

FOREST STEWARDSHIP DEMONSTRATION AREAS: VISUALIZING A TIMBER HARVEST

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The long term viability of Pennsylvania's hardwood industry is dependent upon the decisions that forest landowners make today. Penn State is installing a series of demonstration sites that will help landowners review their options and ultimately make better decisions.

Pennsylvania's extensive forests supply high quality hardwoods to domestic and increasingly international markets. And, the citizens of the Commonwealth enjoy the abundant amenity values associated with our 17 million acres of forestland. Because most of our state's forests are privately owned (one half million landowners own 12 million acres), responsible forest management, including timber harvesting, depends on landowners' awareness and knowledge of forests and forestry.

A new extension/research harvesting demonstration project at Penn State is intended to introduce landowners, the general public, foresters, and loggers to the role that timber harvesting plays in maintaining sustainable forests. The project, entitled "Integrating Sustainable Forestry into Total Farm Management," is funded by the USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program. Cooperators include the USDA Forest Service, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks, the Timber Harvesting Council of Pennsylvania, and Tree Farmer George Freeman.

The study and demonstration design is modeled after a USFS research project established several years ago at the Kane Experimental Forest. We are installing seven harvesting demonstration sites across the state:

Lackawanna State Forest, Lackawanna County
Tiadaghton State Forest, Lycoming County
Forbes State Forest, Somerset County
State Game Lands 211, Dauphin County
Freeman Tree Farm, Clarion County
French Creek State Park, Berks County
Stone Valley Exper. Forest, Huntingdon County

The sites are evenly distributed across Pennsylvania. On at least four of the sites, an educational trail will be created with interpretive signs and informative pamphlets.

Each site demonstrates five different harvesting treatments: a diameter-limit cut aimed at removing the smallest trees, a diameter-limit cut removing only the largest trees (high-grading), a thinning of average-sized trees (replaced by a shelterwood on three sites), an improvement thinning, and a clearcut. Individual treatment blocks are two acres, including an interior 0.6 acre measurement plot. We

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

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We need to continue to increase the visibility of the organization both within and outside our industry. While HLMA represents over 80 percent of the lumber production in Pennsylvania, there are several large to medium sized mills and many smaller mills that are not members. We need to further increase our membership to strengthen the association politically. I urge all of our members to promote the organization to mills in their area that are not members. Everyone in the industry benefits from the activities of HLMA. Let's work to get everyone in our industry to be a member so they can help pay their fair share.

We must continue to promote HLMA to the Legislature here in Pennsylvania. While we have accomplished much over the years, lobbying is a continuous process, and we can always do more. The fact that our annual Legislative Dinner each spring continues to draw increasing numbers is evidence that our industry is recognized. The participation of our membership in attending the Legislative Dinner, writing letters, making visits, phone calls, and political contributions are essential for our continued lobbying efforts.

In a few months Pennsylvania will elect a new Governor, which means we will be dealing with a new administration in Harrisburg. HLMA must work to be recognized early as the voice of the forest products industry and to let the new administration know of our economic importance.

I hope that each of our members will be active and continue to provide their support. An association exists for its membership and for no other reason. HLMA exists for you.

OSHA ON THE MOVE...AGAIN

Minimum Fines Up On Willful Violation

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is expected to announce soon that willful violations of federal job safety and health standards will carry higher minimum penalties.

The new policy will set a \$25,000 minimum proposed fine for those violations. Presently, the agency is working with a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$70,000 for willful violations.

OSHA considers violations willful if they are committed with an intentional disregard of, or plain indifference to requirements of the health and safety laws and regulations adopted by the agency.

Currently, willful violations represent only a small proportion of all alleged violations cited by OSHA. In 1993 only 0.7 percent of all violations were willful.

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anticipate that tree regeneration will vary under the different harvesting treatments. We'll also monitor the effects of deer grazing in paired fenced and unfenced regeneration plots located in each of the six treatment blocks.

How will we know which cutting treatment is best? The answer may not be apparent. Treatment desirability varies for specific forest values including wildlife habitat, soil and water resources, recreation, aesthetics, and timber production. An important purpose of the demonstration is to make the benefits and consequences associated with different cutting alternatives more evident to folks lacking a background in forestry. For example, many people may not know the difference between a "shelterwood" and "diameter-limit" cut. Also, very few people understand that clearcutting can be a beneficial practice. In addition to the five harvesting treatments, a sixth block, called the "control," has been left uncut for comparison. This part of the demonstration area serves as an outdoor classroom illustrating that nature is not static, but dynamic. Even an unharvested forest is an ever-changing mosaic.

Landowners gathering information about managing their own woodlots may find a visit to one of these sites very helpful. Viewing a recently harvested site may also help non-landowners re-evaluate their opinions about forest management practices and their benefits.

Each research plot will be re-measured at three and ten years to assess tree growth, mortality, forest regeneration and other ecosystem variables. At these intervals, wildlife habitat and species diversity will be evaluated along with the economic value and potential of each of the harvesting treatments. These measures will help determine how different harvesting practices affect individual trees and the sustainability of the forest.

Much research has been devoted to determining ways to encourage better management of nonindustrial private forests. Survey results have shown that many landowners have embraced the stewardship ethic, but that they lack the knowledge and necessary motivation to practice sustainable forestry. Pilot studies will be conducted this summer at two of the completed sites to evaluate the educational effectiveness of field demonstrations. Seeing the benefits of harvesting and the ways in which harvesting mimics nature's own gradual processes may allow individuals to sort through the many often controversial issues surrounding forestry. A landowner equipped with some basic information about forest ecosystems will be a much more responsible steward of the land.

These demonstration sites can be a useful tool for promoting sustainable forestry and for spreading the message that Pennsylvania's family forests are working

forests that supply nearly 80 percent of the raw material to the state's hardwood industry. We will be offering training to help Pennsylvania's forestry community make use of these demonstration sites. Call Alison Hiller, Penn State School of Forest Resources, at (814) 863-0401 for more information.

BABBITT DEFENDS ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

In a recent article in "Greenspeak", a publication by the National Hardwood Lumber Association, Secretary Bruce Babbitt defends the Endangered Species Act (ESA) telling a Senate Committee that administrative changes will make the law palatable to landowners. This discussion took place with an Environmental SubCommittee looking at the re-authorization of the Endangered Species Act.

Senator Max Baucus (D-MT) at the hearing told Secretary Babbitt, "It's time to start looking for incentives rather than relying solely on penalties." He further indicated that landowners are scared and afraid that should the Department find a new species living on their land that their land will be tied up and not be available for appropriate use. During this discussion, Babbitt told the SubCommittee that the Act had been administered in a very "narrow, grudging and defensive way," but that he had tried to change the image.

Recently there have been new policies to broaden public participation in the Act requiring independent scientific review when species are about to be listed and further to tell landowners what they can or can't do on their land when an endangered species is involved. Unfortunately, again, there was no mention of paying landowners if their property ended up to be worthless because of the identification of an endangered species.

The Department is trying to find problems early, looking at ecosystems instead of a single species, and relying on the help of the best scientists it can find. In responding, Senator Baucus indicated that they had been working with large companies such as Georgia-Pacific to administer their timberland so that the species are protected. Unfortunately, the Senator was not impressed and indicated that many of the concerns are centered around small landowners who don't have the financial reserves for the problem. The Senator indicated he was strongly looking for solutions for the problem of the small landowner.

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