

# A Landowner's Guide *for a Successful Harvest*

"Healthy Woods Grow on Good Advice"



*Call Before  
You Cut*



# Your **woods** are valuable

...for your **family's** enjoyment

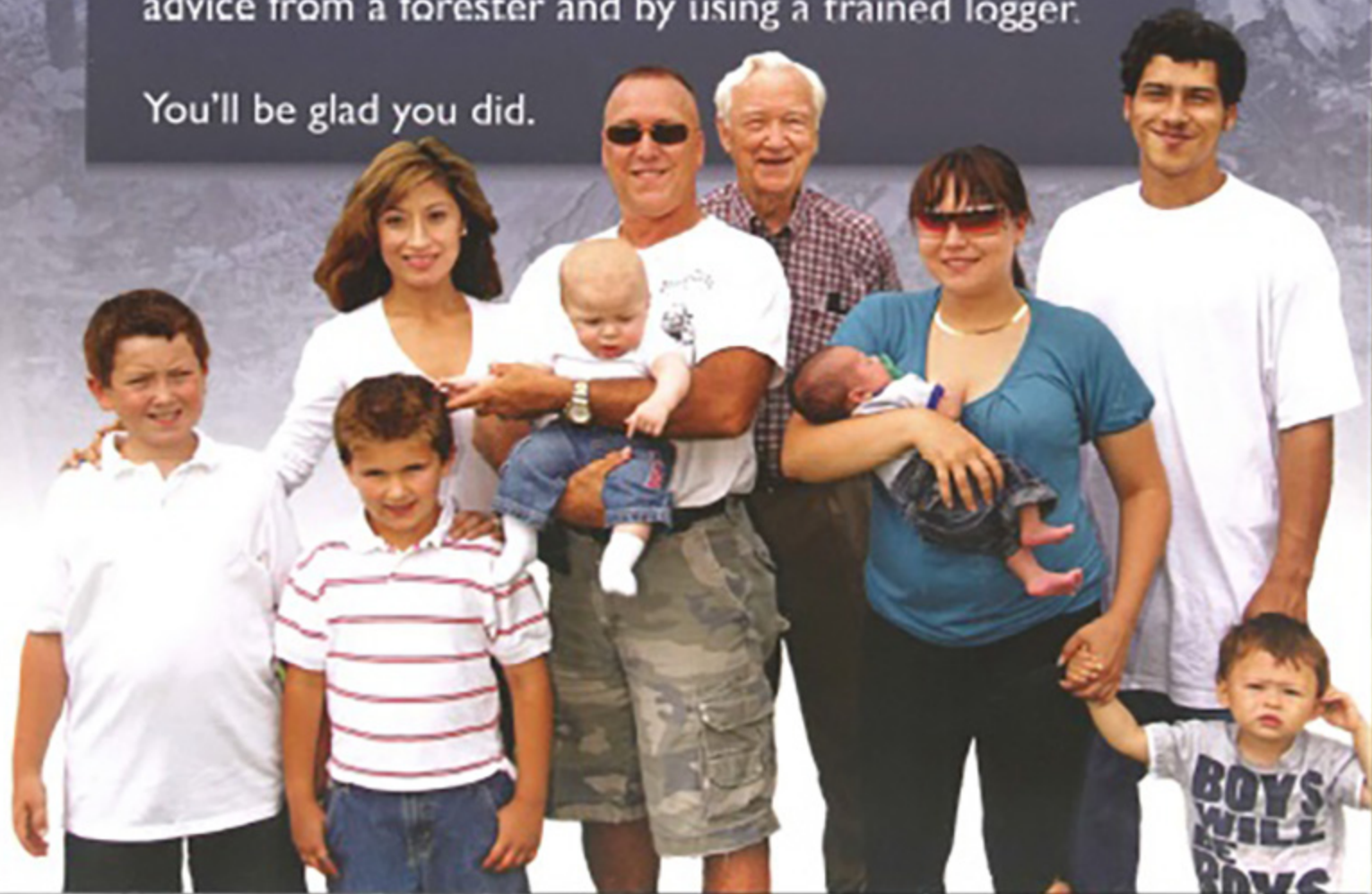
...as a **nest egg** for you and your family's future



If you are considering a harvest, do right by your land, your finances, and your family.

