**Introduction**

The success of a forest residual based biofuels industry in Washington State would depend on a large and constant supply stream. Small family-owned forests make up over 3 million acres of Washington’s forest land, making this demographic a key interest in the search for biomass resources. This study surveyed family forest owners to gain understanding of their perceptions and acceptance level of the potential woody biofuels industry.

**Key Findings**

- Respondents expressed acceptance or conditional acceptance (framed favorably, but with concerns they would want resolved) with almost equal frequency, while respondents who were concerned to the point of disapproval were less than half as frequent as either of the above categories. (Figure 1)

**Methods**

We surveyed a random selection of 865 family forest owners across Washington State. Surveys included both open ended and fixed response questions, to holistically capture the breadth of stakeholder perceptions. Question wording was informed by results of focus group research by Hanna Lee for her masters thesis. Several mailings and reminders were sent, resulting in a 32% response rate.

The first question was: “What do you think and/or how do you feel about this whole idea of making biofuels from forest residuals and other woody materials? Please, do not hold back, your opinion is important. Express yourself in the space provided below. *For this survey, Biofuels refer to a liquid, solid, or gaseous fuel produced from wood material. A biorefinery is the facility where wood material is converted to biofuels. This questionnaire is about biofuel made from forest residuals and similar wood products.*”

The 255 responses to this question were examined using grounded theory thematic analysis with the NVivo program to gain insight of both the general favorability towards woody biofuels and the emergent themes present in the responses.

**Conclusion**

These findings demonstrate that while family forest owners are generally favorable towards the idea of wood residual based biofuels, their key concerns could limit their participation unless these conditions are accounted for in the development of the industry.