

Cabin Creek Biomass Facility Project

Final Environmental Impact Report
SCH# 2011122032



PREPARED FOR:
Placer County
Community Development Resource Agency
Environmental Coordination Services
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190
Auburn, CA 95603

December 2012



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- A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- B (On CD – See Back Cover) Attachments to the Center for Biological Diversity Comment Letter on the Draft EIR

Tables

Table 2-1	List of Commenters	2-1
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARB	California Air Resources Board
BAAQMD	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
BACT	Best Available Control Technology
BDT	bone dry tones
bgs	below ground surface
CA State Parks	California Department of Parks and Recreation
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CALFIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalRecycle	California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
CAPCOA	California Air Pollution Control Officers Association
CAPs	criteria air pollutants
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CEC	California Energy Commission
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
cfs	cubic feet per second
CFSA	core fuel supply area
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CO	carbon dioxide
CO ₂ e	carbon dioxide equivalent
dB	decibel
DOE	Department of Energy
DPW	Department of Public Works
Draft EIR	draft environmental impact report
EA	environmental assessment
EIS	environmental impact statement
Final EIR	final environmental impact report
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact

GHG	greenhouse gas
gpm	gallons per minute
I-80	Interstate 80
IC	internal combustion
lb/day	pounds per day
LFG	landfill gas
LTBMU	Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
MMBtu	Million Metric British Thermal Units
MRF	Materials Recovery Facility
MSA	Master Stewardship Agreement
MT	metric tons
MW	megawatt
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NDFE	Nondisposal Facility Element
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFMA	National Forest Management Act of 1976
NFS	National Forest System
NMOC	non-methane organic compounds
NSAQMD	Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
OPR	California Office of Planning and Research
PCAPCD	Placer County Air Pollution Control District
PH	Public Hearing
PM ₁₀	particulate matter
PM _{2.5}	small diameter particulate matter
PRC	Public Resources Code
RFI	Report of Facility Information
ROG	reactive organic gases
SBC	Sierra Business Council
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District

SPI	Sierra Pacific Industries
SR	State Route
SWFP	Solid Waste Facility Permit
TAC	toxic air contaminant
TART	Tahoe Area Regional Transit
TCPUD	Tahoe City Public Utility District
TCPUD/T-TSA	Tahoe City Public Utility District/Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency
TNF	Tahoe National Forest
tpy	tons per year
TROA	Truckee River Operating Agreement
TTSA	Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency
T-TSA	Tahoe-Truckee Sanitation Agency
U.S. EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
VOCs	volatile organic carbons
WUI	wildland urban interface
$\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	micrograms per cubic meter

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

This document is a final environmental impact report (Final EIR) prepared on behalf of Placer County pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15132. On July 27, 2012, Placer County distributed the draft environmental impact report (Draft EIR) on the Cabin Creek Biomass Facility Project to public agencies and the general public. A public review period of 45 days was provided, in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(a). The review period began on July 27, 2012 and ended on September 10, 2012. One public hearing was held to solicit comments on the Draft EIR on August 30, 2012. The hearing was held before the Placer County Planning Commission at the Granlibakken Resort located at 725 Granlibakken Road in Tahoe City, California.

As described in Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR, Placer County is proposing to construct a two-megawatt (MW) wood-to-energy biomass facility at the Eastern Regional Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and Transfer Station that would use a gasification technology. Gasification systems generate electricity through transformation of the solid woody biomass into a “syngas” (i.e., synthetic gas) and combustion of the syngas in an internal combustion (IC) engine or turbine. Gasification is the thermochemical conversion of woody biomass into a syngas under controlled temperature and oxygen conditions; woody biomass materials are not “burned” in a gasification system. Gasification also produces a solid carbon char (also known as biochar).

The entire Eastern Regional MRF and Transfer Station site is approximately 292 acres and includes four County-owned parcels (APNs 080-010-031, 080-010-033, 080-070-017, and 080-070-016). The proposed project would be located on a 3.7-acre site in the southernmost area of the property. The site is located within the unincorporated portion of Placer County, California, approximately 2 miles south of Interstate 80 (I-80) at 900 Cabin Creek Road, west of State Route (SR) 89.

The proposed project would include construction of an approximately 11,000 square-foot, two-story structure that would house the power generating and emissions control equipment and an approximately one-acre material storage area. The storage area would include a 7,000 square-foot open air pole barn structure to allow materials to dry before use in the energy generation process. Additional onsite improvements would include eight parking spaces, a paved vehicle circulation area that includes new driveways on Cabin Creek Road and the access road to the Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART) and County Department of Public Works (DPW) facilities located on the site, a paved haul road south of the material storage area, stormwater treatment facilities (including an infiltration trench and detention basin), retaining walls, and utility improvements/extensions.

Biomass materials (fuel for the plant) would be processed (ground and screened) at the locations from which they are removed (such as U.S. Forest Service [USFS] fuels reduction sites) and delivered via haul truck to the project site. No additional wood material processing would occur at the project site beyond that which is already occurring in association with current Eastern Regional MRF and Transfer Station wood waste handling activities at their site. As needed, additional fuel for the plant (potentially during extended winters) could include wood waste materials (forest waste biomass) already being processed at the Eastern Regional MRF and Transfer Station.

Written and oral comments were received from public agencies, organizations, and individuals. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15090, Placer County is preparing the Final EIR prior to considering approval of the project. The Final EIR consists of the following documents:

- ▲ Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Cabin Creek Biomass Facility Project (including Appendices A through F), dated July 27, 2012; and
- ▲ Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR, and revisions to the Draft EIR contained in this document.

1.2 CERTIFICATION AND PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS

The EIR is intended to be used by the Placer County Planning Commission when considering the proposed project or an alternative to the proposed project and issuance of a Conditional Use Permit. At a scheduled public hearing, the Placer County Planning Commission will consider the adequacy of the Final EIR and the merits of the proposed project. The Planning Commission will decide whether to certify the Final EIR as being adequate under CEQA. If the Planning Commission certifies the Final EIR, it will make certain findings, including: that the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA; that the Planning Commission has reviewed and considered the information in the Final EIR; and that the Final EIR reflects the County's independent judgment and analysis. After certification, the Planning Commission will consider whether to approve the proposed project, approve it with conditions, or deny the project, in accordance with Section 15092 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

1.3 ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT OF THE FINAL EIR

This Final EIR is organized as follows:

- ▲ **Chapter 1, Introduction.** Chapter 1 provides an overview of the environmental review process and presents a discussion of the EIR certification and project approval process.
- ▲ **Chapter 2, Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR.** This chapter contains a list of all agencies, organizations, and persons that submitted written comments on the Draft EIR or provided oral comments at the public hearing during the public review period; copies of the comment letters and summary notes from the public hearing; and individual responses to the comments.
- ▲ **Chapter 3, Revisions and Corrections to the Draft EIR.** Chapter 3 includes corrections, clarifications and other revisions to the Draft EIR text, based on issues raised by comments on the Draft EIR or County-staff initiated text changes. Revisions are shown as excerpts from the Draft EIR text, with strikethrough (~~strikethrough~~) text for deletions and underlined (underlined) text for additions.
- ▲ **Chapter 4, Report Preparers.** This chapter identifies the Final EIR authors or consultants who provided analysis in support of the Final EIR.
- ▲ **Chapter 5, References.** This chapter lists references cited in this document.
- ▲ **Appendices.** The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program is included in Appendix A, and attachments to the Center for Biological Diversity comment letter on the Draft EIR are included in Appendix B.

This document and the Draft EIR together comprise the Final EIR.