Assure the long term health of your woods by getting advice from a forester and by using a trained logger.

You'll be glad you did.



# Your Timber Harvest: Did You Know?

## What are the differences among harvest methods?

When planning for a harvest in your woodland, the big question is, “Which trees do you leave, and how do you choose which trees to cut?” Pine forests are managed using a reliable system of thinning rows and individual trees at regular intervals, followed by a final harvest. The final harvest can be a clearcut, followed by replanting of seedlings or leaving seed trees to provide needed regeneration. Planting of quality seedlings usually results in more reliable regeneration, and many cost-share programs are available to help you reduce the reforestation cost.

Two common methods of harvesting hardwoods in Maryland are “select cut” and “diameter limit cut.” While these methods may be the best way to receive a high price for your timber in the short-term, they often do not provide for the future of your woodland. These harvesting methods often remove all trees larger than a set diameter—commonly 16 inches, either measured at the stump or at 4.5 feet above ground (“diameter at breast height,” or DBH) — or those with a high value in your woodland, leaving the smaller, less valuable trees. Although this may at first seem like a good way to harvest trees, in many woodlands in Maryland the smaller trees are about the same age as the larger trees, but are just not as vigorous or as healthy. Leaving these trees results in a woodland that is full of trees that will continue to grow slowly, that have poor form and quality, and that are often either genetically inferior or unhealthy. While the initial monetary gains of these harvests may sound appealing, what is left of your woodland is often degraded for generations.

A professional forester can help you design a harvest that provides a good income while avoiding damaging harvests such as a select cut or diameter limit harvest, work with you to select the best trees to leave for the future, and help you select a harvesting method that generates income while encouraging new trees for the future. The forester can also help make sure your wildlife objectives are addressed and sensitive species and habitats are protected. The differences among and the benefit of several harvesting methods that can be used in Maryland can be found in the University of Maryland Extension Fact Sheet 407, “Forest Thinning: A Landowner’s Tool for Healthy Woods.” Find it in the Woodland Stewardship Education site’s Publications Library under “Managing Your Property.”

## Marking trees to harvest: Why is it important?

Depending on what you want out of your woodland (timber, wildlife, recreation, or some combination of these and other goals), specific trees will be chosen to be harvested. Marking trees for your harvest is important for several reasons:

1. You may need to harvest trees based on species, size or location—marking these trees limits confusion during the harvest
2. To improve the overall health of your woodland, trees with poor form or that are in poor health can be marked for removal, even if they don’t increase the dollar value of the sale
3. The value of the timber to be harvested can be better estimated when the specific trees to be removed are marked
4. All potential buyers will know exactly what is being bid on, reducing confusion for the buyers looking over your harvest area

Marking trees to be harvested ensures that only the trees you want harvested are removed, and those you want to remain in the forest for the future are left.

### Items to consider when marking your trees:

Use a paint color different from the color used to mark your property boundaries

Tree marks should face the same direction

Make two marks on each tree: a slash about 4 1/2 feet above the ground and a dot at the base along the ground line

## **How can advertising my timber sale get me more money?**

Properly advertising your timber sale will often result in more interest in your timber and, consequently, higher prices for that timber. If you know the timber buyers in your area and you're knowledgeable about selling timber, you can directly advertise with them. If you've hired a professional forester, let them advertise it for you. A professional forester will be able to directly target buyers that purchase the specific products being harvested from your woodland (veneer logs, timber, pulpwood, firewood, etc.) The highest prices for timber sales are often the result of a bid for the sale, and more than cover the cost of hiring a professional forester. When holding a timber bid for your harvest:

- Advertise the sale with potential timber buyers who specify in purchasing the type of products being harvested
- Include a description of the timber, including species and volume
- Specify any requirements you have for the harvest
- Offer to let them come and personally inspect and measure the trees, either on one date or by appointment
- Request written, sealed bids for the timber by a certain date
- Open all bids at the specified time
- Taking into consideration the price being offered, the reputation of the logger, and the practices they will use to harvest your timber, accept the best offer and agree on a contract! Remember that as the landowner you have the right to refuse any and all bids if they are not acceptable to you and your forester.

