

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
Administration Building
North Haverhill, NH 03774
November 29, 2022

PRESENT: Commissioners Piper, Lauer and Ahern, County Administrator Libby and Administrative Assistant Norcross

OTHERS PRESENT: Alternative Sentencing Director Mitchell, E. Wargo – SNS, Maintenance Supt. Oakes, Bob Berti and Marty Driscoll, North Country Procurement

Commissioner Piper called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Alternative Sentencing Director Mitchell arrived via Zoom and gave the following report (* see attached)

AS Director Mitchell answered questions from the Commissioners.

AS Director Mitchell stated she will be making a presentation to the Plymouth Rotary Club on Wednesday the 14th at 7am.

Agenda Items:

1. Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the November 15th meeting. Commissioner Piper had a few edits.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from November 15th as amended. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Ed Wargo – SNS arrived and gave the following report (* see attached)

E. Wargo answered questions from the Commissioners.

Agenda Items:

1. The Commissioners signed check registers 1065; 1068-1073; 2022-11.25.2022.

2. Certificate of Authority – CA Libby submitted a Certificate of Authority for Commissioner Ahern to sign for the BDAS grant. She explained that there was an amendment to the current contract, which requires a new certificate of authority.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved that, Julie L. Libby, County Administrator is duly authorized on behalf of Grafton County to enter into contracts or agreements with the State of New Hampshire and any of its agencies or departments and further is authorized to execute any and all documents, agreements and other Instruments, and any

amendments, revisions, or modifications thereto which may in his/her judgment be desirable or necessary to effect the purpose of this vote. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

3. Memo for Consideration – County Attorney Hornick – CA Libby stated that Atty. Hornick has submitted a request that the four (4) experienced Assistant County Attorneys in her office receive a one-time \$1,500.00 bonus to compensate them for the additional workload caused by staffing shortages. The new prosecutors that have been hired have such limited experience that they also require a lot of assistance from these more experienced prosecutors.

There has been a tremendous draw on people's time and energy due to extra case-loads caused by staffing shortages and the extra time spent to train new staff. This extra level of work and responsibility is stressful for the staff, and CA Hornick feels that recognizing their efforts with this one-time bonus will let them know that the County recognizes the extra effort that they are giving and that they are appreciated.

There is \$6,000 within the Assistant County Attorney line to cover this cost due to staffing shortages and hiring new staff in at a lesser amount. Commissioner Piper stated that she supports this and feels this is a good compromise. Commissioner Lauer stated that a one-time bonus is well deserved, and she would prefer that rather than a step increase that is a permanent ongoing item.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve a one-time \$1,500 bonus to the four (4) experienced Assistant County Attorneys. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Maintenance Supt. Oakes arrived with a bid waiver request.

Supt. Oakes explained that the county has hired Horizons Engineering to help with the test well study. After the first test well was dug, the county has been advised to drill a second test well. He stated that they are in the middle of this process, and he is looking to continue working with Horizons for the second test well. Supt. Oakes stated that it does not make sense to bring in another engineer at this point in the process, as this is a continuation of the first test well. If the project does go through, it would then make sense to solicit other engineering firms for the full municipal well system.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to sole source to Horizons Engineering due to the fact that they dug the first test well. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion for discussion purposes.

Discussion – Supt. Oakes noted that the cost for replicated services has decreased on this well from the first. Commissioner Ahern stated that he is concerned about the money that they spend, as he is thinking of the elderly constituents in his district. He asked what happens if this does not get a unanimous vote. CA Libby stated that it would then go back out to bid, and the county opens up the possibility to have a different engineering company come in to start the process over which will likely cost more money and more

of Supt. Oakes' time to bring them up to speed. Commissioner Piper stated that she appreciates the questions Commissioner Ahern is asking because he digs deep into the issue, and it shows the Commissioners that Supt. Oakes has done his research.

The Commissioners voted on the motion and all were in favor.

Bob Berti and Marty Driscoll - North Country Procurement

B. Berti and M. Driscoll arrived to discuss a pending shortage in woodchips that are needed to run the county's Biomass Plant, what his company is doing to address this issue and any cost implications that may play into it. He reviewed the attached document with the Commissioners that outlines wood fuel costs.

