ASD Burke announces Phase I awardees for Advanced Drop-in Biofuels Production Project
By OEPP Staff | May 24, 2013

EA-6B Photo A U.S. Navy EA-6B Prowler aircraft assigned to Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23 flies near Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., Sept. 16, 2011. The aircraft was flying on a biofuel blend of JP-5 aviation fuel and camelina oil. (U.S. Navy photo by Kelly Schindler/Released) **(Photo by Kelly Schindler)**

Earlier today, ASD Burke announced the winners of the first phase of the Advanced Drop-in Biofuels Production Project. Winners include - Emerald Biofuels of Illinois, Natures BioReserve of Nebraska, and Fulcrum Brighton Biofuels of California.

These companies have proposed making military-spec drop-in biofuels from a variety of sources, including woody biomass, food-processing waste, animal fat, municipal solid waste, and oil-seed crops. This effort is being carried out under the auspices of Title III of the Defense Production Act with our partners at the Department of Energy and the Department of Agriculture.

Each awardee will now begin a process focusing first on validation of production technology, selecting a site for the refinery, plant design, and other steps needed before plant construction can begin. After Phase I and a subsequent evaluation have been completed successfully, Phase II -- refinery construction-- will begin.

Biofuels are one component of our national investment in renewable energy. The companies selected will now further develop their plans for refineries capable of supplying at least 150 million gallons of biofuel, at a cost of less than $4 per gallon, starting in 2016.

In an interview with Bloomberg, ASD Burke noted “We see a national security benefit in global diversification of liquid fuels.” She went on to say that DoD hopes the effort will “catalyze greater production of these fuels across our economy,” she said.

Investments like these are a step towards a diversified and balanced portfolio of energy options for the United States. The Department of Defense’s operational energy investments are focused on meeting warfighter needs. These initiatives are mostly aimed at energy efficiency and reducing the demand for fuel on the battlefield but they also include diversifying DoD’s supply options. As the nation’s largest

consumer of energy, DoD recognizes that our military will need alternatives to petroleum to keep our supplies diverse, especially for our existing fleet of ships, planes and combat vehicles, which will be with us for decades to come.

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UPDATE (June 17) – We're pleased to announce that a fourth awardee - Red Rock Biofuels of Ft. Collins, CO - has been selected for Phase I of this effort. That means for Phase I, in total, $20.1M in government funds will be matched by $22.6M in private sector funds. And while the awardees are based in Illinois, California, Colorado, and Nebraska, they have proposed partnering with 17 companies in 10 other states.