

## **Study predicts big impact for Mingo project**

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By Audrey Carter Staff Writer  
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WILLIAMSON, W.Va. — The study is completed and the construction of the biomass and coal-to-liquid plant planned for Mingo County is projected to have a phenomenal impact on the local and tri-state economy.

Jointly commissioned by the development team of the Mingo County Redevelopment Authority and Rentech Inc., the study was completed by the Marshall University Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER).

Mike Whitt, executive director of the MCRA, said Mingo Hybrid Energy, LLC, which formed in April 2008 is the holding company for the development of the plant.

According to the study, the construction of the first phase of the plant will generate \$248 million for the local economy. During the 2 1/2 year building process approximately 660 people will be employed the first year, another 1,140 the second year and some 460 in the final year.

CBER estimates at the peak of construction an additional 2,400 support jobs will be created. It is also estimated that as many as 50 percent of those employed will come from counties surrounding Mingo.

Once operational, the first phase plant will pump some \$67 million per year into the economies of Mingo and surrounding counties, with direct and indirect permanent jobs totaling 400, in the \$56,000 per year income bracket range.

The project, with all the support facilities and additional housing for workers, is expected to increase the county's property tax base by almost 50 percent. This could generate as much as \$29 million per year in additional county revenues for needed services, while increasing direct costs for services in the \$550,000 per year range. CBER said the impact of state tax revenues were difficult to project but are expected to be more than \$1 million per year in sales tax alone.

Formed with initial partners of MCRA and Rentech, Mingo Hybrid Energy LLC will expand to include partnerships with technology suppliers, operators, and suppliers that will collectively operate the facility. The facility, which will be located on a 300-acre parcel of land southeast of Gilbert, W.Va., will be situated along the new I-73/74 King Coal Highway. The property has access to rail service with Norfolk Southern as well as an abundant water supply in the project area.

The first phase of the project is designed for a daily production of 400 tons of ammonia nitrate, 3,200 barrels of liquid fuel, along with providing nitrogen and carbon dioxide to the natural gas development industry. The feed stocks will be approximately 1,700 tons of forest residue and an equal amount of non-compliance coal.

As the first phase becomes operational, work will begin on expansion to the eventual full scale of 1,800 tons of ammonia and 30,000 barrels of liquid fuels per day.

While there are many hurdles to overcome, Whitt said it is hoped that site work for the plant can begin before late 2009 with operation in 2011 or 2012.

The results of the study are said to have exceeded expectations