B. Berti explained that his breakeven cost for woodchips right now is a \$5-\$6 per ton. Right now, he is paying \$71/ton to get chips for the county. He is losing money with every shipment. He stated that they have found wood for a temporary amount of time. They are experiencing this with two (2) other customers as well. He noted that another reason for the chip shortage is due to this area losing 25 chip producers over the last couple of years. B. Berti stated that they are looking at \$14-\$15 more per ton, \$5-\$6 of that is for North Country Procurement and the rest is for the loggers and chippers. They can sustain it for a while but not long term. Mr. Berti stated that if he has to stick to the contract price it will force his company into bankruptcy.

Commissioner Lauer asked how much the county pays right now and Supt. Oakes stated \$59/ton. Commissioner Lauer stated that they would be looking at a \$30,000 increase and the alternative is to use oil which has increased as well. She would much rather support a local business than the oil industry; it makes no sense to drive their supplier out of business or switch to oil. Supt. Oakes stated that he advocates that the Commissioners not rush to make a commitment right now and give him time to check out other suppliers. B. Berti and M. Driscoll answered questions from the Commissioners, CA Libby, and Supt. Oakes. Commissioner Lauer stated that she would be in favor of increasing the cost per ton the county pays for the next load to provide some relief while giving Supt. Oakes time to look further into the issue. Commissioner Piper and Commissioner Ahern agreed.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to authorize an additional \$15/ton for woodchips purchased over the next two (2) weeks to give Supt. Oakes time to further look into the situation. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Commissioner Piper stated that she feels confident in the decision they just made and looks forward to hearing back from Supt. Oakes.

Supt. Oakes requested to go into nonpublic session.

MOTION: *10:30 AM Commissioner Ahern moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to

pay or poverty of the applicant according to RSA 91-A: 3, II (c) Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes” Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

Commissioner Piper declared the meeting back in public session.

MOTION: *10:57 AM Commissioner Lauer moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session because they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes” Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes”. Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and the motion passes.

Agenda Items:

1. CA Libby submitted the following CDBG drawdown requests for Commissioner Piper to sign.

GRDC/CEDC – Micro - \$1,500

WREN – Micro - \$5,677.31

MOTION: *11:14 AM Commissioner Lauer moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted according to RSA 91-A: 3, II (a) Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes” Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

Commissioner Piper declared the meeting back in public session.

MOTION: *11:38 AM Commissioner Lauer moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session because they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes” Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes”. Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and the motion passes.

MOTION: *11:39 AM Commissioner Ahern moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted according to RSA 91-A: 3, II (a).

Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes” Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

Commissioner Piper declared the meeting back in public session.

MOTION: *11:59 AM Commissioner Lauer moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session because they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes” Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes”. Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and the motion passes.

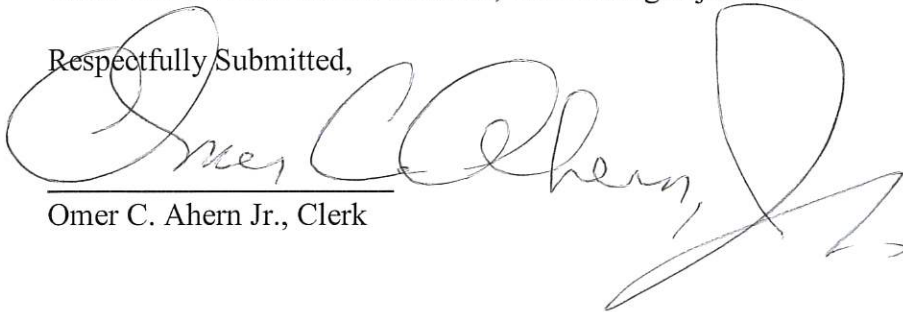
Commissioner Issues:

1. Commissioner Piper stated that she and CA Libby both received a phone call from Rep. Murphy yesterday. He is the State Rep for Hanover/Lyme; they are having trouble with a bridge that goes from Thetford, VT to Lyme, NH, and it has been red listed. Commissioner Piper stated that the request is to ask for ARPA funding from the county to put in a temporary bridge as NH DOT has indicated that they will not do that. It would have to come out of lost revenue. CA Libby explained that people who travel there will have to go out and around for 18 months. Commissioner Lauer stated that she is not in favor of giving the county’s ARPA money to bail out DOT. Rep. Murphy was going to be attending a DOT meeting and did not want to put any information out there if the Commissioners were not in favor of using ARPA funds. The Commissioners agreed they did not want to fund the project.

2. Commissioner Ahern stated that AS Director Mitchell has been invited to the Plymouth Rotary Club to speak about what Alternative Sentencing does and some of the things she is doing to help deal with the problems they are experiencing in Grafton County.

