

Regional Rural Cooperative Marketing Project

Goal: The goal of the Regional Cooperative Marketing Project is to facilitate the combining of specific recyclable materials from multiple rural Northern California jurisdictions together in order to increase interest from processors and manufacturers, improve economy of scale for transportation, improve negotiating positions for prices for materials and services, reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses by shipping in bulk, and improve infrastructure to enable more diversion of materials. Long term goals include eventual use of some of these materials locally to make products of increased value to improve local economies and further reduce greenhouse gas production.

Major Tasks:

I. Identify Facility and Transportation Infrastructure

Anticipated increases in transportation costs are a large driver of this project. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is also a benefit of improving transportation efficiency. Much of the needed information has been obtained from various Board databases placed on a large map, but more information will be needed and added as we obtain it. Markets in Nevada and Oregon will need to be researched, or identified through local reps and recycling businesses. Placing the information in a graphic representation such as a map enables people to visualize the project more readily.

II. Promote Cooperative Marketing with Local Representatives

This will be a harder sell with some than others. In addition to improved diversion, better economy of scale, better commodity prices, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, potential long-term economic development through recycling-based businesses is also selling point. We will work hardest with those that are interested in the concept and cooperate, and hopefully build on successes. If successful, other more skeptical local reps should come around eventually.

III. Identify Potential Buyers and End Markets

Some of this information is available from internal sources, some will require more research. As each end user or buyer is identified, they can be added to the map either electronically, or simply with a sticker. Commodity value, distance to markets, and proximity to transportation routes will be key in identifying potential end markets. In addition, price information will vary as markets fluctuate, and commodities with more stable markets may be better initial targets.

IV. Identify Potential Materials to Cooperatively Market

This will depend on an analysis of the market prices for materials in different amounts or forms, amounts of marketable material available in a given region, and transportation routes and costs. While LAMD staff can do some of this analysis, some local reps may see the potential diversion/cost benefit and some processors may see the business opportunity and do the research themselves.

V. Facilitate Cooperative Marketing of Targeted Materials

This is where the rubber meets the road (or the crumb rubber mfg.). As materials start to get combined and marketed together in a region, staff's role will be to seek out more material to add to the flow and increase efficiency and economy of scale, and add new materials into the effort as opportunity arises.

VI. Research Successful Small to Medium Scale Recycling-Based Businesses

This includes not only successful RMDZ businesses making recycled content products, but also collection, transportation and processing businesses that can serve as good examples for increased infrastructure efficiency. Examples should be sought out not only in California, but also in other states and around the world.

VII. Research Funding opportunities – Grants, Low Interest Loan Programs – Appropriate for Recycling-Based Businesses

Staff will work with existing and prior RMDZ staff, Division of Recycling staff, and local economic development staff to identify other lending and grant sources that might be applied to planning, infrastructure development, and business assistance and development.

VIII. Hold Local Entrepreneur Workshops

While CIWMB staff can research information and provide a framework for cooperative marketing and economic development through recycling, it is up to local government representatives and local entrepreneurs to make it happen. Staff can work with local economic development and solid waste representatives to identify potential entrepreneurs and existing business people, advertize and host workshops to present information on available the existing and potential recycling infrastructure, feedstocks, examples of successful recycling-based businesses, and funding and assistance opportunities.

IX. Identify Potential Local Recycling-Based Businesses to Make Added-value Products from Materials

This is the economic development phase of the project. As materials are combined in bulk in specific, rural locations, recycling based businesses have more opportunity to locate in these rural areas, purchasing their feedstocks locally, and making higher value products that either replace products that would have been shipped into the area (reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses), keeping money in the community, or are shipped out and sold elsewhere, bringing money into the community. This part of the project is an important component of Step II, selling the concept to the local reps.

X. Reassess, Adjust as Necessary

XI. Duplicate Effort Where Feasible

Other parts of the state can build on the successes and lessons learned.

A more detailed work plan is attached. This work plan is meant to be a framework, and should be fluid and adjustable when necessary.

