

RC&D

RESOURCE

CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

Partnerships Serving America's Communities



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service



RENEWABLE ENERGY

MAY 2010



Photo courtesy of Southwest Iowa Renewable Energy, LLC

RC&D councils work with local communities and landowners to reduce energy consumption and develop and expand economic opportunities provided by our Nation's natural resources. The number of related RC&D projects increases each year to meet America's growing need for renewable energy.

Biofuel in Southwest Iowa

Golden Hills RC&D Iowa

Southwest Iowa Renewable Energy, LLC was organized in March 2005 by a pool of local investors to build a 100-million-gallon annual production ethanol plant in southwest Iowa. Nineteen founding members invested \$30,000 each to begin the project development. The goal of the members was to create a locally owned bio-energy business that would create jobs, serve as a source

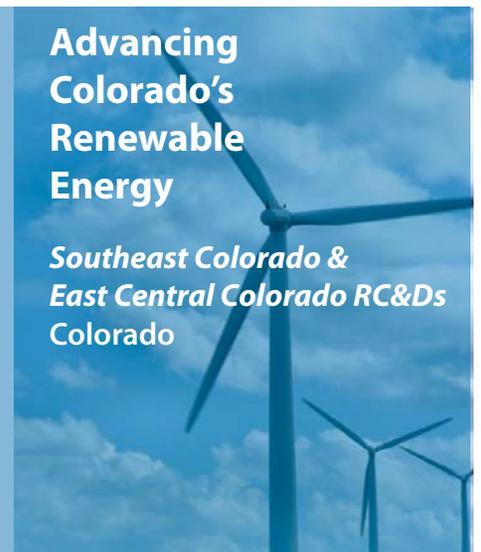
of alternative energy, and contribute to the local economy. In October 2005, the RC&D provided assistance devoted principally to administrative, organizational, and fundraising activities. Local producers hold majority ownership in this state-of-the-art facility that is now operating at capacity (110 million gallons per year). Additionally, this plant created 52 new jobs.

The Southeast Colorado RC&D was awarded a \$100,000 Advancing Colorado's Renewable Energy (ACRE) grant in 2008 by the Colorado Department of Agriculture to develop a pilot project demonstrating various sizes of wind turbines on a diverse set of agriculture applications across the Eastern Plains of Colorado. Additionally, in 2009 the RC&D received an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant to hire two part-time employees to work across government boundaries, develop local strategies, and identify the best energy efficiency opportunities for their six-county jurisdiction.

The East Central Colorado RC&D received a grant to install 1.8-kilowatt demonstration-sized wind turbines at four different school districts in east-central Colorado. The new environmental science classes at these schools are now at capacity, thanks to the hands-on study of renewable energy this "Wind for Schools" project offers.

Advancing Colorado's Renewable Energy

Southeast Colorado & East Central Colorado RC&Ds Colorado



Other RC&D project snapshots from across the nation...

Bioenergy from Grass

Lower Hudson-Long Island RC&D New York

Through support from the NRCS staff, local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the Cooperative Extension Service in the Hudson Valley, this RC&D has developed a collaborative team to work with farmers and retail pellet stove manufacturers and distributors to grow, process, and sell grass pellets to combust in a variety of new-generation pellet stoves and furnaces.

The team developed a mobile pelletizer to deliver a service directly to farmers on their land. Pelletizers densify grass and other organic matter, enabling farmers to minimize transportation costs and deliver pellet fuel to local markets at a competitive price. When burned in modern pellet stoves, these products have much lower pollutants/emissions than coal and oil and are cheaper, on average, for owners to use.



This RC&D project has received funding from NRCS, Rural Development, and New York State. The funding has supported two student interns, who fabricated the mobile pelletizer and maintain the pellet mill for optimal performance. Additionally, funding is supporting a project manager and a pellet mill operator for two years. It is anticipated that Hudson Valley Grass Energy will be able to operate independently after this period.

All photos courtesy of USDA unless otherwise noted.

Energy Audits & Energy Savings

Time & Tide RC&D Maine

This RC&D provided a Maine business owner with technical and financial assistance to install energy-saving curtains and sidewall insulation for three commercial greenhouses that are heated year-round. Based on the energy audit completed for this facility, the changes will save 13,500 gallons of #2 fuel oil annually. In addition, the implementation of the proposed energy-saving practices will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 152 tons annually. It is estimated that installation costs will be recovered in a little over a year.

Wyoming Wind Energy Associations

Southeastern Wyoming RC&D Wyoming

The RC&D formed landowner associations to enhance the marketability of wind energy resources on land owned by the members. The associations have used collective bargaining strategies to successfully negotiate wind energy contracts with wind developers in ways that are environmentally and economically feasible.



Look for other fact sheets highlighting RC&D projects in the areas of:

- Self-Sustaining Communities
- Conserving Natural Resources
- Sustainable Agriculture Production
- Child Nutrition
- Job Creation & Retention

You can make a difference!
Get involved with an RC&D in your area.

To volunteer for projects with your local RC&D council, submit ideas of your own, or find an RC&D council near you, visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd> or www.rcdnet.org, or contact your local USDA Service Center.