

## **Forum on Ethanol Blending in Gasoline in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic**

**June 27, 2000**

### **Forum Report**

This Forum Report is a summary and outline of key issues that were explored in the “Forum on Ethanol Blending in Gasoline in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic,” which took place on June 27, 2000 in Manchester, New Hampshire. The Forum was hosted by a variety of regional stakeholders, including the CONEG Policy Research Center, Inc., Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management, New Hampshire Governor’s Office of Energy and Community Services, and the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission. The Forum was organized by the U.S. Department of Energy’s Northeast Regional Biomass Program. The Forum Report provides an overview of key discussion topics communicated by each speaker. It concludes with a discussion of issues requiring further attention, areas of potential consensus, and likely next steps for policy-makers in Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States.

The Forum consisted of separate panels on the following three topics:

- ▶ The Role of Gasoline Blended with Ethanol in the Environment;
- ▶ The Infrastructure and Cost Implications of Increased Ethanol Blending; and
- ▶ The Potential for a “Homegrown” Ethanol Industry in the Northeast.

The Forum and this report can be viewed as a timely response to the ongoing legislative and regulatory debate in the wake of the discovery of the gasoline additive MTBE in the nation’s water resources. One alternative to MTBE is ethanol, a biodegradable, domestically produced renewable fuel that provides many of the same air quality benefits of MTBE when added to gasoline. However, although ethanol appears to be a safe, environmental and economic issues associated with its use in gasoline still merit consideration.

The potential use of ethanol in Northeast gasoline also gives rise to a number of issues specific to the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states. For instance, the U.S. ethanol supply presently is produced almost entirely from corn, with key production centers located primarily in the corn-belt of the Midwest. Use of ethanol in the Northeast will therefore require shipping ethanol over long distances via barge, rail, or truck. Dedicated pipelines do not exist. Efficient and economical use of ethanol in the Northeast region will require development of a new regional ethanol infrastructure, capable of both producing and transporting the fuel in significant quantities. Over the long-term, production capability would likely be met through the use of cellulosic biomass ethanol technology, an evolving technology that enables the production of ethanol from biomass wastes, including agricultural, wood, and municipal solid waste.

The purpose of the Forum was to inform key state and regional policy makers about the potential role of ethanol in gasoline and related issues, as they endeavor to develop a regional solution to

this complex debate.

A total of 20 speakers/moderators, representing a diverse collection of private, not for profit, and public interests, participated in the Forum. The event was attended by approximately 80 individuals, mostly representing various branches of state governments in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states. The Forum concluded with a moderated roundtable discussion involving panelists as well as Forum attendees.