change. Climate change, however, is not the only driver of bioenergy deployment. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the risks inherent in global supply chains and—triggered by rising energy prices—the value of a diversified supply that is more regionally based. With energy security having again become a critical issue, [bioenergy is able to improve the resilience of societies around the globe](#) by providing greenhouse gas emission reductions, regional energy supply, income to rural communities, and energy system flexibility. The [Bioenergy Review 2023 report](#) presents an evidence-based assessment of the status of bioenergy around the world. The assessment is based on work conducted by some 200 experts, active within the [Tasks of the Bioenergy Technology Collaboration Programme \(TCP\)](#) of the [International Energy Agency \(IEA\)](#). The aim of IEA Bioenergy is to advance technologies and to provide factual input to evidence-based decisions. The information presented is intended to reinvigorate awareness and interest in bioenergy, address concerns arising within the public debate, demonstrate the [synergies between bioenergy and other renewables](#), and point out opportunities that can be seized by many countries around the globe.

**Public Webinars on Draft Priority Climate Action Plan under the US EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant CPRG Program.** The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) invite to participate in a series of three virtual public webinars on the State's draft Priority Climate Action Plan developed for the [U.S. EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant \(CPRG\) Program](#). The webinars may include presentations from metropolitan areas within each region listed below that are also developing their own Priority Climate Action Plans for submission to EPA. All interested stakeholders and members of the public are invited to register for [any or all of the three webinars](#). Following the webinars stakeholders and interested members of the public are invited to [send in their comments](#) on the state's Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) by **February 12, 2024**. The state's plan will be finalized and submitted to EPA by March 1, 2024. The [U.S. EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants \(CPRG\) program](#) provides \$5 billion in grants to states, local governments, tribes, and territories to develop and implement ambitious plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution. Authorized under Section 60114 of the Inflation Reduction Act, this two-phase program provides \$250 million for noncompetitive planning grants, and approximately \$4.6 billion for competitive implementation grants.