

New Hampshire Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund

Final Progress Report  
For the Period September 23, 2009 to June 30, 2011

July 27, 2011

1. Program Title: Roadmap to Position NH Communities to Explore and Implement District Heating and Combined Heat and Power Options Using Renewable Carbon Neutral Wood Biomass.
2. Program Types 8 and 10
3. Summary of Work completed during the duration of the grant, 9/23/2009 to 6/30/2011.

Task 1- 100% Complete. Task 1- A sub-committee of the NH Wood Biomass Heat/Power Task Force was organized prior to G&C approval of the Grant. Once notification of G&C approval was received, the sub-committee prepared the Request for Proposals which was issued on November 18, 2009. The RFP was published in the Manchester Union Leader and Concord Monitor. It was posted on the North Country RC&D and other partner's websites. It was also announced via email to the NH Wood Biomass heat/Power Task Force and several other interested parties. An informational conference for prospective contractors was held on Dec 4, 2009. Seven prospective contractors attended. Another 2 prospective contractors returned interest cards, but did not attend. Proposals were due to be submitted to North Country RC&D by 4:30pm on December 18, 2009. The project sub-committee reviewed the proposals and selected two candidates for interviews. Interviews will be conducted January 20, 2010. A decision was made on the contract hire on January 22, 2010. An agreement with Plymouth State University, Center for Rural Partnerships for a graduate assistant who will work with the project team throughout the project was been negotiated and finalized. As of 12/31/09 90 % of Task 1 was completed. Adjustments were made to the budget categories. The sub-committee of the NH Wood Biomass Heat/Power Task Force reviewed proposals received by the December 18, 2009 deadline. Interviews with the two candidate firms were conducted on January 20, 2010. A team composed of Yellow Wood Associates from St Albans, Vt. and The Biomass Energy Resource Center from Montpelier, Vt. was selected as the contractor to develop the "Roadmap". An agreement between Plymouth State University, Center for Rural Partnerships and North Country RC&D for a graduate assistant, Tom Evans, to work with the project team was finalized. As of 03/31/2010, 100 % of Task 1 was completed.

Task 2 100% complete. Before the contractors were hired the Graduate assistant from Plymouth State University conducted a literature search. The contractor reviewed the annotated bibliography/literature review prepared by Graduate Assistant and conducted their own literature review on community goals and district energy. On February 26<sup>th</sup> the contracting team further defined project roles, completed and forwarded a detailed work plan. The contractors prepared and presented an introductory Webinar on their recommendation for the process for developing the “Roadmap” to the Biomass Task Force on March 18, 2010. The webinar outlined the work plan and presented proposed community goals as well as selection process for the Focus Group. The contractors initiated the creation of a list of completed and pending biomass projects in New Hampshire and a list of local energy committees. The contractor is working with Clean Air – Cool Planet who has a list of energy committee contacts to ensure that we are able to invite all of the energy committees to complete an application for the Roadmap focus group.

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The contractor outlined the decision-making tree for the Roadmap and identified types and range of information that needs to be gathered. Draft “worksheets” to walk communities through each stage of the roadmap were developed. Technical notes were drafted. A draft application for the Roadmap focus group was prepared by the contractor and reviewed by the Sub-Committee.

The contractor then prepared a draft of the “Roadmap” workbook. The draft was reviewed by the sub-committee and a Focus Group on June 25, 2010. The consultants took feedback from the Sub-committee and the Focus Group and prepared a final draft by early September. Graduate Assistant Tom Evans prepared to conduct de-briefing interviews with Focus group participants and also prepared to begin outreach to prospective “Roadmap” users. A draft Education and Outreach Plan was developed by the Sub-Committee which is planned to begin in Mid-September.

The contractor completed the “Roadmap” workbook in late September, 2010. The Roadmap workbook was posted on the NHRC&D Website, [www.nhrcd.net](http://www.nhrcd.net) on October 20, 2010.

With the Roadmap Workbook complete, Task 2 was 100% completed.

Task 3- 100% complete. In October 20, 2010, a meeting was held to explain and demonstrate the Roadmap to a group of prospective partners and users of the Roadmap tool. Following the official release of the Roadmap, the Outreach sub-committee began actively developing a series of activities. Many activities were

put in motion. Four conference presentations were planned. The first took place in April at the Local Energy Solutions Conference in Penacook, NH on April 2, 2011. The next at Heating the Northeast Conference held in Manchester, NH and the third at the Biomass Symposium happening in Burlington, Vt. on April 27-29, 2011. A presentation before the North Country Council Quarterly meeting occurred in May 18, 2011. Graduate Assistant Tom Evans continued de-briefing interviews with Focus group participants and users of the Roadmap to gain feedback. Another conference presentation was made at the Northeast Forest Utilization and Marketing Committee on June 20-23. A new Tri-fold Brochure which explains the purpose of the Community Roadmap was published during this period. The brochure was given out at each conference presentation and was mailed out on June 17, 2011 to all NH municipalities, conservation committees, local energy committees, NH state legislators, schools and other targeted organizations.

The Community Roadmap and Brochure are posted on the North Country RC&D Website as well as most of the partner organizations that helped create it.

In addition, an evaluation of the entire process was prepared by Tom Evans and is included with this report.

4. See the previous section and the Evaluation report .
5. Jobs created included the graduate assistantship at PSU and the contract with Yellow Wood/BERC which has dedicated an estimated .5 FTE to the project.
6. On April 15, 2011, the US Congress and President zero funded the national RC&D Program. This action greatly limited North Country RC&D's ability to conduct further outreach efforts, as it lost its Coordinator, Rick DeMark who was leading the project as well as office space and equipment on which to conduct business. As a result, not all of the funds dedicated to outreach were expended. There remains \$3,417 in the outreach and education budget category. If the PUC would allow North Country RC&D, which has now recovered from the loss of its Coordinator and office, to have access to those funds, North Country RC&D would use those funds to provide hard copies of the Roadmap (which is has received several inquiries) and Update the RC&D website to better market the Roadmap tool.
7. Beyond the Contract. All of the members of the Outreach Committee as well as the consultants which authored the "Roadmap" continue to market the Roadmap to NH communities.
8. A PDF of the Roadmap has already been sent to the PUC and is available on [www.nhrcd.net](http://www.nhrcd.net) A pdf of the Brochure explaining the Roadmap is included.

9. See Attachment 1
10. NCRC&D is currently working with the USFS and several other partners to market the benefits of renewable biomass heat. Without the Roadmap, this work would be much more difficult and may not have begun.
11. NCRC&D will certainly project notice to the PUC of any new and additional activities, especially if the PUC allows NCRC&D to have continued access to the Outreach funds.