

What is the Scope of our Feasibility Study?

Based on the mission and principals of the group, we created an outline for the Woody Biomass Feasibility Study (WBFS). This study will explore 5-10 locations to possibly locate a woody biomass facility. Based on environmental characteristics of each site and fuel resources available within an economically viable distance from each site, we will make general recommendations about the type and scale of biomass facility appropriate. Our hope is that laying this groundwork will help attract investment into biomass infrastructure in the County. The WBFS will include:

1. Site Identification: Identify 5 to 10 industrially zoned sites that are appropriate for a woody biomass facility based on developed criteria. The WBFS will identify the best site or sites (from between five and 10 previously occupied industrial sites) and technology to attract investment towards woody biomass facilities in Mendocino County. The study will focus on 5 to 10 locations and explore the best technologies and appropriate scale for each site based on economic and environmental and social factors.
2. Fuel Resources: Study the woody biomass (fuel) resources that are available within an economically viable distance from each site. A study of biomass availability surrounding each location will be particularly important for potential investors. Biomass shortages have caused the closure of other biomass facilities in California in the past. A guaranteed steady biomass supply will greatly reduce the risk of investing in a woody biomass facility.
3. Environmental Characteristics: Study the environmental characteristics of each location. This will include characteristics such as water availability, existing air quality issues etc.
4. Feasibility Matrix: Based on the fuel resources and environmental characteristics surrounding each site, a matrix will be created showing the amount of fuel that can be delivered and the environmental stress that can be sustained by each location. This matrix will allow us to make general statements about appropriate technology.
5. Scale and Technology: Based on the Feasibility Matrix recommendations will be made on scale and technologies appropriate for each site. These will be general recommendations, for example, in site C, a technology that uses no more than X amount of water, has emissions lower than Y, and uses no more than Z bone dry tons (BDT) of woody biomass per day is appropriate.
6. Economic Impacts: Estimate the job creation potential based on the total number of BDT possibly processed at each location.