

Firewood Processing

Commercial firewood processing could be successfully co-located with other on-site enterprises, benefiting from efficiencies created by sharing equipment, adding value to material waste streams, or utilizing the heat produced by a biomass-to-energy facility. For example, as demonstrated by the Watershed Research and Training Center, a firewood processing operation can be successfully paired with a post manufacturing operation. The firewood is created from the short lengths of round wood, rotten log segments, and end pieces generated as residuals of the post manufacturing process. The firewood is of varying value depending on species. White fir and pine logs are of lower value, while Douglas fir firewood was worth between \$140 and \$180 per cord in 2009. The value of the firewood generated from the peeler residuals may be less than this, because of the percentage of pieces that would be less than the standard 16 to 18 inches long.

The Mt. Adams Stewardship Project in Washington State is demonstrating an innovative approach to adding value to firewood. They have received a Rural Business Enterprise Grant to install a “cooperative” wood drying kiln that could be used to produce higher-value seasoned firewood (free of insect pests). The kiln will also be designed to dry lumber and will be used cooperatively by local sawmills.

Feedstock Specifications:

- Roundwood logs (hardwood is preferred)
- Certain dimensions are required in order to be processed by an automated firewood processor.

Jobs (Full-time Equivalent): 2 - 8

Equipment Needed: Log splitter or firewood processor

Competition:

- Numerous firewood contractors already in place. Certain large contractors have a significant market share

Challenges:

- Any operation should be careful not to put smaller local operators out of business.

General Notes:

- Campgrounds are a good local/regional market.
- Could be marketed to urban centers in boxes or bundles.