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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BTEC to Create First Thermal Efficiency Test Method for Commercial Sized Biomass-Fired Boilers

Test protocol will fill a standards gap and consistently measure boiler heat energy from a range of biomass fuels.

WASHINGTON, DC – July 29, 2015– today The Biomass Thermal Energy Council (BTEC) announced plans to release a draft of the first thermal efficiency test method designed specifically for commercial-sized boilers that utilize solid biomass as a fuel stock (including pellets, chips, briquettes, and cordwood). The project responds to concerns that a lack of reasonable testing standards for biomass systems can make it difficult for specifiers to provide the owner of a biomass system with a clear distinction between the performance of high-efficiency, low-emission equipment and less satisfactory performers. BTEC plans to hold a series of regional scoping meetings to gather public feedback on the standard in the fall of 2015 and spring of 2016.

The project has already garnered \$175,000 in committed support from the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, and the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources.

Once drafted and tested in an accredited lab environment, the efficiency test procedure is slated to be published as a voluntary BTEC document and made publicly available. Continuing work will then be undertaken to gain formal acceptance of the protocol by a respected national standards organization. BTEC will promote the efficiency testing procedure beyond the biomass industry to the HVAC industry, government officials and testing laboratories as well as consumers and businesses. The protocol will closely examine boiler performance at partial load and facilitate the evaluation of the benefits of properly sizing biomass boilers, including methods for multiple-boiler systems.

The final goal of the project will be evaluation and adoption of the new standard by industry, federal agencies and regulatory bodies, as well as state governments. It is anticipated that the existence of this testing method will enable the inclusion of commercial boiler systems in policy and tax incentive legislation at the state and policy levels, which often requires reliable efficiency markers to ensure that highly efficient systems are incentivized.

An overview of the project and information about biomass energy systems can be found on the Biomass Thermal Energy Council's website, www.biomassthermal.org.

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About the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities

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.

About the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund

The West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that invests in the deployment of sustainable energy technologies that benefit West Penn Power ratepayers in Pennsylvania. WPPSEF investments are focused in three broad categories:

- *Deployment of sustainable and clean energy technologies;*
- *Deployment of energy efficiency and conservation technologies; and*
- *Facilitating economic development, environmental betterment, and public education as they relate to sustainable energy deployment in the WPP service region.*

Visit www.wppsef.org for further information.

About the Biomass Thermal Energy Council

The Biomass Thermal Energy Council (BTEC) is an association of biomass fuel producers, appliance manufacturers and distributors, supply chain companies and non-profit organizations that view biomass thermal energy as a renewable, responsible, clean and energy-efficient pathway to meeting America's energy needs. BTEC engages in research, education, and public advocacy for the fast growing biomass thermal energy industry. For more information, visit www.biomassthermal.org.