

**Joint Meeting  
Committee on Electric Utility Restructuring  
And  
Virginia Coal and Energy Commission**

**September 8, 2004**

**Comments by B. E. (Ed) Brammer  
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Good Morning. I am Ed Brammer and I represent Multitrade Group, Inc. of Martinsville, VA.

I have previously been involved in the development and operation of three facilities that use renewable fuels (wood and wood wastes) as the primary sources of energy, in Virginia and North Carolina. These projects included being the original developer of a 79.5 MW wood-fueled project located in Pittsylvania County, Virginia.

In the interest of full disclosure, I have a vested financial interest in promoting the development of additional renewable-fueled power plants in the Commonwealth of Virginia. My interest includes benefits as an owner of forest land, a developer of wood-fueled project and as a supplier of wood fuels. In spite of my financial interest in renewable fuels, I am passionate in the belief that promotion of renewable fuels is in the best interests of the Commonwealth and its general population.

The following are the salient points that favor expanding the role of renewable energy in Virginia's electric power generation mix:

- 1) Wood is a domestic and renewable resource that meets carbon reduction goals as spelled out in the Kyoto Protocol. (Even though the US has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol, its environmental goals would be helpful to cleaning the air.)
- 2) Wood has only trace amounts of sulfur and has generally lower air emissions than other generating fuels.

- 3) Increased use of renewables will create a market for low end forest products and forest industry byproducts such as limbs, tree tops, and low end standing stock, sawdust, bark and shavings.
- 4) There is a very strong correlation between areas where wood fuel can be harvested and areas with chronically high unemployment rates. The vast forest lands of Southside and Southwest Virginia desperately need new jobs and economic stimulus. This handout shows that increased use of wood fuels provides jobs where they are desperately needed.
- 5) The financial benefits of using more wood fuels would also flow to land owners primarily in Southside and the Southwest.
- 6) Likewise, new job creation in the fields of timber harvesting and transportation would be concentrated in the same economically depressed region, i.e., Southwest and Southside Virginia.
- 7) I have prepared a handout that assumes that five wood-fueled plants, each generating only 50 megawatts, were placed in operation in Virginia. Together, they would consume two million tons of wood fuel each year. The handout “follows the money” through three tiers to demonstrate the wide variety of stakeholders and societal beneficiaries in Virginia. I would like to briefly discuss the handout.
- 8) In addition to wood, fuel crop farming holds great promise for Virginia. Using switch grass or sorghums as boiler fuels would give hard-pressed farmers a replacement crop for tobacco. The combustion equipment and handling systems in a typical wood-fueled power plant are capable of using these crops as fuels. Additional research is needed to find ways to make farm fuel crops price competitive with existing fuels.

In conclusion we are convinced that development of additional electric generating capacity that relies on renewable fuels would be environmentally preferable, economically sensible and would create jobs in economically distressed areas. For these reasons I request any assistance in encouraging additional use of renewables in the power generation mix.

I will be glad to answer any questions.

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