## **How will I get paid for my timber?**

There are two main methods to receive payment for your timber: "Selling on Shares or Per Unit" and a "Lump Sum Sale." When selling on shares, you get paid a percentage of what the mill pays the logger for the timber. The share is based on the amount paid by the mill to the logger for a ton or thousand board feet of sawtimber. You as the landowner should receive from the mill a copy of the ticket for each truck delivered by the logger and the price paid per unit and in total for the pulp, sawtimber, veneer, etc. This assures transparency and honesty.

You may agree on a 50:50 sale, a 60:40 sale, or some other percentage where you receive a portion of the money and the buyer retains the rest. While this method can sometimes result in higher prices paid to you for the timber, there are several disadvantages. The exact price you will receive for your timber sale cannot be determined prior to harvesting, and market prices for timber can fluctuate widely. When selling on shares, you assume the monetary loss along with the buyer if market prices drop during the sale. You also have to be sure that all timber cut is honestly accounted for by mill tickets.

The second method, having a lump sum sale, is the less complicated of the two. The total amount to be paid for all trees removed in the harvest is agreed upon and paid at one time, generally prior to the harvest occurring. You know exactly how much you will receive for the timber before agreeing to sell it, and if the market price drops, the loss falls entirely on the buyer, not on you as the landowner. Which method to use depends on your objectives and your potential timber buyers; talking with a professional forester who is familiar with the timber buyers in your area may help you in this decision.

More information on the process of selling your timber can be found in the University of Maryland Extension Bulletin 367, "Marketing Forest Products: Understanding the Sale Process." Find it in the Woodland Stewardship Education site's Publications Library under "Managing Your Property."



# How Can a Forester Help You with Your Harvest?

## **A professional forester can help you in the following ways:**

- Work with you to determine your goals and objectives for your woodland
- Develop a plan for managing your woodland to meet those goals and objectives
- Choose the best harvest method to meet your goals
- Select and market the trees to be harvested
- Advertise your harvest to get the best price and the right logger
- Ensure that regulations and laws are met during your harvest
- Determine eligibility for forest tax programs and other government incentive programs
- Plan management activities to attract desired wildlife
- Ensure soil and water quality protection during the harvest
- Determine if the goals of the harvest were met and resolve any issues before the logger leaves the harvest site
- Protect the health and beauty of your forest for the future

**Before choosing a professional forester, make sure they are licensed,  
and be sure to ask for references from previous clients!**

Consulting foresters are professionals who offer forestry services for a fee and work as the landowner's agent to represent their interests. Industrial foresters represents a sawmill or other forest products industry and have a responsibility to the employer to supply raw wood products. Some forest industry companies provide free management services as part of their own programs. In Maryland, consulting and industrial foresters must meet the required standards for forestry education and experience to be licensed by the state. You can verify their forestry license through the webpage for the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. To find a consulting or industrial forester in your area, go the Woodland Stewardship Education site's "Find a Forester" page, or contact the Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources Forest Service state offices in Annapolis, MD at 410-260-8531.

Maryland DNR Forest Service Foresters are licensed foresters who are employed by the State of Maryland and who can provide you with information for the long-term management of your woodland. They can provide management plans and advice on how to accomplish the plan's objectives, and provide technical assistance and information on tree planting projects, woodland improvement activities, and timber marketing assistance. They cannot, however, administer a timber sale. To find the service forester in your county, visit the "Find a Forester" page or contact the Maryland DNR Forest Service at 410-260-8531.

**Definitions:**

Maryland Licensed Forester: To obtain a Maryland state license, the forester must have a bachelor of science degree from an accredited forestry school, 2 years of acceptable forestry experience, and recommendations from five people who verify forestry competency. Eight credits of continuing forestry education every 2 years are required for license maintenance. Each forester has a license number and landowners can verify the forester is licensed or file a complaint by going to the webpage for the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation and entering the number.

Consulting Forester: A licensed private forester who provide information and professional services dealing with all aspects of forest stewardship for a fee. They represent the interests of their clients in timber sales and other services they offer.

Industrial Forester: A licensed forester who represents a sawmill or other forest products industry and has a responsibility to the employer to supply raw wood products. Some forest industry companies provide free management services as part of their own programs.

