

# Public Comment

for January 23, 2017

RCEA Board of Directors Meeting

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To: RCEA Board

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns about biomass utilization.

I recognize that RCEA is required to use biomass as a result of recent State and federal laws; however, since biomass is the most expensive energy source that we taxpayers must pay for, I urge RCEA to replace biomass with solar and wind energy as soon as possible.

The following are explicit reasons I urge RCEA to minimize use of biomass energy:

After six months, UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Woody Biomass Utilization, verified, in response to my grant source question, that the UC Biomass Resources Group is solely funded by the US Forest Service [taxpayer funded]. In response to the same grant source question, the HSU Schatz Energy Research Center verified additional US taxpayer funded grant sources: US Department of Energy and Department of Agriculture and RCEA. Could this payment pattern create implicit bias?

It strikes me that the technical presentation omitted the time frame of replacement sequestration of CO<sub>2</sub>. There could be the impression of implicit bias because only engineers supported by biomass grants provided interpretations of biomass use with no apparent input from climate, ecological or medical scientists holding opposing views. In September, I submitted two journal articles to RCEA with authors from the Oregon State Department of Forestry. One model projected more than 50 years is required after thinning to regrow the equivalent biomass. A second model, based on old growth forest "burns" showed that after 100 years replacement trees would not sequester an amount of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent to the old growth forest. After stating that biomass energy was carbon neutral in 2010, the EPA, based on actual research evidence, corrected its statement in 2014: biomass is not carbon neutral "a priori".

The vast majority of climate scientists support the evidence that global warming is at or near the tipping point at which abrupt climate change will ensue. We do not have the time available for biomass as a source of energy to be considered carbon neutral.

Pollution from biomass burning for energy is detrimental to human health twenty four hours a day. Dr. Ring in October stated the health concerns of the medical community. In the consent decree for the Blue Lake Power plant VS the US DOJ and EPA, the court states (top of page 25) ..."the reductions of CO and NOX will provide pollution reduction benefits to the surrounding community." Pollution reduction is the best biomass burning can provide. Cleaner is not clean, not carbon neutral.

By comparison with coal and natural gas, biomass power, even when in regulatory compliance, is dirtier than coal, produces more CO<sub>2</sub> than coal or natural gas on an immediate basis, and has the lowest combustion efficiency. Paying a premium for a consumable polluting fuel does not appear to be a prudent use rate payer fees. Energy cost savings should be used to acquire and/or invest in assets that will have a long useful life.

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