



NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service Northern Region



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**News Contact: Nan Christianson,
Northern Region State & Private Forestry
(406) 363-7113**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.

Innovations in Woody Biomass Utilization Focus of Visit to Missoula by Under Secretary of Agriculture Mark Rey

Under Secretary of Agriculture Mark Rey will be in Missoula Friday morning to celebrate past successes ~ and to award newly issued grant checks ~ promoting woody biomass utilization innovations.

Under Secretary Rey will present checks to England Sawmills of North Fork, ID, to Panhandle Forest Products from Cocolalla, ID and to Big Sky Forest Products which is located in St. Regis, MT. These businesses are three of 20 small enterprises from throughout the nation that successfully competed for Forest Service State & Private Forestry Woody Biomass Utilization grant funds.

In June, the Department of Agriculture announced the award of \$4.4 million dollars from a grant program administered by the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, WI. The grant program is designed to develop uses for woody biomass from forested lands, for innovative sources of renewable energy and new products. The attached news release from the Department of Agriculture and the attached Fact Sheet explain the grant program in more detail.

In addition to awarding new grants, Under Secretary Rey will also present a national award to a team of western Montanans that received similar biomass utilization grant funds in 2002-2003. This group of partners worked on projects such as the Darby Library, and the roundwood kiosks and bridge designs. The attached Fact Sheet explains the accomplishments of this team more fully.

The short ceremony, hosted by the Northern Region of the Forest Service, will be held at the Northern Rockies Coordination Center, 5765 Highway 10 West, starting at 8:15 a.m. on Friday, July 8th. Call Nan Christianson at 363-7113, for additional information.

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Attachments include:

June 2005 News Release: USDA Announcing Awards of \$4.4 million for Woody Biomass Utilization Projects

July 2005 Fact Sheet: \$4.4 Million Wood Biomass Grant Program

July 2005 Fact Sheet: Western Montana Partnership Earns a National Fire Plan Award for Innovation in Biomass Utilization