

2-3-2 Biomass Committee Meeting Notes

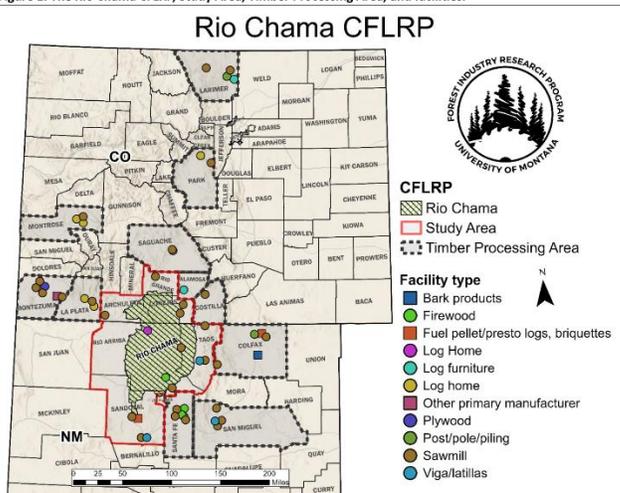
February 24th, 2026

Santa Claran Casino, Espanola, New Mexico

[Link to meeting recording](#)

Introduction

Figure 1. The Rio Chama CFLRP, Study Area, Timber Processing Area, and facilities.



There is an existing BBER study and mill capacity analysis for the Rio Chama CFLRP, including the map of mill infrastructure above. There is a wide variety of processing infrastructure in CFLRP landscape and surrounding areas already, including everything from large sawmills to firewood businesses.

Biomass utilization requires some definition and nuance for the committee. When we refer to biomass we are talking about woody byproduct and not merchantable residuals. In many states, there are large enough trees for the majority of timber sales or service work areas to generate some timber that can be made into lumber. In NM this may not always be the case, due to the prevalence of small diameter trees. In New Mexico and for our committee, biomass includes and limbs of merchantable trees, small diameter trees, and mill waste.

Biomass utilization helps to account for higher value of treatments and makes them more economical. This brings down costs of restoration work. We need to conceptualize this as an all lands issue to support a more resilient wood products market. We have seen boom bust of timber and mills in NM and across the west, and we want to work towards a better outcome by having less reliance on federal timber.

Biomass utilization runs a continuum from large, expensive sawmills to small, lower-cost mills.

Key factors related to biomass utilization:

- Hauling
- Contracting
- Supply consistency
- Infrastructure
- Workforce
- Markets

Frame up Questions: What is our lane in this 232 Committee? How do we want to work together?

- Is There a Coordination Gap?
- If We Built It — What Would It Include?
- What Would Moving Forward Realistically Require?
- Is This the Right Role for the 2-3-2 Biomass Committee? *If not, how would you describe the appropriate role?*

See documents. Should we put in a proposal or support others to do so through the 232 Biomass Subcommittee.

Presentations/Speakers:

Alicia Blake, Director, Cambium LLC

[Click here for full powerpoint](#)

- Cambium develops scale-appropriate strategies
- Chain of custody analysis and support
- 3 Lanes – Consulting, technology, and market development
- 500 businesses across country
- Small diameter slash and other biomass.

Jim Pittman, lead, NM State Biomass Working Group

The NM Biomass working group is exploring opportunities for public private partnership. The working group is intended to fill gaps and supplement efforts. They are looking at alternative construction opportunities, generating more supply for existing companies, supply chain analysis and support. Right now they are building a value chain from feedstock assessment to identifying gaps that may attract outside investment. This group is thinking bigger and considering larger, capital-intensive infrastructure projects.

Manny Lopez, Forestry Director, the National Forest Foundation Wood for Life

NFF is a congressionally chartered non-profit partner to the USFS. They work heavily on NFS lands. This comes with pros and cons. The boom-and-bust cycle is very real when working on Federal lands. Private land work seems to have more flexibility and supply consistency.

Whether or not the Forest Service has directives to put money into landscape restoration or not, there has been a consistent theme of timber targets. There is a timber mindset – whether it be sawtimber or fuels. The way to sway treatments into a timber targets is how we keep supply consistent.

WFL started during COVID when the Navajo Nation coal plants closed. Many homes were in panic mode for heating purposes. There was over harvesting of PJ on BLM land. The Coconino NF supported cutting small-diameter timber on NFS lands. The project exploded since then. Some are still heeding the call, others are not. For some, it is timber target time again, making WFL less of a priority. WFL relies on NFF to do the hauling. They get wood from NFS, and NFF brings their match to pay for hauling. NFF is struggling to keep supply consistent for wood bank initiatives. USFS not getting funding for small diameter thinning projects these days. They want to continue this program on behalf of the Forest Service in some way to help keep it alive as priorities are shifting. This requires support for project design, not just the hauling and processing.

