



**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY**  
**OF THE GOLDEN STATE NATURAL RESOURCES FOREST RESILIENCY DEMONSTRATION**  
**PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

**SCH #2022110466**

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**DATE:** October 22, 2024

**TO:** Responsible and Trustee Agencies and Interested Parties

**PROJECT TITLE:** Golden State Natural Resources Forest Resiliency Demonstration Project

**LEAD AGENCY:** Golden State Finance Authority  
1215 K Street, Suite 1650  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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<https://www.gsfahome.org/programs/ed/forest-resiliency.shtml>

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Golden State Natural Resources Forest Resiliency Demonstration Project

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**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that Golden State Finance Authority, as Lead Agency, has completed a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Golden State Natural Resources Forest Resiliency Demonstration Project.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The proposed project is a response to the growing rate of wildfires in California, which has been exacerbated by hazardous excess fuel loads in forests, and the need to promote economic activity within California's rural counties. The proposed project would improve the resiliency of California's forestlands by sustainably procuring and processing excess biomass into a pelletized fuel source for use in renewable energy generation overseas. The proposed project components include the vegetation treatment activities (feedstock acquisition); the transportation and storage of feedstock, and subsequent processing at two pellet production facilities (located in Northern California and the Central Sierra Nevada region); and the transportation of the finished product to a storage and shipping facility at the Port of Stockton, California for export to international markets. The proposed project can be broken down into three primary phases:

1. **Feedstock Acquisition.** Feedstock generally consists of the underutilized and unmarketable forest material used to produce industrial wood pellets. Feedstock will typically consist of low or negative value woody biomass, such as brush, small trees designated as undesirable ladder fuels, slash piles that would otherwise be open-burned, and dead or dying trees with little or negative value as timber. Feedstock may include otherwise marketable roundwood resulting from forest fuels

reduction and restoration activities. Feedstock would be sourced from approved salvage, prescribed green tree thinning, fuel-reduction, community wildfire protection, or other forest resiliency projects in California and adjoining forests. The Draft EIR further describes the mandatory Project Design Features established for these projects, which set significant constraints upon these activities. Feedstock sources for the project fall into three categories: (1) "GSNR Biomass Only Thinning Projects" are wildfire fuel reduction operations undertaken by GSNR, or on GSNR's behalf, and which would not occur without GSNR's proposed project; (2) "Harvest Residuals" are residual biomass material resulting from timber harvest, vegetation management, and forest management operations undertaken by third-parties unaffiliated with GSNR and which would occur regardless of GSNR's proposed project; and (3) "Mill Residuals" are residual biomass materials, including residual chips, sawdust, planer shavings, bark and other byproducts, of commercial lumbermills operated by third-parties unaffiliated with GSNR. The feedstock is transported by truck from the forest or mill to the wood pellet processing facility.

2. **Wood pellet production.** Feedstock is received at wood pellet production facilities located in the Northern California (Lassen County) and Central Sierra Nevada foothills (Tuolumne County) regions. In general, any feedstock received in roundwood form is processed through a debarker and chipper. The processed chips are conveyed to a radial stacker reclaimer where they will be combined with material that is received in residual (size reduced) form for the next processing phase. The bark from any roundwood is conveyed separately to a storage pile for use as fuel for the furnace used to heat the dryer. The wood chips are then screened for the appropriate size and transferred to the dryer. Chips that do not pass through the screens are directed to an array of hammer mills to be reduced to the appropriate size. The chips are then dried and can go through another stage of size reduction by way of hammer mills and are then sent through the pellet mill. The pellets are cooled to ambient air temperature and sent through a final screen, after which they are stored in silos awaiting loading for off-site transportation. Additional information regarding production facility design is set forth in the Draft EIR, including mandatory Site Design Features established for these facilities.
3. **Transport to market.** The finished pellets are loaded onto rail cars for transport to a dedicated purpose built export terminal at the Port of Stockton West Complex. At the port terminal, the pellets are unloaded and stored in large domes or silos, where the temperature and moisture are continuously monitored while awaiting final load out. The pellets are gravity fed onto conveyors, which transport the pellets from the domes to a shiploader where the pellets are loaded into dedicated cargo ships for delivery to international energy markets.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The proposed Northern California wood pellet production site (including the associated feedstock storage area) is located in Nubieber, approximately 3 miles southwest of the census-designated place of Bieber in Lassen County. The Lassen site is located at 653-800 Washington Avenue, Nubieber, California. The site consists of APN 001-270-086, and portions of APNs 001-270-26, 001-270-29, and 013-040-13. The site includes property historically used for the loading of timber onto rail cars.

