July 18, 2013

General Plan Update
Final Environmental Impact Report Hearing
Supplemental Information

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Introduction

The following is specific information and notations that is the basis for my presentation at the July 18, 2013 Planning Commission Hearing.

As I stated, the biomass energy engines were not mitigated in the Draft and Final EIR and was used themselves as mitigating measures.

Clarification of Scope

The scope of my presentation is limited to industrial biomass energy engines and not biomass used for residential use, such as fireplaces.

General Plan Update

The following notates goals and strategies for biomass energy production and forest thinning.

1. Introduction, page 15

   Strategy

   "Sustainable forestry practices can increase the ability of forests to sequester atmospheric carbon while enhancing other ecosystem services, such as improved soil and water quality. Planting new trees and improving forest health through thinning and prescribed burning are some of the ways to increase forest carbon in the long run. Harvesting and regenerating forests can also result in net carbon sequestration in wood products and new forest growth."

2. Land Use Strategy, page 23.

   "Other natural resources: Identify areas available for management or utilization of natural resources such as wind energy generation, hydroelectric, geothermal, biomass energy production, and large-scale solar power. Identify lands that are designated under Habitat

Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Planning programs and Coordinated Resource Management Plans."

3. Economics Element, page 121

ECON
5.13.4 Incorporation of Renewable Use in County Facilities
The County shall explore the potential for use of renewable resource use in county-owned facilities during design of both new construction and remodeling, with a specific emphasis on the use of thermal biomass for combined heat and power systems, when appropriate.

ECON
5.13.5 Protection of Future Opportunities for Biomass Utilization
The County shall encourage the protection of the infrastructure necessary to preserve future opportunities for biomass utilization for energy production and associated economic uses.

4. Conservation and Open Space Element

Definition, page 164

Carbon Dioxide (CO_2): A naturally occurring gas, and also a by-product of burning fossil fuels and biomass, as well as land-use changes and other industrial processes. It is the principal anthropogenic GHG that affects the Earth's radioactive balance. It is the reference gas against which other GHGs are measured and therefore has a Global Warming Potential of 1.

Goals, page 183

COS
7.10.4 Forest Sequestration and Biomass Energy
The County shall investigate providing incentives for increased carbon sequestration on forest lands and encourage the use of forest biomass for sustainable energy generation.

Goals, page 184

COS
7.11.2 Local Energy Alternatives
The County shall amend the Zoning Code to streamline permitting for the production of biofuels, biomass, and other energy alternatives to reduce dependency on fossil fuels.

5. Agriculture and Forestry Element

Strategy, page 191

"Land dedicated to commercial forest management provides building materials, wood byproducts, energy, carbon sequestration, firewood, County revenue for roads and schools, and employment opportunities, but also wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, aesthetic enjoyment, and watershed services. Maintaining timber operations, maintaining timberlands, encouraging value-added wood products, supporting a stable supply of feedstock to encourage biomass utilization for energy production, and recreational uses are important to the economic base and the natural resource values of Plumas County."

"Timber products have played important cultural and historic roles to the people of Plumas County. Timbers were hewn as supports for sweat lodges for the Maidu tribe, for mining starting in the 1850s, for home construction materials, and for a variety of other uses. Although timber products remain the highest value forest product, gains have been made towards valuing ecosystem services from timberlands. Carbon markets and increasing utilization of biomass for energy production are also gaining in value. As a greater diversity of economic opportunities from management of timberlands is realized, tracking of the products, values, and contributions made will be needed."

Goal, page 203

AG/FOR

8.9.4
Forest Thinning and Fuels Management
The County shall encourage and promote forest thinning programs on both public and private lands, along strategic fuel break locations, in high fire risk areas, urban wild land interface areas, and areas with extensive rural residential development for purposes of maintaining the health of the forest, reducing catastrophic carbon emissions, and reducing the risk of fire, while improving wildlife habitat and protecting watershed functions.

EIR

The following Impacts were mitigated with the unmitigated biomass energy goals and strategies:

1. Impact 4.4-1 Contributions to Global Climate Change
2. Impact 4.4-2 Adverse Effects of Climate Change on Plumas County

The following sections fail to mitigate the effects of biomass energy:

1. Impact 4.3 Air Quality
2. Impact 4.4 Energy and Climate Change
3. Impact 4.6 Hydrology, water quality, and drainage
4. Impact 4.11 Biological Resources

Summary

In my opinion, the impact of industrial biomass combustion for heat and energy deserves analysis in the EIR. Additionally, the impact of industrial thinning must also deserves analysis in the EIR.