



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of Communications

1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300
(202) 720-4623
oc.news@usda.gov
www.usda.gov

News Release

Release No. 0115.16

Contact:
Office of Communications
press@oc.usda.gov
(202) 720-4623

USDA Awards Funds to Expand, Accelerate Wood Energy and Wood Products Markets in 19 States *Projects Support Innovation and Forest Health*


WASHINGTON, May 13, 2016 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell today announced over \$8.5 million to expand and accelerate technologies and strategies that promote the use of wood in commercial construction, heat and power generation, and other wood product innovations that also benefit forest health. Federal funds will leverage more than \$18 million in investments from 42 business, university, nonprofit and Tribal partners in 19 states, for a total investment of \$27 million.

"We are looking for opportunities to reduce forest restoration costs and create more jobs through strong forest products markets," said Chief Tidwell. "This funding supports improving forest health on the National Forest System lands and other forested lands and promotes the economic and environmental wellbeing of rural communities."

The awarded funds will stimulate the use of hazardous fuels from National Forest System lands and other forested lands to promote forest health while simultaneously generating rural jobs. This year, 77 proposals were received for the Forest Service's Wood Innovations grant program, highlighting the expanding interest and use of wood as a renewable energy source and as an innovative building material.

Healthy markets for forest products help the nation's forests mitigate some of the impacts of climate change. Research has demonstrated that wood products from responsibly managed forests outperform other building materials in measures of greenhouse gas intensity, air and water pollution and other environmental impacts. Responsibly-sourced forest products also provide income for private landowners that keep their land forested and supports needed investments in forest management to provide clean water, wildlife habitat, and other resources millions of Americans depend upon.

Today's announcement supports USDA's Building Blocks for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry-a comprehensive effort to provide America's farmers, ranchers and forest landowners with the tools and resources they need to combat climate change. Through this work, USDA expects to reduce net emissions and enhance carbon sequestration in soils and forests by over 120 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent per year by 2025-the equivalent of taking 25 million cars off the road or offsetting the emissions produced by powering nearly 11 million homes each year.

Over the course of this Administration, USDA has invested nearly \$1 billion through grants, loans, and loan guarantees to support over 230 wood energy projects across the country to reduce reliance on costly fossil fuels, support rural economic growth and advance forest restoration. In September 2015, in partnership with the Softwood Lumber Board and the Binational Softwood Lumber Council, USDA announced the winners of the U.S. Tall Wood Building Prize Competition . The competition was held to support a resilient rural wood products industry, promote forest restoration and retention, and foster sustainability in the built environment. USDA is leading the way in demonstrating the innovative uses of wood and other bio-based products that reduce emissions and increase carbon storage.

More information about USDA's work to mitigate climate change can be found in the Department's most recent entry on Medium, [How Food and Forestry Are Adapting to a Changing Climate](#) ↗.

Of the 42 projects funded, 24 are focused expanding wood products markets and 18 increase wood energy markets. Projects address a wide range of issues from incorporating cross laminated timber into commercial building construction, replacing coal with torrefied wood at power plants, establishing biomass district energy systems, and identifying market opportunities for beetle-killed trees.

Two more Statewide Wood Energy teams will be established, in Maine and Nebraska, and one more Statewide Wood Utilization Team in Michigan. These multi-agency teams include federal, state, business, nonprofit and other partners working within each state.

Recipients of the 2016 Wood Innovation grants are from Alaska, Ark., Calif., Colo., Idaho, Mass., Maine, Mich., Minn., Miss., Mont., Neb., Oregon, S.C., Utah, Va., Vt., Wash., and Wis. A complete list of the awards and more information on the grant and cooperative agreement program is available online at the Forest Service Wood Education and Resource Center.

Since 2005, more than 200 grants have been awarded to small businesses, non-profits, Tribes, States, and local governments to improve forest health while creating jobs, renewable energy and healthy communities. Since 2013, this funding has also helped establish 20 Statewide Wood Energy Teams and five Statewide Wood Utilization Teams that collectively expand and support wood energy and wood products markets.

The mission of the U.S. Forest Service, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands managed by the Forest Service contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).

#

2016 Wood Innovations Grant Recipients

Project Title	Organization	Location
Michigan Wood Innovation Team	Renewable Resource Solutions	MI
Development of a Knowledge Management System to Support the U.S. CLT Industry	University of Minnesota	MN
Green Building with Structural Insulated Panels Incorporating Lignin-based Polyurethane Foam Cores	Mississippi State University	MS
Developing New Processes for Fire Retardant, Mold and Decay Resistant Panels from Southern Pine and Sweetgum	Mississippi State University	MS
Wood Products Diversification Plan	Marks Lumber, Inc.	MT
Nebraska Wood Energy Team	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	NE
Design and Engineering of a Western Juniper Biofuel Facility	Forest Energy Group, LLC	OR
Carbon12 (8-story mixed-use timber frame building including CLT)	Kaiser Group Inc.	OR
Oregon Torrefaction Project	Ochoco Management, Inc.	OR
Integration of Biomass District Energy - Oregon State University Cascades	Oregon State University	OR
Northern California OSB Plant Due Diligence	The Beck Group	OR
Wallowa County Biomass Pyrolysis - Linking Forest Restoration with Regenerative Agriculture	Wallowa Resources	OR
Utilization of CLT in Low and Mid-rise Buildings for Enhanced Wind Performance	Clemson University	SC
Prefab Wood: Panelized and Modular Wood Frame Innovations in the Intermountain West Region	Sunroc Building Materials	UT
Development of CLT Markets for Hardwood Lumber Producers to Promote Forest Health and Support of Rural Communities	Virginia Tech	VA
Promoting Modern Wood Heating in Vermont	Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation	VT
Converting Forest Fuels to Revenue through Gasification	Ag Energy Solutions	WA
Accelerating Development of CLT Market in Washington State with a Cross-sector Coalition	Forterra	WA
Quinault Indian Nation Pellet Manu. Facility Engineering & Design	Quinault Indian Nation	WA

2016 Wood Innovations Grant Recipients

Project Title	Organization	Location
Spokane Tribe Biomass District Energy System for Wellpinit, WA	Spokane Tribes of Indians	WA
Next Generation CLT: Combining Thermal Modification and Carbon-based Nanoparticles	University of Washington	WA
Building Code Acceptance of Wood Products Under Design Fire Scenarios.	University of Wisconsin-Madison	WI
Seismically Resilient CLT Inverted Pendulum Solutions for Tall Wood Buildings	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	WI