12:08 PM With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Omer C. Ahern Jr.", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Omer C. Ahern Jr., Clerk

Alternative Sentencing Commissioners Report October 2022

Directors Report:

The Director continues to participate in the Upper Valley, Plymouth and Littleton Sexual Assault Response Team meetings as often as possible.

The Director regularly participates in the New Hampshire Juvenile Court Diversion Network monthly meetings.

Cassie Manning, the Alternative Sentencing Case Manager is working diligently on completing trainings so that she can apply to become a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor in NH. We do not anticipate that she will be able to file her application until February of 2023. Until then the Director will continue as Director and LADC for the programs. Once Cassie is able to transition, we will begin seeking a new case manager to fill her role.

Shelly Golden, Mental Health Court Coordinator, re-initiated the Stepping Up meetings and hosted the first meeting in October. This is a group effort to improve response to people with mental health and/or substance use disorders and divert them away from incarceration. Invitees include Grafton County Attorney's Office, the NH Public Defenders Office, the Department of Corrections, Probation and Parole, Community Mental Health Centers, Alternative Sentencing, Housing Advocates, Drug Court and Law Enforcement. The next meeting is Monday November 21, 2022.

Juvenile Restorative Justice

Grafton County Juvenile Restorative Justice Program is to promote community-based alternatives to the formal court process that; promote positive youth development, safer communities, integrates restorative justice practices, intervenes at the earliest possible opportunity and promotes reduction in juvenile crime and recidivism.

The Alternative Sentencing Director is invited to a collaborative meeting in Littleton, NH in December to meet with Littleton public defender, the juvenile probation officer in that area and the principal of the Littleton HS to discuss the Juvenile Restorative Justice program and the Transformation.

Adult Diversion

Grafton County Adult Diversion Program is to hold an eligible offender accountable while providing the resources, skills, and education to reduce the risk of committing crimes in the future. This program is an alternative to prosecution and offers a defendant a chance to avoid criminal conviction and other punitive sanctions including fines, probation and incarceration.

Adult Diversion successfully completed two participants in a ceremony on October 22, 2022. We are working more closely with the Public Defender's Office and the still with the County Attorney's Office to track, follow up with and schedule new referrals in a more timely manner. The communication has been helpful when referrals have a change in address, change in contact information, or are avoidant to begin the process.

