

MEETING DATE: April 14, 2026

STAFF PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Ken Worthington, Erosion Control Inspector II

DESCRIPTION: Requesting Approval to Pursue Funding from the US Department of Agriculture through the Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Program, Administered by the Forest Service, by Applying for a Grant in the Amount of \$1,850,000.00 to Assist in the Purchase of a Second Biomass Energy Techniques PRD31 Pyrolysis System Unit for the Douglas County Public Works Operations Biochar Facility. No Local Match is Required for this Grant.

SUMMARY: The Douglas County Public Works Operations Biochar Facility is an innovative initiative designed to address the pressing challenges of wildfire risks and forest health in and around Douglas County, Colorado. By processing liability biomass from forest restoration and wildfire mitigation projects, as well as urban and yard woody waste, the facility will convert these materials into biochar, an organic material that can be used to improve soil quality, reduce water consumption, and filter pollutants. The addition of a second unit aims to double the amount of liability biomass that can be processed, up to 26,000 tons of biomass annually, significantly reducing hazardous fuel loads and enhancing forest health.

The funding will enable the installation of advanced pyrolysis technology, which is essential for the efficient conversion of biomass into renewable resources. The anticipated outcomes include the production of high-carbon biochar for use in both agricultural and industrial applications. These outcomes will not only mitigate wildfire risks but also foster local economic growth through job creation and sustainable biomass processing.

The unmet needs this project addresses are: enabling the conversion of a substantially larger volume of biomass byproducts, improving manufacturing efficiencies by allowing continuous operation and reducing bottlenecks in biomass processing, providing operational flexibility to accommodate varying feedstock types and volumes, and reducing downtime and maintenance impacts by distributing processing loads across two units. This will allow for the project's long-term benefits, which include enhanced forest health, improved

waste management, and a model for sustainable biomass utilization that can be replicated in other regions.

Douglas County will be requesting \$1,850,000 of federal funds through the grant. The WPIA grant program does not require any matching funds.

**RECOMMENDED
ACTION:**

Approval to pursue funding from the USDA through the Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Program (WPIA), administered by the Forest Service, by applying for a grant in the amount of \$1,850,000.00 to allow for the purchase of a second pyrolysis system unit for the Douglas County Public Works Operations Biochar Facility. No local match is required for this grant.

REVIEW:

Kristina Mann	Approve	4/1/2026
Jeff Garcia	Approve	4/6/2026
Christie Guthrie	Escalated	4/8/2026
Jill Janz	Approve	4/10/2026
Doug DeBord	Approve	4/10/2026

ATTACHMENTS:

FY26 FS WPIA NOFO_Instructions
FS-1500-0049_Final_WPIA_Application_Form