There is tons of demand for the wood. In the Zuni mountains, they pulled out 2200 cords. This is like a cord per house. Demand is there, the supply is there, the challenge is figuring out the mechanism of actually making it happen in a way that accounts for timber targets. They have found some ways that Forest Service is able to count administrative and free use of wood towards timber targets.

Todd Gardiner (R2/Colorado) and Grace Sorenson (R3 New Mexico), USFS R2/R3 Contacts **Wood innovations program**

- April 22nd Deadline for Grant Proposal
- Wood Innovations Funding Programs:
 - Wood Innovations
 - Community Wood
 - Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance
 - Temporary Bridge Funding Program
 - Firewood Banks Funding Program

- Technical assistance teams
- Wood Innovations
 - Purpose: Stimulate, expand, and support wood products markets and wood energy markets
 - Award ceiling: \$300,000
 - 1:1 match
- Community Wood
 - Purpose: Support local economies by funding turn-key, ready-to-implement projects that expand the number of thermally-led wood energy systems or build or expand innovative wood products manufacturing facilities.
 - Award ceiling: \$1 million
 - No match required, leverage required
- Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance
 - Purpose: Establish, reopen, retrofit, expand, or improve a sawmill or other wood-processing facility
 - Award ceiling: \$2 million
 - No match or leverage requirement
- Can fund stationary equipment not mobile in general. No Capital Improvement or construction

Handout Notes from Participants

The following responses are synthesized from participant notesheets collected after the meeting.

1. Is There a Coordination Gap?

- *Are current efforts sufficiently aligned, or are we missing a landscape-scale mechanism for information-sharing and supply-chain coordination?*
- *Could a structured 2-3-2 proposal meaningfully reduce bottlenecks in feedstock assessment, volume visibility, transportation logistics, or mill alignment?*
- Agency/ County/ District logistic support in mid-value chain
- Lacking mechanism to provide consistent supply to Wood for Life
- Vigas and latillas
- A proposal does not need to cover all 2-3-2 landscape but focus instead on a specific innovation or need through pilot projects

2. If We Built It — What Would It Include?

If this group supported a landscape-wide proposal, what would be its essential elements?

- Chance to pay private landowners to support wood banks.
- Connecting utilization across end uses
- Woodshed planning by proximity and transport corridors
- Chip drop and firewood
- Biomass supply forecasting tied to timber targets
- Hauling fuelwood and maintaining fuel banks
- Get industry partners involved – go to them
- The operator’s toolkit slide Alicia shared seems to have very valuable areas of work to unlock action.
- Network oriented biomass utilization

3. What Would Moving Forward Realistically Require?

- Utilizing timber targets as means to both add value and also communicate value of small diameter wood.
- Clear project proposal
- Feasibility analysis and/or supply/feedstock assessment

4. Is This the Right Role for the 2-3-2 Biomass Committee?

If not, how would you describe the appropriate role?

- Put pressure on Wood Innovations program to consider mobile equipment.
- 232 portable wood splitters – wood bank ownership
- What catalytic role can be taken by 2-3-2 that is different to what individual groups are doing?

Next Steps

Meeting participants expressed varying views on the role of the 2-3-2 committee in supporting biomass utilization. Some expressed trepidation or concern around the idea that a proposal from the partnership as a whole would adequately address the contextualized problems that wood processing entities are faced with. Others thought that supply-chain analysis and market coordination could do some good. Towards the end of the meeting it was proposed that Gabe

Kohler develop a 2-page summary of a potential 2-3-2 proposal to see if the group might be interested in pursuing for Wood Innovations. This was described and agreed upon as a valuable process for developing the goals and objectives of the 2-3-2 biomass utilization committee separate from its potential effectiveness for securing funding. During the meeting, this proposal was described as a supply-chain analysis or feedstock assessment for the 2-3-2 landscape. After the meeting, in conversation with State Forester and others, it became clear that there may be existing efforts that seek to complete a feedstock assessment, and that the 2-3-2's efforts may be better focused on supporting pilot projects or programs in areas that may be identified as gaps in the state's efforts to map feedstock and existing infrastructure. That proposal 2-pager was sent along with these meeting notes.

While speaking about the potential to fund a 2-3-2 Biomass Utilization pilot program with Grace Sorenson, the Region 3 Wood Innovations lead, she expressed concern that the proposal would not be competitive for Wood Innovations funding due to the requirements related to industry involvement. Grace shared information about a separate funding program coming online in March of 2026 that seems like a better fit for the regional scope of a 2-3-2 program. Kohler will continue to develop this program and proposal to seek funding from the new funding source.