



2 Feb 09

Kristin Mayes
Chair, AZ Corporation Commission
Commissioner's Wing
1200 W. Washington
Phoenix AZ 85007-2996

Subject: Biomass utilization

Dear Chairman Mayes:

The Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership (GFFP) is an alliance of environmental, governmental, and business organizations dedicated to researching and demonstrating approaches to forest ecosystem restoration in the ponderosa pine forests surrounding Flagstaff, Arizona. Recently, the Partnership was actively involved in working with the ACC to incorporate woody biomass into revision of the Environmental Portfolio Standards which were incorporated into the Renewable Energy Standard and Tariff (REST) rule.

Forests throughout the State are in trouble. What some regard as green and thriving are, in-fact, overcrowded, out-of-balance, and at serious risk of loss from insect, disease, wildfire, and other environmental factors. The declining health of our forests is a significant threat to many communities in our state, including the greater Flagstaff area. This threat extends to life, property and infrastructure, and includes impacts to wildlife habitat, watershed values, visual quality, and spiritual and emotional bonds. All of these values affect the well-being and economic vitality of our communities.

Productive use of biomass from our forests is a key component to reversing a downward trend in forest vitality and positioning the State as a leader in emerging technology. Biomass utilization deserves serious consideration by the Commission to replace fossil fuels for Renewable Energy Credits. In so doing, the Commission would spearhead efforts to protect our communities, restore our forests, and develop economically viable and sustainable wood-based industries.

It is our hope the Commission understands that excessive biomass is a threat to the State and that actions which encourage or require use of this material will not only address renewable energy needs, but will also further community protection.

Respectfully,

Paul Summerfelt
President – Board of Directors

CC: Members – AZ Corporation Commission
Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership Advisory Board
Flagstaff City Manager, Mayor & Council
Coconino County Manager, Chair & Board of Supervisors