Alternative Sentencing Commissioners Report October 2022

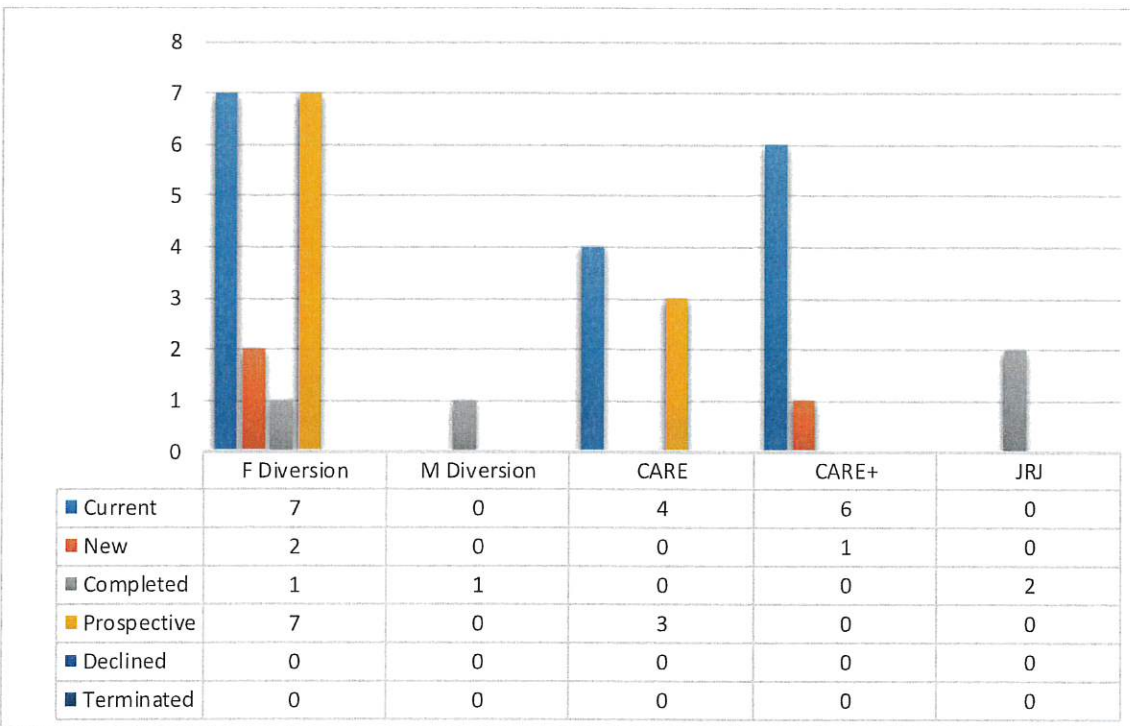
C.A.R.E & C.A.R.E+

The Grafton County C.A.R.E+ Program is designed to support individuals who have been convicted and are under supervision to connect to services and stay active in a therapeutic environment. C.A.R.E+ stands for Community, Assessment, Re-Entry and Education + Supervision, the focus of this program is to assist individuals in giving back to their community while creating a successful foundation and becoming a productive member of society.

The Grafton County C.A.R.E program is currently in a state of modification while probation and the Alternative Sentencing staff collaborate to identify effective timelines and potential sanctions. The program is designed to support individuals on probation who need additional resources in the community, including social services, substance use or mental health treatment, medical and dental services, and life skills.

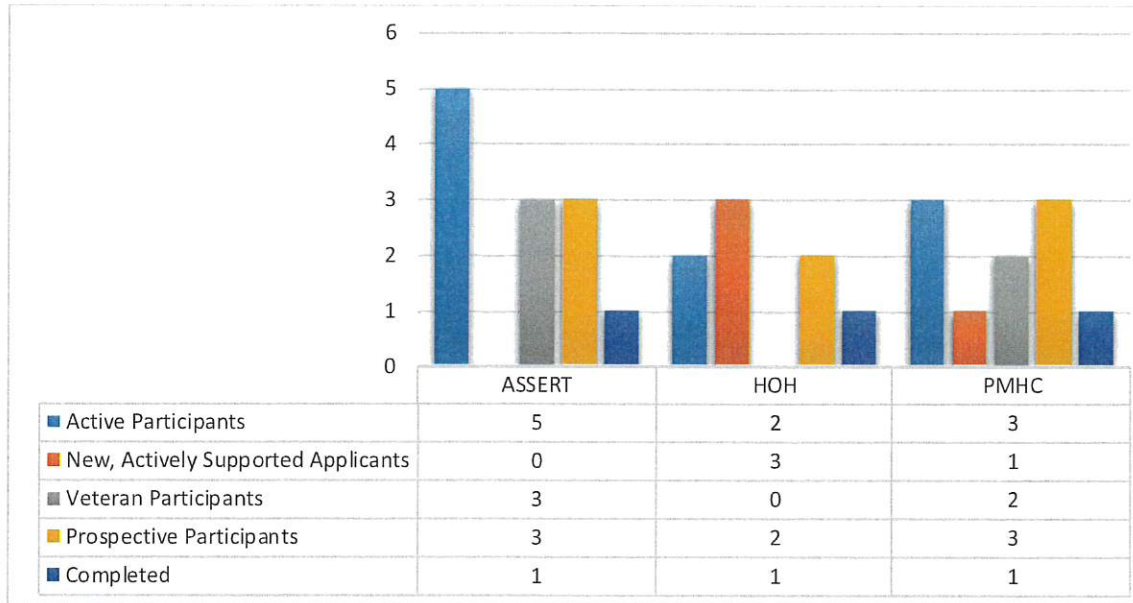
CARE and CARE+ have no new changes.

Alternative Sentencing Programs



Mental Health Court

Grafton County Mental Health Court seeks to provide an effective and meaningful alternative to the traditional criminal justice system for individuals with mental illness. Our goal is to promote prompt intervention, education, treatment and recovery in order to improve the quality of the individual's life, reduce recidivism and improve community safety.



The Mental Health Court Coordinator, Case Manager and Director met with White Mountain Mental Health staff to discuss ways that we can support each other working with mutual clients in a more efficient and streamlined manner. This includes looking at the ability to share evaluations and/or biopsychosocial information that would not have to be duplicated in order for a participant/client to engage in services at either agency. In particular, reviewing the options for mutually appreciated and used assessment tools. Both teams agreed that we share client/participants that benefit from working with case managers from each agency in tandem to increase support.

The Mental Health Court Coordinator and Director also met with Lakes Region Mental Health Center CEO to rebuild our working relationship. This meeting led to current collaboration with the Lakes Region team to support a CARE+ participant.

