

# Public Comment

March 25, 2021  
RCEA Board of Directors  
Meeting

Agenda Item 8.1:  
Biomass Analysis

**From:** [Redwood Coast Energy Authority](#)  
**To:** [Lori Taketa](#)  
**Cc:** [Matthew Marshall](#); [Richard Engel](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Comments on Role of Biomass Power in Humboldt County  
**Date:** Monday, March 22, 2021 8:50:18 AM

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**From:** Mary Hurley <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 21, 2021 11:10 AM  
**To:** Redwood Coast Energy Authority <info@redwoodenergy.org>  
**Subject:** Comments on Role of Biomass Power in Humboldt County

I am writing to express my opposition to renewal of the contract for the biomass plant in Scotia. The costs of burning mill waste for power far outweigh the benefits of this type of power. Our County needs to commit to the State's goals of reducing polluting emissions that increase global warming. There are alternatives to use the mill waste to sequester the CO2 emissions and still provide employment.

I want RCEA to work with partners to increase power sources that address climate change which includes solar and offshore wind.

Thank you.

Mary Hurley  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [Walter Paniak](#)  
**To:** [Lori Taketa](#)  
**Subject:** Comments in opposition to 10 year biomass contract  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 24, 2021 10:07:52 PM

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March 24, 2021

Dear RCEA Board Members,

I am opposed to any 10 year biomass contract for the following reasons.

The contract payments have been and will be far too expensive. HRC's cost of doing business is supported by rate payers, unknowingly. A billion dollar asset company should only need to cover the cost of waste. Under these multi-year contracts RCEA becomes a profit center when we pay full cost. HRC is using heat and behind the meter power.

The attached screenshot shows the average price of lumber over time. I don't believe it is fair to the rate payer to have a cost plus contract when the upward trend in revenue is not considered in the equation. (PG&E solar is looking good. I understand the process of renewable energy credits for these transactions.) The board has a fiduciary responsibility to handle money properly. Would you invest your own money in 30 to 40 year old technology? Before COVID I recall that an HRC representative said they spent maybe million dollars in upgrades. I would suggest that RCEA paid this amount: the rate payer receives an inflated bill and HRC has an asset that can be depreciated and therefore lower their taxes. Several years ago Director Engle commented on the price premium for biomass versus the market price. It was substantial. At another meeting he said that HRC offered a good price at something like 82 dollars. I submit that no one else was willing to pay more. RCEA should be running the show and willing to walk away.

My next comment deals with the close relationship between RCEA and Schatz Energy lab and present and former employees. The human need to conform to the actions of one's group is very difficult to fight against. Our brain creates answers to match our feelings. Sometimes it is true that we should listen to our enemy's because they are the only ones that tell us the truth.

Biomass energy is the dirtiest form of energy production. Has staff provided new board members the number of barrels of diesel fuel needed in the cogeneration process at HRC? Past data can be found by accessing the EIA (Energy Information Agency) portal EIA report 923 and EIA 860 plant no. 50049. Has staff provided the board with the numbers of tons of NOx and PM2.5 for the period in question? The stacks for these dangerous pollutants are less than 1000 feet from an elementary school. Few seem to care about these pollutants as long as the damage done is within regulatory compliance. Please note that for a biomass plant to be in regulatory compliance requires significant exceptions. The relatively new biomass plant in Williams had something like a 25 page document of procedures to be compliant plus a measurement isn't done until the plant is fully warmed up and functioning for several hours.

Finally, near instantaneous release of massive amounts of CO2 by combustion cannot be measured against wood decay that releases methane. The time frame is very different; decay by bacteria or fungi will sequester carbon and improve the soil and takes a much longer time for methane to be released.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. Please don't kick the can down the road; make the tough decisions now.

Walt Paniak  
Arcata

**Lumber**

Summary Forecast Stats Alerts

Historically, Lumber reached an all time high of 1045 in March of 2021. Lumber - data, forecasts, historical chart - was last updated on March of 2021.



**lendingtree Refinance Calculator**

**1.75% RATE    2.01% APR**

Loan amount

Loan term

Commodity	Actual	%Chg
Crude Oil	57.7700	0.03 %
Brent	60.8200	0.05 %
Natural gas	2.5120	0.20 %
Gasoline	1.8857	-0.56 %
Heating oil	1.7428	-0.35 %
Gold	1732.83	0.33 %
Silver	25.208	0.51 %
Copper	4.0570	-0.76 %
Lithium	85,000.00	0.00%
Soybeans	1424.5000	0.25 %
Wheat	633.0000	-0.28%
Cotton	82.59	-1.13%
Lean Hogs	96.5250	1.55%
Lumber	943.50	1.87%

[More](#)

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Walt Paniak