

Wisconsin Council on Forestry
Task Group Summary Report
Bill Horvath, Chairman

Task Group Issue Description:

The Forests of Wisconsin provide a wide range of economic, social and environmental uses. Acreage of forestland continues to grow. Presently billions of dollars are exported each year from Wisconsin to meet energy needs. The issue is what role Wisconsin forests can play in woody biomass utilization to meet a growing demand for energy and fuel.

Recommended outcome:

Presently Wisconsin has no energy policy and no public policy for the use of woody biomass to assist in meeting Wisconsin's fuel and energy demands. The outcome of this task group will be to provide public policy and a legislative framework to more effectively use woody biomass to meet those needs.

Action Plan:

Task 1

Review current forest inventory analysis (FIA) data.

Objective:

To determine the amount of available woody biomass in the state that would serve as a basis for decision making in its use for fuel and energy.

Responsible Party:

Bill Horvath, Task Force and DNR.

Timeframe:

3 months (March – May 2004)

Task 2

Beyond FIA, conduct an economic analysis of increased biomass use.

Objective:

Determine how the increased use of woody biomass would impact the state's economy in general and on three local economies.

Responsible Party:

Bill Horvath

Timeframe:

Completion of the FIA review to December 2004.

Task 3

Review woody biomass use for fuel and energy in the state by public and private sectors to ascertain obstacles in its use.

Objective:

Find ways to reduce economic, social and other obstacles to increase use of woody biomass for fuel and energy.

Responsible Party:

Bill Horvath

Timeframe:

December 2004 – June 2005

Task 4

Review of industrial wood residue use in the state, obstacles and opportunities for use.

Objectives:

To make greater use of industrial wood now being buried or discarded.

Responsible Party:

Bill Horvath

Timeframe:

December 2004 – June 2005 (concurrent with Task 3)

Task 5

Explore feasibility for development of small power plants in Northern Wisconsin

Objective:

The utilization of woody biomass for energy from the Northern one-half of the state, which has the bulk of the woody biomass supply.

Responsible Party:

Task Force and Wisconsin Public Service Commission and others?

Timeframe:

June 2005-December 2005

Task 6

Explore other environmental benefits from woody biomass utilization, including city urban tree disposal, ecosystem health and wildlife benefits.

Objective:

Obtain and maximize the full range of benefits from biomass use for energy and fuel.

Responsible Party:

DNR urban forestry and wildlife staff

Timeframe:

June – December 2005

Task 7

Develop a support system backed by research and institutional arrangements that will provide growth and maintenance of utilization of woody biomass for fuel and energy.

Objective:

Institutionalize the use of woody biomass utilization through research education and support systems in public and private facilities.

Responsible Party:

UW system and others.

Timeframe:

December 2005 – June 2006

Task 8

Conduct an analysis of existing state legislation and public policy for dealing with woody biomass utilization.

Objective:

Develop overall state legislation that can be used to support increased woody biomass utilization and to develop model legislation for use by the Council of State Governments.

Responsible Party:

Task force committee, state Legislature

Timeframe:

Beyond June 2006

3-01-04

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