

West Biofuels Launches Hat Creek Bioenergy Facility, Championing Forest Health and Renewable Energy in California

West Biofuels launches Hat Creek Bioenergy, which converts forest biomass to renewable power & biochar, helping prevent wildfires and creating local jobs.

BURNEY, CA, UNITED STATES,

November 10, 2025 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- On October 15, 2025, West Biofuels, a leader in renewable bioenergy solutions, celebrated the official ribbon cutting for Hat Creek Bioenergy, a biomass-to-energy facility which the company constructed and is operating. This flagship facility represents years of collaboration with local, regional and statewide partners and converts forest biomass into renewable power, supporting forest stewardship and providing clean energy directly to the local electrical grid.



Hat Creek Bioenergy Facility

The plant is a landmark achievement in sustainable forest management, providing a critical destination for forest biomass, which aids in wildfire mitigation efforts in the community. The project is also a significant driver of local economic opportunity, supporting a team of 15 skilled plant operators, most of whom are from the Burney community. The plant's construction phase also provided over 60 short-term jobs to the region.

The facility supports the sustainable management of about five square miles a year of forested area by local licensed timber operators and their staff. The residuals from this forest management are delivered to the facility and converted into renewable electricity and carbon sequestering biochar. During the life of the facility, over a hundred square miles of forest area around the Burney community can be made and kept fire-safe, dramatically reducing the risk of a local catastrophic fire.

"This is a proud and exciting moment for our team, our partners, and this community," said Matt

Summers, Chief Operating Officer of West Biofuels. "This facility represents years of hard work and a shared vision where clean energy, forest stewardship, and economic opportunity go hand-in-hand. This is an ideal local solution for fire risk reduction".

The project was made possible through a coalition of dedicated partners and investors. The company extended its deep gratitude to primary investors, Peter Paul and Mieko Willoughby, for their unwavering commitment.

Key grant support was instrumental in the plant's development. The California Energy Commission (CEC), in partnership with the Fall River Resource Conservation District, provided the foundational grant for the facility. Early support also came from the US Forest Service and the USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Continued support from CalFire, including a Biomass Transportation Subsidy, will be vital for managing local feedstock transportation.

The ceremony featured a lineup of distinguished speakers, including:

- Justin Britton, Wood Products & Bioenergy, CalFire
- Angie Gould, Deputy Director in R&D, California Energy Commission (CEC)
- Gabrielle Stevenson, Assistant Deputy Director, Energy & Climate, GO-Biz
- Bruce Ross, Press Secretary, Office of Senator Megan Dahle

Assemblywoman Heather Hadwick was also in attendance to support the launch.

The West Biofuels team is incredibly proud of this achievement and thanks the local Burney community and state officials for their contributions in making Hat Creek Bioenergy a reality. Future projects will rely on continued support from key stakeholders in order to bring clean energy and healthy forest management practices to rural communities throughout California and the West. The Hat Creek Bioenergy facility is a model that can be replicated in other forest communities with the same vision and effort.

Taylor Parkinson

West Biofuels

[email us here](#)

+1 530-207-5996

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