

**V(A). Planned Program (Summary)**

**Program # 6**

**1. Name of the Planned Program**

Sustainable Energy

**2. Brief summary about Planned Program**

Alaska's forest and agricultural resource potential for bioenergy production is immense. The economic potential of Alaska's forests is under-realized in biomass harvest, timber and nontimber products. The potential for Alaska to develop new agricultural land is also under-realized. Furthermore, agricultural lands that are currently in Conservation Reserve Program may lend themselves to sustainable production of biomass. The forest ecosystem and agricultural lands can play a role in diversifying the economy of Alaska. State leaders plan to develop both renewable and nonrenewable natural resources to contribute to the economic well-being of their citizens without compromising ecological integrity and biodiversity. To be sustainable, any development activities require production practices that balance technologies and economic necessity with environmental imperatives.

Research, teaching and outreach are needed to provide information about management of Alaska and northern ecosystems, the production of sustainable energy sources and new methodology for second generation energy systems. As energy continues to become a growing concern throughout the world, the boreal forest and agronomic crops of Alaska have the potential to provide fuel alternatives to petroleum and coal.

**3. Program existence :** Intermediate (One to five years)

**4. Program duration :** Medium Term (One to five years)

**5. Expending formula funds or state-matching funds :** Yes

**6. Expending other than formula funds or state-matching funds :** Yes

**V(B). Program Knowledge Area(s)**

1. Program Knowledge Areas and Percentage

KA Code	Knowledge Area	%1862 Extension	%1890 Extension	%1862 Research	%1890 Research
123	Management and Sustainability of Forest Resources	10%		20%	
125	Agroforestry	10%		20%	
131	Alternative Uses of Land	10%		20%	
205	Plant Management Systems	30%		20%	
511	New and Improved Non-Food Products and Processes	40%		20%	
	<b>Total</b>	100%		100%	

**V(C). Planned Program (Situation and Scope)**

## 1. Situation and priorities

Alaska contains vast forests and lands that have forest product and agricultural production capability. The priority is economic viability without negative impacts on existing agricultural and forestry enterprises. The USFS forest inventory analysis (FIA) for Alaska is incomplete at best. Agricultural land surveys exist for many locations but are not complete for the entire state of Alaska. Additionally, large masses of the productive forest and agricultural lands are not within reach of current transportation infrastructure and existing electrical or power supplies.

Agricultural land surveys for Alaska are published by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). It is estimated that within the road system there are 500,000 acres of cropable lands. Grain, grass and oilseed crops are likely candidates for energy use. The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) provides statistics for grain and hay. There are no statistics for oilseeds or crop residues, although amounts could be estimated. Woody biomass as a crop is also a potential energy source. There have been reasonable successes with these crops in other northern areas. Basic research is needed on grasses and woody species for biomass. Willow, poplar and small-diameter spruce are the species most frequently used and have been briefly addressed in previous research.

The Western Governors' Association in the review draft of "Biomass Electric Supply Sources for the Western States" (2005) estimated biomass resources in the Western states, including Alaska. The major categories included agricultural, forest and urban biomass resources. However, much of the information regarding crop residues, energy crops, unused logging slash, primary sawmill residues, bio-solids, waste water and landfill waste had to be estimated based on an average from selected Western states, calculated on a per capita or per acre basis as applicable, then extrapolated to obtain totals.

Much more information exists but, as stated above, is scattered and not organized in a manner specifically directed to give quantifiable answers to those with an interest in using biomass as a dedicated fuel stock. Research and subsequent education and outreach are priority concerns as we move from rough estimates to actual capabilities concerning Alaska potential for sustainable energy production.

## 2. Scope of the Program

- In-State Extension
- In-State Research
- Multistate Research
- Multistate Extension
- Integrated Research and Extension
- Multistate Integrated Research and Extension

## V(D). Planned Program (Assumptions and Goals)

### 1. Assumptions made for the Program

Alaska's forest and agricultural resource potential is immense. There is a need for research on the availability, quality and feasibility of sustainable, economic use of agricultural and forestry biomass in Alaska. Communities that do not have access to the Southcentral natural gas distribution system rely heavily (75%+) on high cost petroleum-based fuels to satisfy their home/space heating. Most also use petroleum products or coal for their electrical generation needs. The negative aspects of this reliance are further compounded in relatively isolated rural and village communities by the high cost of transporting

these expensive fuels to point of use.

It is this high end-use fuel cost that is driving many individuals and communities to seek alternative fuel sources, especially in the critical realm of home/space heating. Sustainable biomass energy sources are attractive because of their apparent wide distribution, abundance, proximity to affected communities, easy availability and assumed low cost (when combusted in an appropriate technology) and are being strongly considered as a means of alleviating the fuel cost dilemma.

AFES has collected and archived meteorological data over a span of 100 years (the longest continuous weather record for the state) in Interior Alaska. In the Matanuska Valley wind speed and direction has been collected for over three years using a 30 m meteorological tower to accurately gauge the potential for energy generation. Data for solar applications was collected during 1980 - 1995. It was compiled and is available for this region from Extension. CES will provide outreach to communities about biomass heating opportunities and forest management relating to biomass and provide assistance to entrepreneurs involved with sustainable energy production.

**2. Ultimate goal(s) of this Program**

Our goal is to better qualify/quantify biomass resources and address the question of availability, quality and feasibility of biomass so that it might be used in Alaska as an economic, sustainable fuel source by:

- Updating the forestry biomass database which will help optimize forestry bioenergy production
- Helping communities learn about and assess biomass heating opportunities and forest management relating to biomass
- Providing assistance to entrepreneurs involved with sustainable energy production
- Seek new answers in the ever-challenging field of energy production.

