

 UI Extension Forestry Information Series

Timberrrr!

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Have you been out in the woods lately? The sounds of chainsaws and heavy equipment are filling the air. With all of the restrictions on federal timberlands these past few years, timber buyers are looking to non-industrial private forestlands for their logs. So, you want to sell some of your timber too? How do you go about finding someone to buy it? How do you handle high-pressure timber buyers that come knocking on your door? What do you do first?

Do your homework. Decide what it is you want from your land, and then develop a forest management plan. Ask your neighbors who helped them develop a forest management plan or harvest their timber. Contact forest consultants and logging contractors and ask for references. If they will not give you 3 to 5 references, call someone else. Go and look at the last three jobs of several of your contacts. You would gather this type of information before hiring a plumber or electrician, why not your logger or forest consultant? Keep up with current timber prices. Call your local Idaho Department of Lands Forest Practices Advisor. He or she can provide you with contacts and a copy of the Idaho Forest Practices Act.

Follow a plan. Keep your timberland objectives in mind. Use your forest management plan to guide your management decisions. If you do not have a forest management plan *write one or have one written.* Contact your local IDL Forest Practice Advisor, or a private forest consultant for help. A clear, well thought-out management strategy, with maps, will allow you to communicate more effectively with anyone working on you land.

Procure a written contract. Before signing the contract consider having it reviewed by an attorney skilled in this type of contract. Go over the legal

document thoroughly with your contractors, and make sure they know your expectations. Secure a bond to insure that the contract is followed exactly as is written.

Be involved. Inspect the harvest site frequently. Keep records of all management activities. Talk to the head of the contracting crew to make sure they know what you want and that they are abiding by your contract.

Timber harvesting is a big decision, financially and ecologically. Take the time to thoroughly plan and research all aspects of the operation. If you have questions, do not hesitate to ask others who have more experience than you. The following publications may help you make the decisions necessary to meet your forestland expectation:

- *Management Planning for the Woodland Owner.* (UI) – CIS 675. \$0.25.
- *Diameter Limit Cutting: A Questionable Practice.* (UI) – CIS 630. \$0.25
- *Contracts for Woodland Owners and Christmas Tree Owners.* (OSU) – EC 1192. \$1.00

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