

What are the Group's Mission and Operating Principles?

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to study the feasibility of utilizing woody biomass for energy production and economically viable value-added products by developing strategies for biomass projects that are consistent with community needs/values, that promote environmental health, and that strengthen our economy

Operational Principles:

1. Our work will be locally oriented
2. We recognize that diverse viewpoints are important to our success
3. We will utilize public involvement strategies that build common understanding and ownership of the work before official public hearings
4. We will focus on long term environmental, economic and social sustainability - only promoting projects that fulfill the following environmental, economic and social equity criteria:

Environmental:

- We will seek economically feasible state-of-the-art, Best Available Control Technology (BACT) to minimize the impacts on air quality, water use, forest, overall public health, and community quality of life
- We will ensure that we are carbon neutral,
- We will maintain the carbon sink to counteract global warming,

Economic:

- The project will be viable and able to give the developer the likely possibility of getting a fair return on his/her investment
- The project will likely be viable as the economy changes
- There will be a sufficient, reliable stream of woody biomass products to sustain the project long term (foreseeable future)
- The project will not compete with or undercut the existing economic base of the County (fruit and wine production, tourism, recreation, etc.)

Community Equity:

- The project will provide well paying jobs
- The project will create long term improvement of the forests
- The community will be enthusiastic/proud that this project is happening in their community
- The community will be empowered by this initiative, thereby creating a catalyst for other related initiatives.