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Summary of Changes to the Green-e Energy National Standard

Provisions on Biomass: April 9, 2012 Update

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Decision Summary

On April 9, 2012 the Green-e Governance Board (“Board”) approved changes to the Green-e Energy National Standard (“Standard”) that modified the then-existing language defining the eligibility of biomass as a renewable fuel source under the Standard. The new language clarified the circumstances under which organic matter can be used for electricity generation and considered eligible for inclusion in a Green-e Energy certified renewable energy product.

The changes included clarified language on forestry residues, tree plantations, and the limited circumstances under which whole trees are eligible as a fuel source (e.g. trees that are certified as thinnings that improve ecology, or have died and fallen naturally). The new language includes that whole trees from Federal lands are ineligible, as are some waste-to-energy technologies such as municipal solid waste gasification. There are no changes to landfill gas and wastewater methane eligibility. These changes go into effect with generation occurring July 1, 2014 and later and used toward Green-e Energy certified sales, with the potential for extended recognition of preexisting contracts with biomass facilities that would otherwise no longer be eligible under the revised Standard.

Timeline

In July 2010, Green-e Energy staff received a stakeholder inquiry about the eligibility of certain biomass resources under the Standard. Staff took this issue to the Board¹ to get further clarification of the Board’s interpretation of qualifying biomass. In response to the issue raised, the Board decided to form a subcommittee to reevaluate eligibility requirements for biomass under the Standard. The Board indicated that such reevaluation was appropriate, in part, because of recent attention on electric power generation emissions from biogenic resources (including reports like the Manomet Study).²

The Biomass Subcommittee researched the issues, solicited opinions from relevant stakeholders, and subsequently opted to initiate a round of stakeholder input on the Standard’s biomass criteria—including woody waste, agricultural crops and waste, municipal solid waste, biodiesel, energy crops, and animal and other organic waste, as well as repowering and use of tracking systems. The first 60-day stakeholder

¹ A list of Green-e Governance Board Members are available at: http://www.green-e.org/about_who_gov_bd.shtml

² Manomet Center for Conservation Science, Biomass Sustainability and Carbon Policy Study, <http://www.manomet.org/manomet-study-woody-biomass-energy> (accessed May 17, 2013).

comment period opened on September 21, 2011, with notices sent to more than 2,000 contacts at environmental organizations, utilities, foresters, government agencies, electricity generators, and others. The call for comments was also posted on the homepage of the Green-e Energy website and referenced at quarterly Green-e Energy participant calls. This comment period was set to close on November 22, 2011, and was extended through November 29, 2011 to facilitate stakeholder participation.

The Biomass Subcommittee requested that an outside advisory group be assembled, which was ultimately called the Biomass Advisory Group, to provide a broader base of expertise, collect input from industry and increase interaction with stakeholders. This group, which contained primarily scholars and industry professionals, participated in multiple group calls with the Biomass Subcommittee. Individual calls were also held with representatives from NGOs, paper companies, forestry companies, utilities, government agencies, third-party certifiers, and others. Discussions with the Biomass Advisory Group provided further clarification on and interpretation of stakeholder comments, and added to the Board's understanding of the issues and viewpoints represented.

The Green-e Governance Board solicited a second 60-day stakeholder comment period on August 15, 2012. The request for comments was distributed to over 2,500 stakeholders, including government, NGOs, scholars, industry professionals, and others. The notification was posted on the homepage of the Green-e Energy website, noted in Green-e Energy program participant quarterly calls and referenced at the Renewable Energy Markets (REM) conference. On September 24th, 2012, Green-e Energy staff hosted an open Biomass Advisory Group Breakfast at REM 2012, a one hour in-person discussion with attendees (including some members of the Biomass Advisory Group), Green-e Energy participants, and Green-e Governance Board members. This comment period was set to close on October 15, 2012, but was extended through October 22, 2012 to facilitate stakeholder input.

Over the course of the Standard revision process, the Green-e Governance Board reviewed stakeholder comments and relevant scientific research, soliciting further information where useful to the process. After reviewing the information provided throughout the revision process, the Biomass Subcommittee presented draft Standard revision language to the Green-e Governance Board. This draft was refined over several Board meetings and subcommittee sessions.

On April 9, 2012 The Green-e Governance Board met and approved the updates to the Standard.

Standard-Setting Procedures

The Green-e programs follow best practices for standard-setting organizations in updating, creating, and maintaining standards. The programs are governed by the independent Green-e Governance Board, with the Center for Resource Solutions serving as the program administrator. This Board approves standards and substantive policy issues affecting the terms under which certification is granted.

At the beginning of a standard-setting or standard-updating procedure, CRS forms a stakeholder list by reaching out to existing stakeholders and identifying new relevant groups and individuals. Stakeholders include a wide variety of organizations and individuals. Any interested party can become a stakeholder and submit comments during open comment periods. CRS conducts two 60-day public comment periods for every significant standard update. At the beginning of a stakeholder comment period, CRS staff notifies

stakeholders for that period and provides information on how to submit comments, including online submission instructions and relevant deadlines. Additionally, the Green-e and CRS websites are kept up to date with announcements of stakeholder comment periods and other pertinent information. At the conclusion of the stakeholder comment periods, the Board reviews substantive stakeholder comments, determines if revisions are needed, and recommends and adopts updates to the Standard accordingly.

About Green-e and Center for Resource Solutions

A program of Center for Resource Solutions, Green-e is North America's leading independent consumer protection program for the sale of renewable energy and greenhouse gas reductions in the retail market. Green-e offers certification and verification of renewable energy and greenhouse gas mitigation products through Green-e Energy, a renewable energy certification program; Green-e Climate, a greenhouse gas emission reduction certification program; and Green-e Marketplace, a program that provides forward-thinking organizations a simple, nationally recognized logo they can use to communicate their renewable energy and climate commitment to their customers and stakeholders. To learn more about Green-e Certified products and programs available in all 50 states and Canada, visit www.green-e.org.