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CSR PARTNERS WITH INDIANA RAIL ROAD TO CONVERT RAILROAD TIES INTO BIOFUEL

NEW BRIGHTON, MN – The Coalition for Sustainable Rail (CSR) announced April 14 that it is initiating research on conversion of used railroad ties into an advanced biofuel. This research, funded through a generous grant from the Indiana Rail Road (INRD), is a first look into the viability of “upcycling” used railroad ties into biofuel.

“CSR is thrilled to have the support of the Indiana Rail Road on this important, potentially historic opportunity,” said CSR President, Davidson Ward. “INRD is dedicated to innovation and technology, and its investment in our primary research is an inspiration to the entire team.”

Working with the *Natural Resources Research Institute* (NRRI) of the University of Minnesota - Duluth, CSR aims to determine the viability of converting some of the 15 million ties replaced on U.S. railroads each year into a clean-burning coal alternative.

Using an innovative biomass processing technique known as torrefaction, the researchers at NRRI and CSR seek to convert the structure of used railroad ties, primarily made from hardwood species, into a clean, renewable, homogenous, and densifiable biofuel. The final result is anticipated to be a pelletized biofuel that can be used in power plants – but not before powering CSR’s test bed steam locomotive, the Santa Fe Railway’s 1937-built No. 3463.

“As the son of a Santa Fe dispatcher and a lifelong student of that railway, I’m intrigued in CSR’s desire to rebuild and modernize such an innovative piece of technology as the 3463, and especially NRRI and CSR’s pursuit of energy, fuel and transportation development,” said INRD President and Chief Executive Officer, Thomas G. Hoback. “This important research impacts not only the future of energy in the U.S., but it honors the tradition of American innovation, from the reconstruction and modernization of an iconic steam locomotive to the biofuel development associated with our donation.”

This initial investigation aims to identify any hurdles involved with the “upcycling” of railroad ties to fuel, including the handling of wood preservatives found in railroad ties. CSR will make results of the research known through its “White Paper Program,” which can be found on its website at www.csrail.org/whitepapers.

“This is something that I believe could lead to a key development in the future of the railroad industry,” said Hoback. “It is important to take pride in the history of where we’ve been, and the unique melding of research with preserving history, as championed by CSR, is a great way to honor the legacy of the Santa Fe.”

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The Coalition for Sustainable Rail is a 501c(3) research and development non-profit organization dedicated to the development of modern biofuels, sustainable railroad locomotives, modern boiler-based electricity generators and education. It maintains formal research relationships with multiple institutes at the University of Minnesota, including the Natural Resources Research Institute, a leader in the development of advanced, modern biofuels. Learn more about its research on its website: www.csrail.org

The Indiana Rail Road Company is a privately-held, 500-mile railroad based in Indianapolis with a full-time staff of 185. The company hauls the equivalent of more than 800,000 truckloads of consumer, industrial and energy products each year. INRD is also active in the community, operating the annual INRD Santa Train and serving as a major sponsor of the Indiana Historical Society's Indiana Bicentennial Train as well as "Jingle Rails" at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art,. For more information, visit the Indiana Rail Road online at www.inrd.com or on Twitter and Facebook.