



PARTNER
Rocky Mountain Trench
Ecosystem Restoration Program

Restoring Nature's Balance.
www.trench-er.com

May 20, 2011 • For Immediate Release

Wood Biomass Workshop Aimed at Kootenay Projects

The Rocky Mountain Trench Natural Resources Society (Trench Society) will host a two-day workshop next month in response to growing interest in small-scale bioenergy projects in the Kootenays.

The intensive hands-on workshop, to be held June 13-14 in Cranbrook, is aimed at individuals and organizations currently at the planning stages of setting up wood biomass heating systems.

Attendance at three events offered last year by the Trench Society revealed significant regional interest in developing community-based bioenergy projects.

A tour of four Montana public schools that have converted from fossil fuels to wood biomass, plus follow-up workshops in Cranbrook and Castlegar on bioenergy basics, attracted a total of 90 participants representing local, regional and provincial governments, First Nations, colleges, school districts, the forest industry and others.

“The response to those events convinced us and our partner sponsors that a more advanced workshop was necessary,” Trench Society Coordinator Dan Murphy said.

Columbia Basin Trust, BC Bioenergy Network, Green Heat Initiative and SCR Management Inc. are co-sponsoring the upcoming event.

Workshop moderator Tom Hobby of SCR Management in Victoria has put together a comprehensive agenda that includes a tour of two potential projects near Cranbrook and an impressive list of North American and European speakers.

“This year’s workshop will have an applied focus, a hands-on approach,” Hobby said. “We are encouraging participants to bring their own project ideas or plans and we’ll work through many of the actual details over the two days.”

He said workshop sessions will be interactive, with expert presenters addressing technical questions from participants. “The people we’re bringing in have real-world understanding of the issues and requirements for developing and managing effective projects.”

more ...

Keynote speaker is Kootenay East MLA Bill Bennett, whom Hobby describes as having a passion for clean energy development and the benefits it can bring.

Bioenergy development is taking off in the Kootenays for a number of reasons, says the Trench Society's Dan Murphy.

“For those of us in grassland restoration, it's a way to advance the program by utilizing marginal wood as feedstock for biomass heating. For communities, it's got huge potential as an economic way to implement their wildfire protection fuel treatment plans.”

Murphy said the Trench Society signed an agreement in 2010 to work with the cities of Kimberley and Cranbrook, the Ktunaxa Nation, St. Mary's Indian Band and Nupqu Development Corp. on bioenergy opportunities.

“All of us are very much aware of the environmental values,” he said. “Wood-fired heating systems that use the latest technology are very energy efficient and have extremely low levels of greenhouse gas emissions.”

Workshop agenda and registration are available at www.trenchsociety.com or by contacting Dan Murphy at dgmurphy@telus.net.

– 30 –

CONTACT:

Dan Murphy, RPF
Coordinator, Rocky Mountain Trench Natural Resources Society
Home office: 250-919-6444
Cell: 250-421-9320
Email: dgmurphy@telus.net

The Rocky Mountain Trench Natural Resources Society (Trench Society) is a coalition of ranching, hunting, wildlife and environmental organizations working with the Rocky Mountain Trench Ecosystem Restoration Program (ER Program) to restore the grasslands and open forests of the East Kootenay and Upper Columbia Valley. Trench Society member organizations are:

- Cranbrook Archery Club
- Cranbrook Community Forest Society (**new member as of May 2011**)
- East Kootenay Wildlife Association
- East Kootenay Wild Turkey Association (**new member as of May 2011**)
- Kootenay Livestock Association
- Rocky Mountain Naturalists
- Southern Guides & Outfitters Association
- The Land Conservancy of BC (Kootenay Region)
- Waldo Stockbreeders Association
- Wildsight
- Windermere District Farmers Institute