

Grant helps Biomass Centre build industry

North Bay, ON, August 8, 2011 — The Biomass Innovation Centre at Nipissing University has been awarded a \$75,000 Education Grant from the Community Energy Partnerships Program (CEPP) to help develop sustainable energy projects within the Blue Sky Region of Northern Ontario.

In partnership with Transition Town North Bay and Algonquin Agro Energy, the Biomass Innovation Centre will use the funding to create toolkits, training modules and other instructional materials. They are looking to engage municipal leaders, community stakeholders and community residents, using the publications to build awareness, inspire action and increase capacity for the development of sustainable energy projects.

“Our goal with this funding is to implement a local renewable energy project and to see the eventual creation of a Blue Sky Energy Co-op,” said Megan Smith, project manager at Nipissing’s Biomass Innovation Centre. “With the expertise that exists at the university, as well as the knowledge and experience that our partners bring to the table, we are well-poised to achieve great success with this grant and with the overarching goal of building a biomass-centred economy in this region.”

The Biomass Innovation Centre, developed by Nipissing’s School of Business, launched in 2009 with the goal to assist in the development of a robust biomass industry in northern Ontario. The centre works with organizations and individuals to identify biomass supply opportunities, support projects that transform biomass into fuels and high-value products, and develop market capacity and demand for bio-fuels and bio-refinery products. www.biomassinnovation.ca <<http://www.biomassinnovation.ca/>>

“In a world where fossil fuel production is becoming increasingly difficult, this project helps advance the development of a renewable energy industry in our region that will reduce the costs of our future energy needs,” said Bond Keevil, chairperson of the Board of Transition Town North Bay. “Some of the barriers to progress on energy security in our region include a lack of awareness of energy supply issues and prevailing attitudes towards renewable energy technologies and facilities. Transition Town North Bay members look forward to volunteering their time in support of this important project to create greater awareness.”

“Education is a catalyst of change and Algonquin Agro Energy Inc. looks forward to participating in this initiative, focussing on education to reshape and develop attitudes toward renewable energy and help launch projects that will embrace both economic development and environmental responsibility, said Rosanne Van Schie, president of Algonquin Agro Energy Inc.

Transition Town North Bay is looking at ways to help the city and surrounding communities adapt to a future with less fossil fuel energy. Their mission is to help make the transition to a lower carbon society smoother by undertaking projects in their own communities that promote a more sustainable way of living. www.ttnorthbay.org <<http://www.ttnorthbay.org/>>

Algonquin Agro Energy Inc. is a 10-acre licensed short rotation willow biomass nursery, located at the north entrance to Algonquin Park near Mattawa, Ontario. The purpose of the nursery is to supply biomass willow to start-up agricultural plantations for cultivation and sale to local bio-energy facilities. www.algonquinagroenergy.com <<http://www.algonquinagroenergy.com/>>

For more information please contact: Bob Pipe, communications officer: 705-474-3450 ext 4528; cell: 705-471-6205