



COUNTY OF PLACER
Community Development/Resource Agency

Michael J. Johnson, AICP
Agency Director

PLANNING

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

December 14, 2010



Placer County believes your organization may have recently received a letter from the North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance (NTCAA) requesting clarification as to the relationship your organization has with the County regarding a proposed Biomass facility project in the Tahoe Basin. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that we will be clarifying for the record the status of the County's relationship with your agency in order to ensure that there is no confusion in the public's mind over support and sponsorship of this important project.

The following passage was included in the Notice of Preparation for a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the Lake Tahoe Basin Biomass Energy Facility, filed with the California State Clearinghouse on July 20, 2010. Several organizations, including yours, were described as partners in the Biomass Program. This term was used because of our years of work together to achieve a mutually beneficial solution to biomass disposal and reduction of catastrophic fire threat in the Greater Tahoe Region.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The proposed project is part of the broader Placer County Biomass Program. The Biomass Program identifies the need to reduce fire danger, reduce air pollution from opening burning, create green energy, and create future economic growth. The Placer County Board of Supervisors (BOS) created a Biomass Policy Team and adopted a Strategic Plan in 2007 for Wildfire Protection and Biomass Utilization. Specifically, the BOS created the Biomass Program to oversee and coordinate Placer County's efforts to: (1) determine the feasibility of removing woody biomass from forestlands in the county; and (2) examine the options for using excess biomass to generate economically-sustainable forms of energy or other beneficial products. Elements of the Biomass Program are being implemented through federal funding and grants administered by the U.S. Forest Service, Placer County Air Pollution Control District, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and DOE. The Biomass Program includes partnerships with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Tahoe Conservancy, California State Parks, the North Tahoe Fire Protection District, the California Energy Commission, the University of California at Davis, and NV Energy.

By the use of the term "partnerships", the County did not intend to imply that your organization was a partner in the development of the proposed facility in any legal sense, such as through the execution of a document such as a memorandum of agreement. Placer County understands that your organization will make its own independent determination regarding any proposed biomass facility. Placer County appreciates its ongoing working relationship with your organization, and understands that your agency will exercise its independent discretion as the County works toward the goal of achieving a beneficial solution to the biomass disposal issue.

In addition, the Placer County Biomass Website lists your organization as a political, technical, and/or economic supporter of the proposed Biomass Facility. The County is in the process of updating the site to more clearly reflect your organization as having been a supporter of the overall concept of a biomass facility within Placer County. The site will also be updated to indicate that, since no specific design has been completed and the County is awaiting the results of the environmental review that any support by any agency is in concept only. The County anticipates that an environmental document will be available to the public in the May 2011 timeframe. At that time, the County will complete the specifics of our design proposal and your organization will have the opportunity to have input and determine whether to support the County's proposal for a Biomass facility.

The County hopes that this inadvertent choice of wording has not inconvenienced your agency in any way. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the letter from the North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance or anyone else, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Brett Storey
Placer County Biomass Program Manager

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