The proposed Central Sierra wood pellet production site (including the associated feedstock storage area) is located at 12001 La Grange Road approximately 9 miles southwest of the community of Jamestown in Tuolumne County, California. The Tuolumne site consists of APN 063-190-056. The site was previously used as a bark facility by Sierra Pacific Industries.

The finished pellets will be transported by rail or truck to the Port of Stockton, West Complex (Edwards Ave. at Lipes Dr., Stockton, California).

**HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES:** The proposed Tuolumne County and Port of Stockton sites are included on the lists enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. Information regarding these sites, and any potential effects on the environment, is disclosed in the EIR.

**SIGNIFICANT ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** The Draft EIR provides an evaluation of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The Draft EIR identifies potentially significant impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, transportation, utilities and service systems, and wildfire. Impacts related to aesthetics, biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, utilities and service systems, and wildfire would be substantially reduced or avoided with implementation of mitigation measures. The Draft EIR identifies significant and unavoidable environmental impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation.

**DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY:** The Draft EIR is available online at:

<https://www.gsfahome.org/programs/ed/forest-resiliency.shtml>. Copies of the Draft EIR and supporting documents are available for review at the lead agency's office during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.):

Golden State Finance Authority  
1215 K Street, Suite 1650  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Copies of the Draft EIR are also available at the following locations (please confirm business hours for the office you wish to visit):

Lassen County Planning and Building Services  
707 Nevada Street, Suite 5  
Susanville, CA 96130

The Oney Frosty In Town  
302 S Main St,  
Adin, CA 96006

Big Valley Market  
201 Bridge St  
Bieber, CA 96009

Tuolumne County Community Development Department  
A.N. Francisco Building  
48 Yaney Ave. 3rd Floor  
Sonora, CA 95370

Tuolumne County Library  
480 Greenley Road  
Sonora, CA 95370

San Joaquin Council of  
Governments\*  
555 E Weber Avenue  
Stockton, CA 95202-2804

Van Buskirk Community Center  
Library\*  
734 Houston Ave.  
Stockton, CA 95206

*\*Indicates locations where translations of the Executive Summary of the DEIR in Spanish and Tagalog are also available.*

### **SUMMARY TRANSLATIONS:**

Translations of the Executive Summary of the DEIR are available in Spanish and Tagalog online at <https://www.gsfahome.org/programs/ed/forest-resiliency.shtml> and in print for review at the San Joaquin

Council of Governments and Van Buskirk Community Center Library locations indicated in the previous section.

**DRAFT EIR PUBLIC MEETINGS:** The Golden State Finance Authority will hold three public meetings to provide an opportunity for comments on the Draft EIR.

**Lassen County Area Meeting** – October 28, 2024 at 6:00 pm  
Bieber Veterans Memorial Building  
657-575 Bridge St., Bieber, CA 96009

**Stockton Area Meeting** – October 30, 2024 at 6:30 pm  
Kipp Stockton Elementary School  
742 Dallas Ave, Stockton, CA 95206  
*A virtual participation option is available for this meeting by utilizing the following link:*  
<https://rcrcnet.zoom.us/j/88007664912> (Webinar ID: 880 0766 4912) or calling (833)548-0282. No registration is required.

**Tuolumne County Area Meeting** – November 4, 2024 at 6:00 pm  
Chicken Ranch Casino, Event Hall  
16929 Chicken Ranch Rd.  
Jamestown, CA 95327

**PUBLIC REVIEW TIMELINE:** The 60-day public review period for the Draft EIR begins October 22, 2024 and ends December 23, 2024. Golden State Finance Authority must receive all written (including email) comments within this time period. Comments may be submitted to the attention of “GSNR DEIR Comment” at the following:

Via US Postal Service:  
Golden State Finance Authority  
1215 K Street, Suite 1650  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Via Email:  
ceqacomment@gsfahome.org

Comments provided via email should include “GSNR DEIR Comment” in the subject line.

**QUESTIONS:** If you have any questions about this project, please visit:  
<https://www.gsfahome.org/programs/ed/forest-resiliency.shtml> or email at [gsnr@gsnrnet.org](mailto:gsnr@gsnrnet.org).