



Final Environmental Assessment for the Virginia State Energy Program's Cephas C&D Wastes Biomass Project, Richmond, Virginia (DOE/EA-1767)

U. S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory

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Cephass Industries (Cephass) is proposing to construct an open-loop biomass manufacturing facility in Richmond, Virginia. The demand for recycling construction and demolition (C&D) debris has rapidly increased in recent years prompting the construction of approximately 200 biomass manufacturing facilities nationwide, with more expected to be developed. Of particular value is the recycling of wood and woody material into biomass commodities that can be sold to end-users as an alternative fuel source. Studies have shown that the recycling of C&D debris serves to: produce energy, conserve landfill space, reduce the environmental impact of producing new materials, and reduce overall construction project expenses by lessening disposal costs. The Cephass Open Loop Biomass Manufacturing Facility is a shovel-ready biomass project that would support the C&D and recycling industries in metropolitan Richmond. The proposed facility would be located on approximately 5.2 acres within the Broad Rock Industrial Park, which is located within the Richmond City limits south of the James River (Appendix 1). Development of the facility would include constructing an approximately 33,000 square foot metal building from recycled materials that would house the operational equipment (Appendix 2). The facility would have the capacity to accept and process 250-500 tons of C&D debris on a weekly basis, of which approximately 35% is expected to be biomass fuel. Cephass applied for funding assistance from Virginia's State Energy Program (SEP) through the Virginia Department of Mines Minerals and Energy (DMME). DMME selected this project to receive a grant from the SEP. States can apply their SEP funds to a variety of activities related to energy efficiency and renewable energy. Recently, much of states' SEP funding came from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) of 2009 (Public Law 111-5, 123 Statute 115; Recovery Act), in which Congress appropriated \$3.1 billion to the Department of Energy (DOE or the Department) for SEP grants and from which Virginia received \$70 million pursuant to a statutory formula for financial distribution. Virginia recently informed the Department that it proposes to use \$500,000 of its SEP funds as a grant to the Cephass project. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) DOE must complete a review of potential environmental impacts of projects funded under the SEP before deciding whether to allow states to use their funds for the projects they select. DOE prepared this environmental assessment (EA) to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed biomass project and the no action alternative. This EA analyzes the following areas of potential environmental impacts: water resources, geology, topography, soils, vegetation, wildlife, air quality, noise, visual resources, archeological and historic resources, land use, environmental justice, and infrastructure.

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