

RCW 43.30.835 Forest biomass demonstration projects. (1) The department may develop and implement forest biomass energy demonstration projects, one east of the crest of the Cascade mountains and one west of the crest of the Cascade mountains. The demonstration projects must be designed to:

(a) Reveal the utility of Washington's public and private forest biomass feedstock;

(b) Create green jobs and generate renewable energy;

(c) Generate revenues or improve asset values for beneficiaries of state lands and state forestlands;

(d) Improve forest health, reduce pollution, and restore ecological function; and

(e) Avoid interfering with the current working area for forest biomass collection surrounding an existing fixed location biomass energy production site.

(2) To develop and implement the forest biomass energy demonstration projects, the department may form forest biomass energy partnerships or cooperatives.

(3) The forest biomass energy partnerships or cooperatives are encouraged to be public-private partnerships focused on convening the entities necessary to grow, harvest, process, transport, and utilize forest biomass to generate renewable energy. Particular focus must be given to recruiting and employing emerging technologies that can locally process forest biomass feedstock to create local green jobs and reduce transportation costs.

(4) The forest biomass energy partnerships or cooperatives may include, but are not limited to: Entrepreneurs or organizations developing and operating emerging technology to process forest biomass; industrial electricity producers; contractors capable of providing the local labor needed to collect, process, and transport forest biomass feedstocks; tribes; federal land management agencies; county, city, and other local governments; the department of commerce; state trust land managers; an organization dedicated to protecting and strengthening the jobs, rights, and working conditions of Washington's working families; accredited research institution representatives; an industrial timberland manager; a small forestland owner; and a not-for-profit conservation organization. [2023 c 470 s 2043; 2009 c 163 s 2.]

Explanatory statement—2023 c 470: See note following RCW 10.99.030.

Findings—Intent—2009 c 163: "The legislature finds that forest biomass is an abundant and renewable by-product of Washington's forestland management. Forest biomass can be utilized to generate clean renewable energy.

In some Washington forests, residual forest biomass is burned on-site or left to decompose. The lack of forest products markets in some areas means that standing forest biomass removed for forest health and wildfire risk reduction treatments must occur at substantial cost. Utilizing forest biomass to generate energy can reduce the greenhouse gases emitted by burning forest biomass.

The legislature further finds that the emerging forest biomass energy economy is challenged by: Not having a reliable supply of predictably priced forest biomass feedstock; shipping and processing

costs; insufficient forest biomass processing infrastructure; and feedstock demand.

The legislature finds that making use of the state's forest biomass resources for energy production may generate new revenues or increase asset values of state lands and state forestlands, protect forestland of all ownerships from severe forest health problems, stimulate Washington's economy, create green jobs, and reduce Washington's dependence on foreign oil.

It is the intent of the legislature to support forest biomass demonstration projects that employ promising processing technologies. The demonstration projects must emphasize public and private forest biomass feedstocks that are generated as by-products of current forest practices. The project must reveal ways to overcome the current impediments to the developing forest biomass energy economy, and ways to realize ecologically sustainable outcomes from that development."
[2009 c 163 s 1.]