



File Code: 3000
Route To:

Date: March 28, 2024

Subject: California Department of Conservation application to EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Program

To: Elizabeth Betancourt, Natural and Working Lands Policy Advisor California
Department of Conservation 715 P Street Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Betancourt,

I am writing in support of the California Department of Conservation's application to EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program. In 2020, the State of California and the US Forest Service signed a memorandum of understanding committing to treating one million acres annually to promote forest resilience. These treatments produce millions of tons of low value woody biomass, and uses for this material are critically needed.

Over the past year, our staff has co-led the development of a California Wood Utilization Strategy alongside the Department of Conservation. This and other efforts have identified carbon-negative biofuels as a critical component of a circular bioeconomy in California. California has made progress in developing the biofuels sector, in large part because of the Department of Conservation's pilot program. However, significantly more public investment is needed to bring projects from proposal stage to operational, and to realize all the public benefits that these developments will provide.

Staff from our Wood and Biomass Utilization Program have worked with the Department of Conservation since 2022 on the Forest Biomass to Carbon-Negative Biofuels Pilot Program. We anticipate supporting the Department of Conservation through ongoing program design and implementation consultation, as well as identifying opportunities for program synergies between this program and the programs we administer. Further, we expect to fill a similar role as we have over the last two years, including a commitment of staff time to provide technical assistance to program development, grant application review and scoring, and outreach activities.

If funded, this project will have a significant positive impact on woody biomass utilization, forest health, pollution reduction, and low-carbon energy production in California.

X Sherry Hazelhurst

Signed by: SHERRY HAZELHURST

SHERRY HAZELHURST
Director, State & Private Forestry