**V(E). Planned Program (Inputs)**

**1. Estimated Number of professional FTE/SYs to be budgeted for this Program**

Year	Extension		Research	
	1862	1890	1862	1890
2017	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2018	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2019	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2020	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2021	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**V(F). Planned Program (Activity)**

**1. Activity for the Program**

AFES will continue work on oilseed crops. If successful, this research will lead to development of "best practices" management regimes and genetics of bioenergy crops. CES is working with communities on use of biomass products and technologies and with producers to develop value-added forest products. AFES/CES researchers will seek to assimilate all existing information on the total forest and crop biomass available in Alaska into one database, and determine the gaps in the database and the information needed to fill the gaps and the biological, physical, and economic feasibility of using Alaska biomass as biofuels.

CES and AFES outreach will include working with communities and organizations regarding the use of biomass and with producers interested in biomass production.

**2. Type(s) of methods to be used to reach direct and indirect contacts**

<b>Extension</b>	
<b>Direct Methods</b>	<b>Indirect Methods</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Education Class</li> <li>● Workshop</li> <li>● Group Discussion</li> <li>● One-on-One Intervention</li> <li>● Demonstrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Public Service Announcement</li> <li>● Newsletters</li> <li>● TV Media Programs</li> </ul>

**3. Description of targeted audience**

The target audiences include producers and consumers, communities, agriculture and forestry businesses, industry leaders, entrepreneurs, individuals and groups concerned about the quality of the Alaska environment, public resource agencies, public and private resource managers, other faculty and researchers, and undergraduate and graduate students. Our efforts will be directed toward environmentally and economically sustainable development and conservation of our natural resources that will benefit all citizens and help them adapt and become resilient as the climate changes. Advisors and the target audience include State Board of Forestry, Society of American Foresters, Alaska Farm Bureau, Alaska Energy Authority, USDA Forest Service, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, borough governments and Alaska Native corporations. Information on impact of fires will assist the Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry and private landowners and managers. Research and outreach efforts will address public education on the sustainability of biomass harvesting, new technologies and community planning.

**V(G). Planned Program (Outputs)**

NIFA no longer requires you to report target numbers for standard output measures in the Plan of Work. However, all institutions will report actual numbers for standard output measures in the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results. The standard outputs for which you must continue to collect data are:

- Number of contacts
  - Direct Adult Contacts
  - Indirect Adult Contacts
  - Direct Youth Contacts
  - Indirect Youth Contact
- Number of patents submitted
- Number of peer reviewed publications

Clicking this box affirms you will continue to collect data on these items and report the data in the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results.

## **V(H). State Defined Outputs**

### **1. Output Measure**

- Output 1: Workshops, demonstrations, short courses, classes, field days and conferences on sustainable energy issues organized and conducted.
- Output 2: Community, organizations and one-on-one consultation concerning bio-based energy opportunities conducted.
- Clicking this box affirms you will continue to collect data on these items and report the data in the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results.

**V(I). State Defined Outcome**

O. No	Outcome Name
1	Outcome 1: Maintain a forestry biomass database.
2	Outcome 2: Monitor adoption of bioenergy technologies.

**Outcome # 1**

**1. Outcome Target**

Outcome 1: Maintain a forestry biomass database.

**2. Outcome Type : Change in Knowledge Outcome Measure**

**3. Associated Knowledge Area(s)**

- 123 - Management and Sustainability of Forest Resources

**4. Associated Institute Type(s)**

- 1862 Extension
- 1862 Research

**Outcome # 2**

**1. Outcome Target**

Outcome 2: Monitor adoption of bioenergy technologies.

**2. Outcome Type : Change in Action Outcome Measure**

**3. Associated Knowledge Area(s)**

- 511 - New and Improved Non-Food Products and Processes

**4. Associated Institute Type(s)**

- 1862 Extension
- 1862 Research

**V(J). Planned Program (External Factors)**

**1. External Factors which may affect Outcomes**

- Natural Disasters (drought, weather extremes, etc.)
- Economy
- Appropriations changes
- Public Policy changes
- Government Regulations
- Competing Public priorities
- Competing Programmatic Challenges

- Populations changes (immigration, new cultural groupings, etc.)

### **Description**

Alaska is experiencing impacts of the changing climate in the degradation of glaciers, the ecology of the boreal forest and its ice-impregnated northern soils. Moisture stress continues to lead to insect predation and tree death. These negative factors will influence the thrust of ecosystem management in coming years. Policy and regulation and competing public priorities affect land use and management of forests and rangelands. Programmatic challenges will occur as consideration is given to the management of the forests for fuels to mitigate demands on petroleum and coal supplies.

Transportation costs draw attention to regional and local management for energy and other local wood products. Finally, as demographics of the population change and demographics of the forest industry change toward management with a specific product objective as well as an objective of sustainable and resilient northern ecosystems, there will be need for continuing adult education and higher education to fill workforce vacancies or new positions that are created to meet demands in energy and ecosystem management fields.

The production of oil has decreased, the price of oil has fallen and the calculation of oil revenues to the state has changed, creating funding stream losses that are negatively affecting higher education. Until revenues are replaced, research support through the state will be less than previously enjoyed. Continuing budget cuts as a result of the reduction in oil revenues will result in the loss of funding for faculty and staff salaries. AFES has lost two research position and no longer contributes research in this area except through oilseed research which is reported in the Ag & Hort planned program. It is not anticipated that these positions will be refilled in the near future. This will severely impact research and education.

## **V(K). Planned Program - Planned Evaluation Studies**

### **Description of Planned Evaluation Studies**

The objective of the AFES and Extension is to set in place communication processes that bring information from our units to our clientele and provides feedback to adjust our programs, within the capabilities of our space and budgets, to meet the needs of the people of Alaska.