

Energy Issues

Critical Issue #1: Rural Energy (region-wide)

- Effects of energy development on rural communities
- High cost of energy inhibits community development (especially in remote communities in areas of Alaska, Pacific islands)
- Need for off-the grid energy systems for rural communities & businesses
- Lack of well-integrated energy conversion on farms

Critical Issue #2: Diverse Energy Sources (region-wide)

- Need to capitalize on diverse sources of energy in the West
- Need infrastructure & technology to support development of alternative sources
- Assisting individuals/communities to realize optimal benefits of the new energy economy
- Wind, solar, geothermal, small hydro, ditch-driven generators—all need transmission capability
- Space & implementation for solar energy
- Make ammonia from excess intermittent electricity
- Need to convince funders & policy makers that West can be a major contributor of biomass energy
- Can biomass energy become a practical replacement for fossil fuels?
- Need to address continuing high cost of biofuels/bioproducts versus fossil fuels
- Generate biomass energy without using arable land
- Wildland fire fuel reduction & biomass feed-stock
- How can we find new feedstocks, unique or underutilized in the West
- Food and fuel issues related to biofuels

Critical Issue #3: Impacts of energy development/mitigation strategies (region-wide)

- Identify environmental impacts of energy development on environment and people (including ag land owners & mitigation strategies)
- Impacts of land-use restrictions (e.g., ESA, cultural resources) on expanded energy development
- Environmental impacts/policy on the entire energy system, including delivery (e.g., coal & oil trains, natural gas/oil pipelines)
- Water use for energy production

Other Issues Related to Energy

- **Energy Cost**
 - o High energy cost of supplying irrigation water
 - o Support research into policies & programs that ensure energy affordability
- **Energy Policy & Education**
 - o We need a systems approach to ag & energy
 - o Broad energy education—people do not understand where their energy comes from & what it does for their life
 - o Support through research, policies and practices that enhance energy reliability
 - o Assist through research & outreach, the energy industry, policy makers, & consumers to understand & make informed decisions regarding energy resources

- Lack of sufficiently trained workforce in bioenergy/bioproducts industries
- **Energy Efficiency/Conservation**
 - Support research into programs that promote energy conservation & safety
 - Home organization & construction to save energy
 - Education re: energy efficiency in small businesses and home
 - Energy efficiency in ag production, high energy use in ag
 - Lack of trained extension agents in conducting energy audits on farms and processing facilities