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Herty Announces Launch of Consortium for Advanced Wood-to-Energy Solutions

OCTOBER 29, 2014

Release courtesy of www.tappi.org



Photo courtesy of Herty Advanced Materials Development Center

The Georgia Southern University [Herty Advanced Materials Development Center](#), Savannah, GA (Herty), U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities (Endowment); and the USDA Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, WI (FPL); announced the launch of the Consortium for Advanced Wood-to-Energy Solutions (CAWES). The consortium's goal is to spearhead development of commercially-viable, advanced wood-to-energy products that can be produced from low-value

trees and forest residues that can compromise forest health and increase the frequency of wildfires.

The U.S. Endowment and the Forest Service, via its State & Private Forestry division, have "jump started" the consortium with a \$4 million investment designed to identify and fill critical research, development, and deployment needs in launching successful commercial biomass to energy products operations.

Deteriorating forest health conditions—due to overstocked stands, insect and disease killed timber, and extremely limited market options for low-value forest biomass—have led to increasing size, intensity, and acreage of wild land fires that are collectively consuming more than \$3 billion in federal tax dollars annually in suppression costs and billions more in economic and environmental loss, as well as loss of human life.

Large volumes of wood in the form of disease- and insect-killed trees, as well as slash, small diameter trees, and non-commercial species that need to be removed, are of no- or extremely low-commercial value as traditional wood-based products. Without markets for this low-value wood, forest landowners and land managers are left with few viable options to address deteriorating forest health conditions.

Development of commercially-viable and sustainable energy sources from low-value forest biomass is one of the most promising opportunities to develop new markets for wood. CAWES's initial focus

will be on a process known as torrefaction. “Our initial work will center on determining the commercial viability of torrefaction—the ‘roasting’ of wood in a low oxygen environment—to create an energy dense product that can more easily be shipped, stored and used to produce renewable energy,” said Dr. Alexander Koukoulas, President and CEO of Herty.

“We are excited to be one of the founding partners in this important initiative designed to advance the health and vitality of our Nation’s forests while growing family-wage jobs,” said Endowment President and CEO Carlton Owen. “The idea of linking some of the nation’s leading research institutions in a rapid feedback system with product manufacturers is among the more promising aspects of CAWES.”

“CAWES is an open-platform collaborative of institutions in the public and private sectors representing green energy, forest management, research, philanthropy and private industry committed to advancing economically-viable, scalable, distributed wood-to-energy solutions that stimulate forest restoration and rural economic development through research and application of advanced wood-to-energy solutions,” said Dr. Ted Wegner, Assistant Director of FPL.

The founding partners will seek the participation of public and private institutions that share the commitment for addressing the challenges and opportunities of creating sustainable green energy products while advancing forest health and rural forest-rich communities.

For more information contact:

Carlton N. Owen, President and CEO, [864-233-7646](tel:864-233-7646), <mailto:carlton@usendowment.org>. The **U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities** (the Endowment) is a not-for-profit public charity working collaboratively with partners in the public and private sectors to advance systemic, transformative, and sustainable change for the health and vitality of the nation’s working forests and forest-reliant communities – www.usendowment.org

Ted Wegner, Ph.D., Assistant Director, [608-231-9434](tel:608-231-9434), <mailto:twegner@fs.fed.us>. The **USDA Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory** (FPL) has for over 100 years, worked with academia, industry, and other government agencies to lead to ground-breaking discoveries with great benefit to the public — www.fpl.fs.fed.us.

Alexander Koukoulas, Ph.D., President and CEO, [912-963-2553](tel:912-963-2553), <mailto:akoukoulas@herty.com>. The **Georgia Southern University Herty Advanced Materials Development Center** in Savannah, GA was established in 1938 to honor Dr. Charles H. Herty who spearheaded the use of southern pine forests in paper and wood products manufacturing. Since 2012 it has operated as a division of Georgia Southern as a world-class research and development facility focusing on high performance materials and bio-based products – www.herty.com

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125-degree programs serving more than 20,500 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education.

Governor Deal Issues New Policy for Travelers from Ebola-affected Countries

OCTOBER 29, 2014



Courtesy release

Gov. Nathan Deal today announced that Georgia will increase Ebola monitoring for all in-bound travelers from affected countries.

"We are taking every necessary precaution to ensure that Georgia stands prepared to manage the risks associated with Ebola," Deal said. "Because Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson Airport is one of five points of entry into the United States from affected areas, I have developed, in coordination with my Ebola Response Team, a policy to more aggressively monitor travelers from affected countries, symptomatic or not, and quarantine if need be. We are taking these

proactive steps to protect the health of the people of our state, and this new policy is an altogether effective and appropriate response at this time."

Travelers will be screened at the airport by quarantine station medical personnel. This screening will include measuring temperature and checking for symptoms of Ebola and history of any exposure to known Ebola patients.

If travelers show symptoms, they will be isolated immediately and transferred to a designated hospital for evaluation. If the travelers show no symptoms, they will be divided into three categories for monitoring. Categories and associated procedures detailed below:

- **Category 1, high risk** – *Travelers with known direct exposure to an Ebola patient.*
Travelers in this category will be subject to quarantine at a designated facility.

- **Category 2, low risk** – *Travelers from affected area with no known exposure to an Ebola patient.* Travelers in this category will sign a monitoring agreement with the Georgia Department of Public Health. This agreement requires travelers to conduct temperature and symptom self-checks twice per day and report results to Public Health once per day (electronic, email or phone contact acceptable). Travelers who fail to report during the 21-day incubation period will be contacted by Public Health and issued a mandatory quarantine order if necessary.
- **Category 3** – *Medical personnel actively involved in treating Ebola patients returning to the United States.* Individuals in this category will be issued a 21-day active monitoring order and will be visually monitored (video communications or home visit) by Public Health twice per day. Public Health will assess for the development of symptoms and adjust restrictions as necessary. Noncompliance will result in quarantine at a state-designated facility.

The Ebola Response Team held a conference call this afternoon to analyze and endorse this new procedure. It will meet this Wednesday to continue evaluating state preparedness and making necessary recommendations.

Members of the [Georgia Southern University Pandemic Influenza and Emergency Infectious Disease Committee](#) met recently to discuss community and campus preparedness and response related to infectious diseases such as the Ebola virus and Influenza.

University Health Services Medical Director and Staff Physician Brian DeLoach said the University has an updated response plan. He also noted that each patient who is seen at the University's Health Center, regardless of the reason, would be asked about their travel history within the last 21 days.