

ENERGY (component of the Wood Products TRC for the Coos County Economic Action Plan)

Action Step 1: Explore the potential to have a bio-diesel Manufacturing Plant sited in Coos County.

Justification:

1. reduce reliance on foreign oil (keep energy expenditures local)
2. produce locally renewable energy
3. sell local - buy local
4. significant? Creation of jobs in the manufacturing environment and the supply chain environment. (How many?)
5. create an important market for low grade fiber
6. alternative to transporting fuel from outside (expensive).
7. potential co-generation opportunities.
8. supports State and Federal special renewable energy and energy independence goals.

Who: DRED; DOE; USDA; universities

Timeline: 1 to 3 years [is the “timeline” based upon if someone decides to do it today, how long it would take to get it up and running; or is it from the point we are at today with all the R&D and marketing and everything else likely, if it does stick, to actually come on line.

Measures of success:

1. jobs (how many?)
2. measurable improvement in quality of life
3. taxes
4. reduced dependency on foreign oil
5. sustainability: competition for raw material; market stability; competitive cost
6. Feasibility / innovation: is anyone else making bio-diesel out of wood chips? (perhaps there are some pilot projects (U. Michigan or Wisconsin?) [Thad could look into this.]
7. Base of support/acceptability: Anticipate strong positive support of public.

Funding/ resources:

1. tax credits; favorable local treatment
2. fiber sustainability is key
3. consider establishing a cooperative; however, this may be a long shot due to large investment involved.
4. [economic development experts may have more ideas, especially Peter Riviere]
5. cross reference to the findings of the fiber sustainability team.

Action step 2: Form a fuel purchasing cooperative to leverage lower fuel prices.

(The savings could be quite large. --- crude guesstimate: if it takes 2 gallons to produce a ton of wood and 1 million tons are produced in Coos annually, then that represents 2 million gallons of fuel.)

Justification:

1. lower fuel prices (similar effect as pre-buying fuel)
2. potential to weather price spikes more effectively

Who: Timber Harvesting Council (perhaps they should form a standing Coos County subcommittee); DRED -- need a director (State or quasi-State entity to take the lead)

Timeline: research could begin immediately (complete in 1-2 years--- how long does it take to build a tank farm?)

Measure of success: achieve effective differential between street price to Cooperative price.

Resources: private funding by participants; NH Timber Harvesting Council (for logistics, etc.)

Action step 3: Form a transportation cooperative to facilitate trucking of forest products in Coos County. This may include a central dispatch function. The Cooperative might just manage operations; or it might own or operate the rolling stock, which would haul logs, equipment, people, etc. The cooperative could include vehicle maintenance support.

Justification:

1. facilitate backhauls
2. increase truck efficiency
3. reduce number of trucks needed
4. lower per unit transportation costs
5. dramatically reduce energy consumption
6. reduce wear and tear on roads
7. optimal employment of labor

Who: Timber Harvesting Council; DRED. -- need a director (State or quasi-State entity to take the lead)

(first response on part of individual businesses would likely be “got too much to do just trying to survive”.)

Timeline: 6 months to 2 years

Measure of success:

1. successful participation and positive reaction by participants
2. backhauls facilitated
3. increased truck efficiency
4. reduction in number of trucks needed
5. lower per unit transportation costs
6. reduced energy consumption
7. reduced road wear and tear

Resources: Timber Harvesting Council; DRED; Extension; Plymouth State’s Center for Rural Partnerships

Action Step 4: Legislate new initiatives to develop an improved “trade zone” environment for the timber industry.

Address such things as---

- a. Homogeneous load limits across the region (NH, VT, ME, NY, Quebec)
- b. Federal load limits for interstate commerce
- c. Fuel tax: abatement or all to roads
- d. Reduced speed limits and enforcement

Justification: Legislated improvements would provide a more favorable operating environment for the wood products industry through lower costs, more efficient operations, and more economical use of resources.

Who: Federal and State legislatures; NHTOA; NH Timber Harvesting Council; NH Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

Timeline: 2-3 years.

Measures of success:

1. homogeneous load limits achieved.
2. favorable fuel tax changes
3. reduced speed limits and enforcement

Resource: support for legislative action by TOA, Timber Harvesting Council and other stakeholders.

Action Step 5: Develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) to achieve fuel conservation in timber harvesting.

Consider covering such things as---

- a. Backhauls
- b. No idling
- c. aerodynamic trucks
- d. reduced skidding distances
- e. cooperative use of logging equipment (shears, etc)
- f. commuting in log trucks
- g. labor workforce

Justification: BMPs would directly contribute to conserving fuel consumption in the wood products industry with the attendant benefits of increased profitability, contribution toward national goal of energy independence, and conservation of equipment.

Who: Timber Harvesting Council; UNH Cooperative Extension; NH Division of Forests and Lands; NH Sustainable Forestry Initiative; TOA.

Timeline: 1-2 years

Measures of success: new BMPs published, distributed, accepted and implemented by the wood products industry.

Resource: Timber Harvesting Council; UNH Cooperative Extension; NH Division of Forests and Lands; TOA; Sustainable Forestry Initiative.