

Wood Bioenergy: Ecological and Community Sustainability

How can planning ahead maximize gains and minimize impacts for forests, communities, and local industries?

- Biomass harvesting as a tool to accomplish sustainable forest management - Harvesting Guidelines
- Wood bioenergy development as a tool to support rural forest-based communities (economic and social goals)



Why Biomass Harvesting Guidelines?

Good biomass harvesting practices can enhance and improve forest land; poor practices can damage and devalue it (PA Guidelines)



Assessment of Biomass Harvesting Guidelines – January 2009

- Comparison of existing guidelines from Maine , Minnesota, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Forest Stewardship Council, and Canada
- Common elements of biomass guidelines
 - Dead wood, wildlife, water quality, soils, silviculture, disturbance
- Recommendations for future biomass guidelines

Recommendations for developing Guidelines

- Sound science and wide stakeholder engagement
- Define terms clearly
- Base recommendations on local ecology and conditions
- Include clear recommendations for removal of dead wood
- Use guideline development as opportunity to improve forest management.
- Change and adapt

Wood Bioenergy: Appropriate Scale

- Appropriately-scaled as defined through a collaborative process involving broad stakeholders
- A range of issues need to be considered (supply, ecology, social and cultural impacts)
- Thorough analysis and agreement on key issues will lead to more successful wood bioenergy development
- Community scale is a sub-scale of appropriately-scaled bioenergy development

Wood Bioenergy Development at the Community Scale

- Designed to adapt to ecological and economic changes over time – build resiliency in local economies
- Economies of scale lend themselves to accelerated implementation of forest restoration and community wildfire protection activities
- Promotes local ownership, business development, and employment
- Keeps energy dollars local

Concluding Thoughts: Appropriate Scale

- Develop policies that support bioenergy development at multiple scales
- Develop policies that support a suite of bioenergy development, including thermal
- Consider social and cultural implications of bioenergy development
- Engage diverse stakeholders early in the bioenergy development process

Links and Contact Info

Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition: Biomass Issue Paper

www.sustainablenorthwest.org/quick-links/resources/rvcc-issue-papers

An Assessment of Biomass Harvesting Guidelines

www.forestguild.org/publications/research/2009/biomass_guidelines.pdf

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