

**COMBINED PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION,
NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT, and
NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS,
for the
TUOLUMNE BIOMASS LLC BIOMASS UTILIZATION PROJECT**

DECEMBER 20, 2022

Tuolumne County, Community Development Department
2 South Green Street
Sonora, CA, 95370
209.533.5633

California Department of Housing and Community Development
2020 W. El Camino Ave, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95833
916.263.2297

Filed

DEC 16 2022
THERESA BADOETT
Tuolumne County Clerk
By _____
Deputy

These notices shall satisfy three separate but related procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the County of Tuolumne and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

To: All interested agencies, organizations, and individuals:

INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Tuolumne County is the Lead Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed Tuolumne Biomass LLC Biomass Utilization Project (proposed project). In compliance with CEQA, Tuolumne County has prepared an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). The purpose of an IS/MND is to provide decision makers, public agencies, and the general public with an objective and informative document that facilitates a basic understanding of the proposed project and fully discloses the potential environmental effects associated with the proposed project. The Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project described above has determined that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, an Environmental Impact Report is not required for the project. The project site is not identified on any list enumerated under section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

Project Location: The project site consists of a 17-acre leased property comprising a portion of Assessor's Parcel Number 063-070-086 in an agricultural area on 5400 O'Byrnes Ferry Road, east of the California Correctional Facility in the community of Jamestown, California. The site is within a portion of Section 34, Township 1 North, Range 13 East, Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian and within Supervisorial District 5.

Project Description: The proposed project would utilize woody biomass material from forest stewardship projects, including forest restoration and wildfire mitigation activities, to manufacture a number of value-added products. The project would also include a combined heat and power system, which would use a gasification technology to generate electricity to support project activities. Project elements would include an approximately 14-foot wide access road, a 2.5-acre log deck yard, a 3-acre outdoor storage/wood drying area, a 42,000-square foot (sf) merchandizing line, a 3,200-sf millwright shop, a retention pond, on-site wastewater disposal, a well and water storage tank, and a 30,000 sf warehouse building with an adjacent 1,800 sf office. The project

consists of Conditional Use Permit CUP22-003 and Williamson Act Contract WA22-001 to allow for the proposed facility.

Significant Impacts: The IS/MND identifies potentially significant impacts in the following environmental issue areas: aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, and tribal cultural resources. All impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels with the implementation of the mitigation measures set forth in the IS/MND.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Any individual, organization, or agency may submit written comments on the IS/MND to:

Tuolumne County Community Development Department
C/O Natalie Rizzi
2 South Green Street, Sonora, CA, 95370
or
nrizzi@co.tuolumne.ca.us

The Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposal described above may be viewed on the County's website at: <https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/821/Environmental-Review-Documents> and may be obtained during regular business hours, Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the following address:

Tuolumne County Community Development Department
A.N. Francisco Building, 4th Floor
48 Yaney Avenue
Sonora, CA 95370

All comments must be received by Thursday, January 19, 2023. Comments should specify that they are addressing the IS/MND.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about January 5, 2023 HCD will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of Community Development Block Grant National Disaster Resilience (CDBG-NDR) grant funds under Public Law 113-2 of the Disasters Relief Appropriations Act, 2013, (Appropriations Act), as amended to undertake a project known as Tuolumne Biomass LLC Biomass Utilization Project. The proposed project would utilize woody biomass material from forest stewardship projects, including forest restoration and wildfire mitigation activities, to manufacture a number of value-added products. The project would also include a combined heat and power system, which would use a gasification technology to generate electricity to support project activities. Project elements would include an approximately 14-foot wide access road, a 2.5-acre log deck yard, a 3-acre outdoor storage/wood drying area, a 42,000-square foot (sf) merchandizing line, a 3,200-sf millwright shop, a retention pond, on-site wastewater disposal, a well and water storage tank, and a 30,000 sf warehouse building with an adjacent 1,800 sf office. The estimated total project cost is \$14,600,000 with a HUD funded or assisted amount of \$9,700,000. The project site consists of a 17-acre leased property comprising a portion of Assessor's Parcel Number 063-070-086 in an agricultural area on 5400 O'Byrnes Ferry Road, east of the California Correctional Facility in the community of Jamestown, California.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

HCD has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of

1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR), which can be accessed at any time on the HUD Environmental Review Online System (HEROS). The site does not require any log in or credentials. The public can access the review for the Tuolumne Biomass LLC Biomass Utilization Project at: <https://cpd.hud.gov/cpd-public/environmental-reviews>

From there, make the following selections: under Report Status, select Public Comment; under State, select California; for City, select Jamestown, and then click Show Reviews. Click on Tuolumne Biomass LLC Biomass Utilization Project and the environmental review will download as a Microsoft Word document. The Microsoft Word document will contain links to additional documents, maps, and analysis.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, organization, or agency may submit written comments on ERR to HCD Disaster Recovery Branch at NEPAComments@hcd.ca.gov. All comments received by 11:59 p.m., January 4, 2023, will be considered by HCD prior to authorizing submission of a Request for Release of Funds. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

HCD certifies to HUD that Jessica Hayes in her capacity as Disaster Recovery Branch Chief consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities and allows the Rural Community Assistance Corporation to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will accept objections to its release of funds and HCD's certification for a period of 15 days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of HCD; (b) HCD has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76) and shall be addressed to Tennille Parker, Director, Disaster Recovery and Special Issues Division, Department of Housing and Urban Development. Objections should be submitted to Tennille Parker electronically at: disaster_recovery@hud.gov. If submitting objections in writing, send to: 451 7th Street SW, Room 7282, Washington, D.C. 20410. Potential objectors should contact HUD at the e-mail address listed above to verify receipt of objection and to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Ms. Jessica Hayes, Disaster Recovery Branch Chief
California Department of Housing and Community Development