Service Forester: A licensed forester employed by the State of Maryland who can provide woodland owners with information on long-term management, information on tree planting projects, woodland improvement activities, and timber marketing assistance. However, they cannot however, administer a timber sale.

Extension Forester: A licensed forester employed by the University of Maryland Extension who in cooperation with other partners provides research-based outreach education for woodland owners and natural resource professionals. This includes workshops, field tours, conferences, volunteer training, newsletters, fact sheets, webinars, videos, and other media and resources.

# What is a Trained and Professional Logger?

The Maryland/Delaware Master Logger Program is a voluntary program that trains loggers in Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, and reduce the impact to your woodland during a harvest. Additionally, they:

- Are trained in safe and efficient timber cutting and logging safety practices
- Have current certification in CPR and First Aid
- Maintain Workers' Compensation coverage on all employees
- Participate in advanced training and periodic recertification training
- Provide liability insurance on request

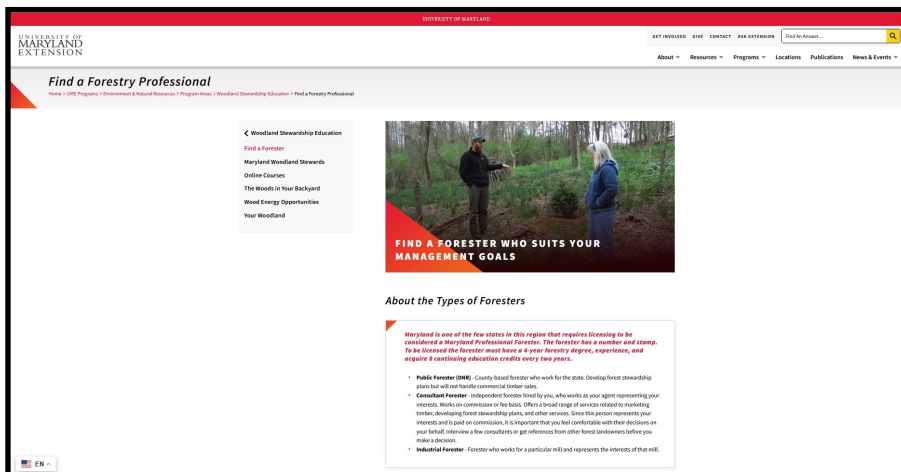


To learn more about choosing a professional logger, visit the Maryland/Delaware Master Logger Program website at <http://extension.umd.edu/masterlogger>

or call (410) 827-8056.

As when choosing a professional forester, be sure to ask for references from previous clients before hiring a logger!

# Need A Forester?



**There are a number of resources available on line to find the right forester for you ...**

The “Find a Forester” page on the University of Maryland Extension’s Woodland Stewardship Education program website includes information about Maryland foresters. Go to our website (listed below) and click on “Find a Forester” in the gold bar.

At “Find a Forester,” you will also find links to important directories for Maryland woodland managers and landowners:

*Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources Forest Service County Directory*  
helps you find the forestry office near you.

*Maryland Consulting and Industrial Foresters Directory*  
provides contact information for professional foresters serving Maryland property owners.

*The Maryland Small-Acreage Professional Foresters Directory* is designed for owners of 1 to 10 acres. The directory contains a listing of individuals and companies that specialize in working with smaller properties.



# Other Information That Will Help You with Your Harvest!

## **Why Should I Have a Contract?**

A timber sale contract is a written agreement between you and the individual or company purchasing your timber and serves as your only protection during your timber harvest. It details all of the aspects of the timber sale that have been agreed upon, and needs to be acceptable to both the timber buyer and yourself. You and your woodland are unique, and no standardized contract will address all of your concerns. As with any contract, it is recommended that you seek assistance when creating and agreeing upon a timber harvest contract. Professional foresters are often experienced in writing timber contracts and know what to include and what to be on the lookout for to protect your interests during the harvest. They are also uniquely qualified to develop a contract that is tailored to your individual situation.

Some items that are needed for a timber sale contract that are often overlooked include a detailed description of the harvest area and what exactly is being sold, the price for the sale, how and when payment is to be made, Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be used during the harvest, buyer's financial responsibility for excessive damage to or removal of trees designated to remain after the cut, and much more. A timber sale contract is a detailed document that is legally binding after being signed—a trained forester can help make sure it protects your interests!

