



Located on the northeastern end of Okayama Prefecture and at the southern base of the Chugoku Range, Nishiawakura Village is a village with population of a little over 1,500. In August 2004, the village withdrew from a merger negotiation with neighboring districts based on the result of referendum. Since then, the village has been searching for a way for its survival through regional vitalization based on forests that make up most of the village.

In 2009 the "100 Year Forest" project was initiated in a partnership between villagers, the village office and the forest cooperative.

The village aims to create a beautiful "high-quality countryside" through the expansion of small hydroelectric generation using water resources nurtured in its rich forests, development of a community that is 100% self-sufficient in primary energy supply using renewable energy from forest biomass, and simultaneous pursuit of preservation and utilization of forests that make up 95% of the village area.

Absorption of Greenhouse Gas through "100 Year Forest Project"

The village will continue the 100 Year Forest Project through forest preservation, adding value to timber of the village and promotion of interchange including experience-based tours in partnership with the villagers, the village office and the forest cooperative.

In this project, 3,000ha out of 3,580ha of private forests in the village are subject to preservation. Their growth will be ensured through continued forest management focused on thinning for stable absorption of carbon dioxide.

In line with the expansion of management area of the forest, the city will introduce advanced forestry machineries (subsidy system was established in fiscal 2015) and conduct aviation laser measurement for advanced forest management in order to determine the amount of resources.

Opportunities of carbon offset will be expanded through certification by Foreststock.



Build a Low-carbon Model Community Based on Renewable Energy

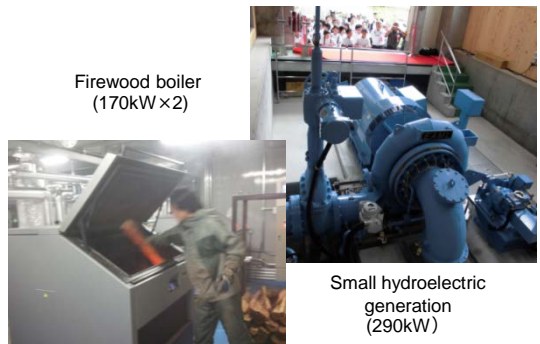
- Actively introduce small hydroelectric generation, wood biomass and photovoltaic generation

As Hydroelectric generation taking advantage of the rich water resources and topographic features of the Chugoku Range is the leading project of the village, the village replaced Nishiawakura Power Generation (290kW) in July 2014. Utilization of the resources of the forests that make up 95% of the village is the mission of mountainous areas. The village started introducing firewood boilers to three hot spring facilities in fiscal 2014. All other hot spring facilities will be updated to firewood boilers by fiscal 2016. Moreover, a regional heat supply system using woody biomass will be developed in fiscal 2019 in line with the development of the main facilities of the village.

The village has been actively promoting the introduction of photovoltaic power generation to residences and public facilities. In fiscal 2013, the city also introduced a power plant operated with the participation of residents.

- Develop a lifestyle suitable to a low-carbon society

Villagers will set up a new panel to study new lifestyles and build a low-carbon model community.



Firewood boiler (170kW×2)

Small hydroelectric generation (290kW)

Exchange with Cities and Support for Start-ups with the Theme of "High-quality Countryside"

The village will work on community development that can get across the concept of a low-carbon society model in a hilly mountainous area of Japan to the broad public.

Using carbon offsets centered on the existing Foreststock certification system, the village will expand its partnership with local governments and companies toward creation of a low-carbon society.

The village will develop sightseeing itineraries suitable for a low-carbon society for tourists and observers visiting the village.

More than 10 new businesses have been started by young people who support the 100 Year Forest Project since fiscal 2012. The village started a local venture school to foster human resources to start a new business in Nishiawakura in fiscal 2015, with an eye to the securing of human resources and further expansion of employment.

Local venture

Sonraku Energy, Inc.



Wood Craft Center Youbi