



NEW MEXICO ENERGY, MINERALS and NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

BILL RICHARDSON

Governor

Joanna Prukop

Cabinet Secretary

Tom Mills

Deputy Cabinet Secretary

Chris Wentz

Director

Energy Conservation and Management Division

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Contact: René Parker

Biomass Program Manager

Phone: 476-3314

COWS TO GENERATE ENERGY: ENERGY CONSERVATION DIVISION AWARDED GRANT

SANTA FE – The first demonstration in New Mexico using dairy manure as a source for energy will become reality thanks to a grant from the State Technologies Advancement Collaborative (STAC), which includes the National Association of State Energy Officials, the Association of State Energy Research and Technology Transfer Institutions, and the U.S. Department of Energy. The New Mexico Energy Conservation Management Division led a public-private partnership that has been awarded a \$336,949 grant for a two-year distributed energy biomass demonstration project in Southern New Mexico. The Energy Conservation Management Division is a part of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department.

The partnership includes the Texas State Energy Conservation Office, New Mexico State University, and a host of private partners. The project was one of only 13 to be awarded grant funding under a nationally competitive STAC solicitation; a total of 61 proposals were submitted and considered. Funding will be matched with a 55% cost share (\$411,871) from project partners, evidencing the strong commitment and interest in making this project a success.

“The goal of the project will be to harness energy from cow waste,” said Chris Wentz, director of the Energy Conservation Management Division. “The grant will allow us to design, construct, operate and evaluate a low-water anaerobic digestion process to convert dairy manure to methane gas. That gas can be used for generation of on-site heat and power.”

The low-water process is key to implementation in New Mexico and other Western states that are faced with limited water supplies. In addition, the resulting solids can be used or sold as fertilizer.

“This project will provide a national model for the utilization of biomass for heat and power generation,” said Joanna Prukop, Cabinet Secretary of the NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department. “I grew up on a farm and I can tell you: it’s a new way of looking at manure. This process turns a waste product into a public benefit.”

The proposed digester will be designed to handle approximately 5,000 tons of manure per year resulting in approximately 1,500 kilowatt-hours of electricity. Results of the project will be documented and disseminated nationally.

Dairy biomass utilization offers a significant opportunity for the State of New Mexico in achieving its renewable energy, environmental and economic development goals. New Mexico is currently seventh among all states in milk production and home to some 300,000 dairy cows averaging 2.6 million tons of manure per year. This project will focus on the technological and economical feasibility of such a project and its ability to be replicated throughout the Western states, which face limited water supplies and an increasing number of confined animal feedlot operations.

The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) works to position New Mexico as a national leader in the energy and natural resource areas and to create a New Mexico where individuals, agencies and organizations work collaboratively on energy and natural resource management to ensure a sustainable environmental and economic future. There are five divisions: Energy Conservation and Management (ECMD), State Forestry (SFD), Mining and Minerals (MMD), Oil Conservation (OCD), State Parks (SPD), and Administrative Services (ASD). The Office of the Secretary (OFS), headed by Cabinet Secretary Joanna Prukop, provides policy direction for the department and is its link to the Office of the Governor. Contact the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department at (505) 476-3226 or visit www.emnrd.nm.us.

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