CABIN CREEK
BIOMASS FACILITY

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Planner
Placer County Biomass Program

• Approved in 2007 with the following goals:
  ▪ Reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires
  ▪ Find beneficial uses for forest management residuals (biomass)
  ▪ Improve air quality in Placer County
Biomass Program

• Support fuels management activities
• Reduce open pile burning
• Improve regional air quality by reducing emissions
• Use biomass to provide renewable energy
Gasification Technology

[Diagram showing gasification process with labels such as fuel input, exchanger, gasifier, BIO-CHAR, heat transfer by conduction, heat transfer by radiation, preheated air or gas turbine exhaust, and pyro/syngas.]

[Images of a gas generator and an electrical grid system.]
Biomass Project

- **WHAT**: Two MW biomass electric power generation facility
- **WHY**: Emerged as a vital component of the Program because it meets Program goals
- **HOW**: Secured federal matching grant funds through the Department of Energy
- **WHERE**: Board directed staff to search for a viable location
Site Selection Criteria

- Land use compatibility
- Adequate size
- Electric transmission/distribution facilities
- Water/wastewater access
- Transportation network
- Co-located uses for waste heat
- Proximity to fuel sources
Eastern Placer County
Core Fuel Supply Area

Black = 30 mile radius
Blue = 60 minute drive
Kings Beach Site Attributes

• Proximity to fuel stock (Tahoe Basin)
• Industrial zone district
• Developed with an 18 MW backup facility
• Power transmission infrastructure
• Site owned by electric company interested in partnership with County
• Waste heat would be sold to local businesses and could also be transferred to local streets and sidewalks for snow melt
Kings Beach
Alternative Site

• BOS directs staff to withdraw Kings Beach application and identify an out-of-basin project site
Cabin Creek Site
Cabin Creek – Placer County Property

Project Site
Cabin Creek

- Without significant public opposition, EIR progresses rapidly
- Planning Commission approved Cabin Creek Biomass project use permit and certified the EIR
Planning Commission Decision Appealed

- Project appealed by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD)

- Appeal focused on four issues:
  - Inconsistent fuel mix description
  - Combustion efficiency of gasification versus open burning
  - Baseline for EIR evaluation
  - Project impacts on forest habitat
Board of Supervisors Decision

• Staff coordinates with CBD to resolve most important issues
• CBD generally agrees with new proposed conditions of approval
• Board of Supervisors denies the appeal and approves the project
• No litigation
Lessons

• Careful attention to initial site selection
• Early consultation with decision makers
• Provide information early – during NOP
• Conservative analysis
• Potential opposition:
  • Local community
  • Environmental groups
  • Neighboring jurisdictions