

# DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

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To All Interested Parties:

The Montana Woody Biomass Utilization Strategy was initiated to address one of the strategic priorities identified in the Montana Forest Resource Assessment completed in 2010. The intent was to provide an analysis on past and present opportunities and actions related to maintaining and developing markets for small trees and residual forest material, and identify opportunities for future efforts by those engaged in the woody biomass arena.

This strategy has clearly met that intent, by:

- providing a thorough analysis of the biomass that exists within Montana;
- documenting historic use of biomass by wood products manufacturing facilities;
- summarizing recent efforts to establish small, wood-fired heating systems through the "Fuels for Schools" program, and ongoing efforts to construct combined heat and power facilities at existing wood products manufacturing plants; and
- identifying and showcasing emerging technologies that hold promise for additional and higher-value uses of woody biomass and small-diameter trees.

From my review of this strategy, it is clear that we should continue our efforts in establishing small, decentralized heating systems in our schools, hospitals, and other public and private buildings, while continuing our efforts to construct combined heat and power systems to maintain markets for biomass while strengthening the bottom line of our wood products manufacturers. I am also excited by the potential of new building materials and the emerging biofuel/biochemistry applications for wood products, from flavorings in the food we eat to the jet fuel used to transport us around the world.

I encourage all of us to continue working to build upon the success of those who have been working in this arena, and wish to extend my gratitude to the members of the Biomass Working Group for developing this strategy.

Sincerely,

Robert Harrington