



# ENVIVA EXPANSION THREATENS FORESTS, CLIMATE, & COMMUNITIES

## Major Buildout Proposed

Enviva, the world's largest producer of wood pellets, is attempting to expand. **If these production increases occur, North Carolina will become the country's largest pellet exporter, sending 2.5 million tons of wood pellets per year overseas to be burned for energy.** Enviva hopes to expand at their facilities in Richmond, Sampson, and Northampton County.

Currently, there is a draft permit for Enviva to expand their Northampton mill. If approved, its annual production capacity will rise to over 780,000 tons of wood pellets, requiring over 18,000 acres of forests to be cut down each year. That's more clearcuts, more carbon in the atmosphere, more dangerous logging trucks, less habitat for wildlife, and less protection from natural disasters.

The wood pellet industry has been allowed to grow unchecked in North Carolina. NC Governor Cooper must place a moratorium on all expansion of the wood pellet industry.

## Impacts on Forests

The wood pellet industry is driving the **destruction and degradation of tens of thousands of acres of forests**, which are cut down, turned into wood pellets, and shipped overseas to Europe and Asia to be burned for energy.

Despite their claims over the years to only source waste wood and wood not suitable for other industries, Enviva has been documented sourcing from bottomland and coastal hardwood forests.<sup>[1]</sup> These native hardwood forests have been designated as a global biodiversity hotspot.



## Climate Impacts

Numerous scientific studies have confirmed that **burning trees releases more greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electricity compared to coal and is worse for the climate than burning coal** - particularly over the crucial years ahead.<sup>[2]</sup> Increased carbon dioxide concentrations from burning wood persist in the atmosphere for decades or more. The urgency of the climate crisis demands that we dramatically scale up forest protection. Forests draw carbon out of the atmosphere and store it in trees and soil. Now, more than ever, we need standing, diverse, healthy forests and wetlands to store carbon, protect us from flooding and storms, and provide us with clean air and water.

## Community & Economic Impacts

Enviva facilities impact surrounding communities with **increased truck traffic on small roads, dangerous air pollution, dust, constant noise, and a degraded landscape.**

The production of wood pellets creates harmful particulate matter, volatile organic compounds that create smog, and other hazardous pollutants.

A recent report by Environmental Integrity Project shows a shocking pattern of air quality violations or noncompliance at **all** of Enviva's wood pellet facilities.<sup>[3]</sup> Enviva has been the subject of lawsuits regarding their unlawful air pollution and has only agreed to install pollution controls at their Richmond and Sampson County facilities after being taken to court. <sup>[4]</sup>

Environmental Justice communities - those with incomes below the state median and more than 25% people of color - **are twice as likely to have a wood biomass pellet production facility** than other communities.<sup>[5]</sup> These communities face pollution and destruction of their forests, and do not benefit economically.

**Enviva has not improved the local economies** where it has plants. In Northampton County, NC, Enviva opened a plant in 2013. Since that time, the poverty rate has actually increased from 26.3 percent to 28.5 percent.<sup>[6]</sup>



# TAKE ACTION: STAND FOR FORESTS AND COMMUNITIES

## Tell Gov. Cooper & NCDEQ: NO Expansion

Governor Cooper has claimed to be a champion for the climate. But so far, Governor Cooper has turned a blind eye to the wood pellet industry. Does that sound like a climate leader to you?

Gov. Cooper must place a moratorium on any expansion of the wood pellet industry until the state completes a comprehensive study on the cumulative impact of the industrial-scale wood pellet industry on forests, the climate, and communities. At the same time, as NC moves to develop a Clean Energy Plan, lawmakers must ensure that biomass electricity has no place in the state's clean energy future. North Carolinians deserve truly clean energy alternatives, such as energy efficiency, solar, and wind, and real forest protection.

**We need real and bold leadership.** Attend the Northampton County Public Hearing to stand for forests and communities.

WHEN: 6:30 PM Tuesday, August 20, 2019

WHERE: Northampton County High School, Auditorium, 152 Hurricane Drive, Gaston, NC 27832

Or email your public comment to: [DAQ.publiccomments@ncdenr.gov](mailto:DAQ.publiccomments@ncdenr.gov) (cc: [roy.cooper@nc.gov](mailto:roy.cooper@nc.gov))

Visit <http://dogwoodalliance.org/no-enviva-nc> for more information and to send your public comment.

Contact [rachel@dogwoodalliance.org](mailto:rachel@dogwoodalliance.org) with questions.



## References

1. <https://bit.ly/2XcS2tN>
2. <https://on.nrdc.org/1Uc74qh>
3. <https://bit.ly/2jXemBR>
4. <https://bit.ly/2XbCW7Z>
5. <https://bit.ly/2D5vGOO>
6. <https://bit.ly/2YDq738>