



February 3, 2014

GMC Biomass Resource Assessment Project

Dear Sirs:

I am delighted to write an endorsement of Green Mountain College's project entitled *Sustainable Forests, Sustainable Communities: Assessing the Impacts of a Community-Scale Wood-to-Energy Project in Poultney, Vermont*, which was conducted in the spring of 2013 by Assistant Professor Sarah Mittlefehldt and her class. I got to know Sarah several years ago when we worked together on a project to secure sustainably harvested fuel for the college's biomass energy plant. The current project, which I did not participate on, extends the earlier work in admirable and innovative ways.

Sarah's students explored different ways in which Green Mountain College's biomass plant potentially affects local forests and the communities that depend on them. As part of this service-learning project, students tackled the following questions: 1) What impact does the college's biomass plant have on regional biodiversity and ecosystem health? 2) What are the economic impacts of the biomass plant in Rutland County and the local region? 3) What impact does the biomass plant have on social capital in the region? Students in the class worked on ways to systematically measure and assess various impacts of GMC's biomass plant on natural, economic, and social capital stocks in the coming years.

Green Mountain College has shown itself a leader and innovator in the field of biomass energy because of its attention analyzing the source of fuel and the related impacts on local communities. *Sustainable Forests, Sustainable Communities* breaks new ground and is a valuable addition to the field.

Yours truly,

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Executive Director

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