

## AOC Supports ODF's Biomass Leadership Plan

Testimony from Mark Nystrom, Policy Manager, AOC  
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The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) would like to state their support for the Biomass Leadership Plan component of the Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) budget. AOC has always been a strong advocate for the expansion of biomass throughout the state and believes that the Biomass Leadership Plan will help facilitate these goals. Some of the benefits of expanding the use of biomass for heat or co-generation include:

- Biomass markets **reduce the cost of forest restoration** and lead to more acres treated. The Deschutes National Forest accomplishes 30% more forest thinning and restoration at the same cost when biomass markets are available.
- Biomass-based businesses **create much needed jobs** in rural communities.
- ODF **grant funds would be statewide** and available to support new uses of low-value material wherever opportunity presented itself regardless of end product. ODF funds would fill an important gap that holds back business development in rural communities.

The state strategy for building a robust biomass industry should be “all of the above” so as to account for market fluctuations and market opportunities. At this time there are facilities in the state that are sitting idle and with the proper incentives and assistance, can create much needed jobs. In addition, finding a market for low value forest products will make more forest restoration projects make sense economically, leading to more healthy forests and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

AOC strongly urges support of the Biomass Leadership Plan. Please contact AOC policy manager Mark Nystrom ([mnystrom@ocweb.org](mailto:mnystrom@ocweb.org)) with any questions.