

Lake County LCI Biomass Pilot Project

The purpose of this project is to identify opportunities for the Lake County Risk Reduction Authority to support increased utilization of woody biomass, particularly from forest health and wildfire risk reduction projects. This was accomplished through three primary reports, and the key findings from each are summarized below.

Lake County Biomass Supply Assessment

- Lake County is dominated by federal lands, most of which has burned in the last 10 years, and fragmented smaller parcels of nonindustrial private forestland.
- Forest health and vegetation management work is largely dependent on grant funding, due to limited existing biomass markets nearby.
- Biomass utilization solutions should be small-scale, given volatile supply and invasive pathogens concerns.
- Actions to increase biomass availability could include: expand forest health programming for private landowners; strategically coordinate fuels reduction projects county-wide and maintain long-term funding; and build local CEQA capacity for more efficient project permitting.



Lake County RRA Financial Analysis Study

- Despite its achievements, the RRA faces barriers to expansion, including limited funding, coordination inefficiencies, and insufficient staffing.
- However, there are clear ways in which the RRA could expand its impact and scope to support biomass utilization and strengthen economic development opportunities in Lake County.
- To support an expanded role related to biomass utilization, the RRA could pursue a set of core functions such as environmental review, project siting, and local code reform; workforce development; and coordination and outreach.
- The RRA could pursue a variety of revenue sources to support its expanded functions, including grants, member dues, fees for services, and endowments/gifts.



Lake County RRA Entity Action Plan

This report identifies four main focus areas that the RRA could pursue in support of increase biomass removal and utilization:

- Improve and streamline local CEQA compliance processes, including through clear exemption policies, staff training, and empowering other local districts to serve as lead agency for vegetation management and biomass project development.
- Advance a public-private partnership to spur biomass waste disposal, such as through centralized sort yards and mobile biochar machines.
- Facilitate a Biomass Business Competition to encourage local entrepreneurial growth focused on developing value-added products from forest biomass waste.
- Lead a Forest Biomass Use Action Center, providing a coordinating role to convene partnering organizations on biomass issues, provide technical assistance, and conduct public outreach related to local biomass utilization.

