



Taking Action to Improve Forest Management - No. 1 May 1, 2014

"I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use our natural resources, but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob by wasteful use, the generations that come after us."

Theodore Roosevelt (1858 - 1919)

It's time to improve America's management of our forests.

Allowing mature hardwood trees to rot is wasteful and disgraceful, and it represents a level of complacency America can no longer afford. With nearly 740 million acres of forests in the U.S. (approximately 31% of our total land in the lower 48 states), one would think by now we would have an effective strategy for managing this precious, renewable resource. But we don't. Yes, we need to preserve the beauty, diversity, and animal habitat of our forest lands, and we can. But prohibiting or restricting prudent, selective harvesting is not the answer. It's the problem. Government policies and regulations that prevent access to and selective harvesting of our nation's forest lands:

- eliminate jobs,
- force viable logging operations out of business,
- increase prices on hardwood products,
- provide unnecessary fuel for raging forest fires,
- actually harm the environment; decaying trees stop taking in carbon and start releasing carbon back into the atmosphere, and
- generally degrade wildlife habitat.

Current policy is not responsible, sustainable forest management. It's irresponsible policy that should be changed.



Tom Abendroth, President
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Did you know?

Mature hardwood trees take in less carbon dioxide than newer growth. If these trees are left to die, fall over and rot, or burn in a forest fire, they actually release the carbon they have retained back into the atmosphere. Selectively harvesting hardwood trees before they're too mature and converting that wood into finished products, where the carbon is retained forever, is a win/win for the logging and wood

products industry as well as for those who are concerned about the percentage of carbon in our air.

Harvesting mature trees makes way for new growth that absorbs greater amounts of CO2 and releases on average a pound of oxygen for every pound of wood grown.*

Total forest growth in the U.S. has exceeded the amount harvested every year since the 1940's.*

The annual hardwood growth rate in the U.S. surpasses our harvest by 70 percent.*

Each year 1.7 billion trees are planted in the United States - more than five trees for every man, woman and child in America - an average of 4.8 million seedlings each day.*

Scientists estimate lumber manufacturing consumes just 4% of the energy used by all raw materials manufacturers. Steel and concrete manufacturers consume 56%. A steel stud requires 21 times as much energy to produce and releases 15 times the sulfur dioxide as a wood 2x4. Producing concrete emits up to 3 times more carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon than lumber production.*

Next Time: What do we need to change to ensure more responsible management of our forests in the future?

*These facts are provided by the Hardwood Forest Foundation, a 501-C3 organization, founded in 1989 and involved in a variety of educational programs and activities throughout the United States and Canada, with the support of its parent organization, [National Hardwood Lumber Association \(NHLA\)](#).

AFFILIATIONS



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