

Social Acceptability of Biomass and Biofuels

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While scientific, infrastructure, and community asset development are significant and important to the success of the emerging biofuels industry, key questions must also be addressed regarding local stakeholder perceptions, experiences, and potential acceptance or rejection of this industry. A mixed methods survey was developed to examine informed stakeholder perceptions regarding forest management use, trust, communication, knowledge, experience, social acceptance, local community impact, and environmental concerns of stakeholders in the Pacific Northwest. The survey included both qualitative and quantitative questions regarding a forest biomass to biojet industry in Western Montana, Northern Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. In 2013, the survey was administered to over 330 stakeholders in 21 stakeholder groups broadly defined as people who work in the timber and forest products industries, governmental contacts, and environmental groups in the Pacific Northwest. The presentation will discuss the different stages of survey development, the surveying process, and explore overlying themes in social acceptability identified in communities' knowledge, perceptions, and concerns by stakeholder group, region, education level, and political affiliation. This information will also be examined in terms of what it means to the NARA project as a whole, and the next steps in validating the information collected will be discussed.