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## **Sen. Murkowski, Rep. Young Announce Funding for Alaska Wood-to-Energy Project**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, and Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, today announced that the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) has been awarded U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funding to promote the development of rural wood-to-energy projects.

“Congratulations to the Alaska Energy Authority on receiving funding to develop a rural wood-to-energy project,” Murkowski said. “Not only will these funds help Alaskans find innovative solutions to their energy needs, they will also provide badly needed economic development to rural areas. Using a local, renewable energy feedstock is great way to keep energy costs down in rural communities, where power generation can be expensive and, at times, unavailable.”

“I am pleased with today’s announcement and look forward to hearing more positive developments as Alaska Energy Authority leverages the rural wood to energy partnership to bring innovative biomass solutions to the state,” Rep. Young said. “Alaska has always relied on wood-based resources for heat and power, and recent technological advancements have dramatically increased their efficiency while decreasing their impact and cost. These strides have made wood energy particularly ideal for the conditions in Alaska’s rural areas.”

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack awarded \$1.1 million in federal funds to five organizations across the country to form statewide teams to stimulate development of wood-to-energy projects. Under the five cooperative agreements announced today, state, private and federal organizations will work together to support the effort. In addition to the federal funds, \$1.8 million in non-federal funds – \$2.9 million, collectively – have been put toward the wood-to-energy projects.

The five recipients are:

- Alaska Energy Authority, Anchorage, Alaska
- Idaho Governor’s Office of Energy Resources, Boise, Idaho
- The Watershed Research & Training Center, Hayfork, Calif.
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Saint Paul, Minn.
- North Country Resource Conservation & Development Council, Gilford, N.H.

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