

County of Placer

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May 9, 2013

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PROPOSED TAHOE AREA BIOMASS PLANT TAKES ANOTHER STEP FORWARD

Placer County's proposed Cabin Creek Biomass Facility project that will use forest waste to produce renewably sourced electricity cleared another hurdle Tuesday at the regularly scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting. The Board unanimously denied the third-party appeal of the December 6, 2012, Planning Commission certification of the Project's final environmental impact report (FEIR) and approval of the Project's Conditional Use Permit.

The project proposes to construct a two-megawatt electric power generation facility on a 3.7 acre portion of the 148-acre County-owned Eastern Regional Materials Recovery Facility and Transfer Station site on State Route 89 between Tahoe City and Truckee. The facility will use gasification technology to convert woody biomass material into a synthetic gas, which would then fuel an internal combustion engine/generator producing electricity. To construct this project, a conditional use permit is required. The county prepared an environmental impact report pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

The appeal of the Planning Commission's actions was filed by the Arizona-based Center for Biological Diversity (CBD). All appeals of Planning Commission decisions are heard by the Board of Supervisors. During Tuesday's public hearing on this appeal, Placer County staff highlighted the discussions between the County and CBD which resulted in the cooperative formulation of seven new proposed conditions of approval for the Project. These conditions address the source of the biomass and include additional review and enforcement provisions. After concluding public testimony on the appeal, the Board denied CBD's appeal, certified the FEIR and all associated documents and approved the project's Conditional Use Permit. The Board also specifically took action to formally incorporate into the project's Conditional Use Permit conditions of approval all seven of the new conditions that were formulated cooperatively by CBD and the County.

Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery, in whose Fifth District the proposed facility will be built, praised Kevin Bundy, the attorney for CBD for working with the County. "I think you helped us take what was already a good project and make it better," said Montgomery. "That's something we should really all try to do—to work together, now and moving into the future."

For more information on the proposed Cabin Creek Biomass Facility, contact Gerry Haas in the Planning Services Division at 530-745-3000.

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