The Mental Health Courts in Grafton County, with the Alternative Sentencing Department, continue to prioritize collaborative efforts to locate and access expedited mental health services and housing. We are experiencing a scarcity of these resources.

Alternative Sentencing
Commissioners Report October 2022

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
JRJ	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	\$100	---	---	---
AD	\$705	\$375	\$730	\$525	\$225	\$310	\$794	\$460	\$100	\$1115	---	---
MISSE D	---	\$25	\$50	---	\$25	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
LATE	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
+ UA's	---	---	---	---	---	---	\$50	---	---	\$100	---	---
MRT	---	---	---	---	---	---	\$35	---	---	---	---	---
CARE	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
MISSE D	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
+ UA's	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
BDAS	\$1445.04	\$1970.53	\$2410.99	\$1745.75	\$3008.97	\$3756.92	\$3429.21	\$3169.73	\$2474.24	\$1704.42	---	---
Totals	\$2150.04	\$2370.53	\$3190.99	\$2270.75	\$3258.97	\$4066.92	\$4308.21	\$3629.73	\$2674.24	\$2919.42		

Grafton County IT update for 11/29/2022

Cybersecurity/Infrastructure upgrade

Biomass – Completed

DOC - Completed

Court house switching has been upgraded. A problem was discovered with the Avaya phones connection which has been moved back to the old switching until troubleshooting can be completed.

Alternative Sentencing work underway. Almost ready to swap over to new equipment.

Nursing and Admin buildings are the only two remaining to be updated.

Arctic Wolf

For the month of October, 148 million logs were ingested by the sensors. Of those, 2 incidents were seen as “Interesting” and were further investigated.

These were attempts from the outside to access the firewall. There are multiple attempts logged in each incident.

Two risks were identified as an outdated SSL security socket that was still in use. Both were corrected.

Top attacking countries:

China

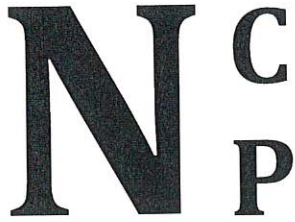
Russia

Iran

Zimbabwe

Belarus

There was a downward trend this past month in the number of attempts. While this is a good sign, it does not mean future attempts will not re-occur.



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**WOOD FUEL COST OVERVIEW
AS PRESENTED TO GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022**

- 1) **HISTORICAL IMPACTS ON LOW-GRADE HARDWOOD (defined as hardwood pulpwood and firewood)**
 - a) Decline in paper needs
 - i) Tissue
 - ii) High gloss paper (magazines)
 - iii) Bond paper
 - b) Closure of paper mills
 - i) Berlin – Groveton (New Hampshire)
 - ii) Gilman Paper (Vermont)
 - iii) Sixty percent of Maine mills, including softwood plants, produce approximately 2 million tons of fiber
- 2) **RECENT IMPACTS**
 - a) Reduction in demand of biomass power
 - b) Covid
 - c) Diesel fuel shortages
- 3) **IMPACTS OF ITEMS 1 AND 2 ON TIMBER HARVESTING PRODUCTION (logging)**
 - a) Central to Eastern Maine severely impacted and the ripple effect on infrastructure
 - b) Loss of markets for biomass in New Hampshire resulting in reduction of logging capacity
 - c) Post covid demand for tissue paper high
 - d) Shortage of tissue fiber
 - e) Ukrainian war impacting heating fuels in Europe
 - f) Reduction in oil output in United States increases demand and price for diesel fuel and gasoline
 - g) Shipments of liquid natural gas increased to Europe, i.e., Boston now receives 70 to 80 percent less in shipments to Everett plant from GDS Suez
 - h) Purchase of three pulp mills in Maine by Chinese paper company, Nine Dragons Paper Holdings Limited
 - i) Shortage of workers and truck drivers resulting in lost logging production
- 4) **CURRENT IMPACTS OF ITEMS 1, 2, AND 3 ON HARDWOOD PULPWOOD/BOLEWOOD**
 - a) Pulpwood has increased by \$30/ton in one year; \$15/ton within the last month
 - b) Firewood (bolewood) is selling locally for \$2,500/load (12-14 cords/load)
- 5) **IMPACT ON HARDWOOD CHIPS FOR FUEL**
 - a) Current producer
 - b) Locating new suppliers
 - c) Results
 - d) Decision of fuelwood costs