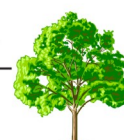
To learn more about writing and agreeing on timber sale contracts, see the University of Maryland Extension Bulletin 367, "Marketing Forest Products: Understanding the Sale Process." Find it in the Woodland Stewardship Education site's Publications Library under "Managing Your Property."

**The Call Before Your Cut campaign in Maryland  
is coordinated by  
the University of Maryland Extension's  
Woodland Stewardship Education program.  
Our partners include:**



**ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES, INC.**

P.O. Box 501  
Huntingtown, Maryland 20639



# Need More Assistance?

## **How Can I Protect my Soil and Water Resources?**

As a forest landowner, you are legally responsible for protecting your water resources under Maryland Erosion and Sediment Control regulations. The use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) during your timber harvest are required and will help protect your soil from erosion and your water quality by reducing sedimentation. Practices such as installing water bars on logging roads, re-seeding areas cleared for the harvest operations, maintaining forest cover around streams or wetlands, and planning and implementing stream crossings to minimize disturbance to streams, are some of the practices used by the logger removing your timber to help protect the resources in your woodland other than your trees. Prior to a harvest the logger must at a minimum file a Standard Erosion & Sediment Control with the local Soil Conservation District and depending on the potential impact on water quality, additional permits may be required. Special regulations apply to harvests near streams, or the critical area (within 1000 feet of the tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay).

Any sedimentation entering a stream after the logger leaves becomes your responsibility as the landowner. It is recommended that most landowners have a professional forester involved in the timber sale to monitor the harvest and assure the required BMPs are being properly followed, thereby reducing the risk. Regulations and permit requirements for timber harvesting vary by the individual counties within Maryland. Consult the University of Maryland Extension Bulletin 417, “Green Book 2014: How to Apply for Woodland Harvest Permits in Maryland.” Find it in the Woodland Stewardship Education site’s Publications Library under “Managing Your Property.”



## References

Publications of interest to Maryland woodland owners and managers:

UME Extension Bulletin 367, "Marketing Forest Products: Understanding the Sale Process," by Jonathan S. Kays and Lori Bittenbender

Extension Bulletin 417, "Green Book 2014: How to Apply for Woodland Harvest Permits in Maryland," by Jonathan Kays and Andrew A. Kling.

Fact Sheet 407, "Forest Thinning: A Landowner's Tool for Healthy Woods," by Nancy Stewart and Nevin Dawson

"Maryland Small-Acreage Professional Forester Directory," by Jonathan Kays and Andrew A. Kling.

These and other publications can be found in the Publications Library of the Woodland Stewardship Education program. Visit <http://extension.umd.edu/woodland> for more information.

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# Considering a harvest?

A man with short hair, wearing a white t-shirt and camouflage shorts, stands in a grassy field with trees in the background. He has his arms crossed and is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression.

## *Know Your Objectives*

Determine what you want your woodlands to provide. Is it wildlife, recreation, timber, or even a park-like setting? Maybe some of each? Depending on your goals, different trees may need to be harvested. A forester is trained to select the right trees for your intended goals. For example, if producing both income and a good habitat for wildlife is a primary goal, a forester can design a harvest that will promote the future growth of higher value trees.

## *Inventory Your Woods*

Having an inventory of your woods is like having an appraisal of your home's value. It's a key part of knowing your overall financial worth.

## *Keep Your Woods Healthy*

Taking note of what you want your woodlands to look like, and the benefits it will provide now and in the future, provides a road map towards a healthier woodlot.

## *Working together*

A harvest plan designed and carried out by a knowledgeable forester working with a trained logger will help assure that the harvest meets your needs as a landowner. Planting more trees, removing invasive species, or conducting a harvest are just a few of the activities that might make up such a plan.

## *Select Trees Carefully*

When a tree should be cut depends on many things, such as its age and maturity, its contribution to your woods' health, the market price of different timbers, and your own goals and needs. Make sure that your "select cut" is based on all these things and not just the current value of the tree.

## *Protect Your Interests*

Market your timber properly to ensure you receive a fair value and oversee the implementation of your harvest carefully so your land is not damaged.