



## PENNSYLVANIA FUELS FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

Promoting the use of local, sustainable biomass for heat and power projects

### Summary of 2015 Activities

#### Overview

2015 was an active year for PA FFS&C. We organized and cosponsored a variety of events, and played an integral role in the successful application for a State Wood Energy Team grant. The boiler operators' group continued to be successful, and the ongoing efforts to catalog commercial wood energy systems in the state resulted in the most complete collection of system information available to date.

#### 2015 Officers of PA FFS&C

Chair: Daniel Ciolkosz

Vice Chair: Sarah Wurzbacher

Secretary: Michele Ferguson

Treasurer: (open)

#### Team Business Meetings

Team business meetings were held on the following dates:

- 11 February, 2015
- (April meeting cancelled in lieu of spring tour)
- 10 June, 2015
- (August meeting cancelled in lieu of informal get together at Ag Progress Days)
- (October meeting yielded in favor of wood energy team meeting)
- 09 December, 2015

Note that several business meetings were cancelled in lieu of various activities, as well as to support the state wood energy team.

#### Wood Energy Team Grant

The "PA State Wood Energy Team" grant proposal was submitted to the US Forest Service, and was selected for funding. The three year, \$250k grant will be used to:

- Provide salary for Ed Johnstonbaugh and Mike Palko to actively promote the use of wood energy in new and existing projects around the state.
- Provide funds for workshops and short courses on wood energy topics
- Support the regional biomass conference organized by the PA Biomass Energy Association

PA Fuels for Schools and Communities pledged to be a participant in the project, and would host meetings of the wood energy team. We also placed a wood energy team page on our website, at

[http://www.pafuelsforschools.psu.edu/partners/PA\\_WoodEnergyTeam.asp](http://www.pafuelsforschools.psu.edu/partners/PA_WoodEnergyTeam.asp)

The PA Fuels for Schools and Communities group is not receiving direct funds from the grant, but a banner and updated brochure will be created for the group as part of the grant.

## **Public Events**

The following public events were organized or co-sponsored by PA Fuels for Schools and Communities:

### Spring Bioenergy Tour – April 15, 2015

This multi-site event, co-sponsored by the PA Biomass Energy Association and Penn State Extension, included a tour of a biomass pelleting plant in Meadville PA, a torrefaction plant in Port Allegheny, PA, and a forest management research site near Kane, PA.

### National Bioenergy Day Open House and Tour – October 19, 2015

This event, co-sponsored by the PA Biomass Energy Association and Penn State Extension, included an open house, pellet plant tour, and switchgrass field production tour in Meadville, PA

### National Bioenergy Day Forests Fields and Home Event – October 21, 2015

This event, co-sponsored by the PA Biomass Energy Association and Penn State Extension, included an open house, forest management tour, switchgrass production talk, and high performance home tour in Julian, PA.

### National Bioenergy Day Biomass Boiler Open House – October 23, 2015

This event, co-sponsored by the PA Biomass Energy Association and Penn State Extension, included an open house and tour of a biomass boiler in Loysburg, PA.

### State Wood Energy Team Kickoff Meeting – October 23, 2015

This meeting was co-sponsored by PA Fuels for Schools and consisted of the initial meeting of the wood energy team project group.

### Boiler Operators' Group – November 20, 2015

The boiler operators' group met at Northeast Bradford School District in Rome, PA for discussion, a site tour, and a presentation by Paul Frederick of the VT Department of Forestry.

## **Wood Fuels Standard**

In January, the group released its "Recommended Fuel Specifications" document, providing guidance on selecting wood fuels for commercial scale biomass boilers. The document is available online at

<http://www.pafuelsforschools.psu.edu/resources/fuelstandards.asp>

## **Biomass Boiler Systems Survey**

Michele Ferguson distributed a survey to biomass boiler operators, compiling the results into a list of commercial scale (excluding wood products industry installations) boilers and key performance characteristics from their recent operation. This information will be reviewed and released to the public ASAP.