

# VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

**VIRGINIA  
TECH**



**VIRGINIA  
STATE**

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

## EXTENSION FORESTRY NOTES

SPRING 1986

### SECOND ISSUE

Hot off the press is this second issue of Extension Forestry Notes. As noted in our first issue (Winter 1986), the purposes of this newsletter are to provide information on forest management topics to Virginia landowners and to familiarize them with ongoing work in Virginia Tech's Department of Forestry. The Notes are available through the mail, local Extension offices, and the Extension Computer Network. County agents and Virginia Division of Forestry (VDF) staff are encouraged to distribute the Notes in whole or in part to interested landowners and local news media. If you have names of landowners to add to our list, please send them to: Extension Forestry Notes, Department of Forestry, 228 Cheatham Hall, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061.

### USING FOREST HERBI- CIDES

The use of herbicides as a tool for achieving regeneration and improving stands is a common practice in Virginia. To best use this tool, landowners should have a clear idea of what they want their woodlands to produce. Then, a professional forester should assess the property's potential for achieving the stated production goal. Forest industry, private forestry consultants, and the VDF are sources for this service.

Comparing the land's current conditions with the owner's desired production, the forester can recommend those management practices best suited to the site. Site preparation for planting, crop tree release, improvement "cutting," and, possibly, thinning are all operations that often are most efficiently completed with certain herbicides.

On small woodlands, the owner must decide if he wants the job done by hand application or by mechanical equipment, including helicopter spraying. If the choice is to do it by hand, the landowner must then decide whether to do the job himself or hire somebody to do it. Backpack, belt-held, and brushsaw units are all affordable herbicide application equipment for individuals, and each is suited to different silvicultural treatments and stand conditions.

The last decision to make before getting the job under way is what chemical and formulation to use. Application placement (to foliage, bark, or cut surface), season of year, and tree species are important considerations for determining the most effective herbicide. Again, consulting a forester experienced in this field will make the choice easier. Also, herbicide labels supply information necessary for applying the product effectively and safely. Before using any herbicide, READ THE LABEL CAREFULLY AND COMPLETELY. The Cooperative Extension Service's Pest Management Guide for Forest, Christmas Tree,

Right-of-Way, and Non-Crop Areas (Publication 456-005) may prove helpful. Used properly, recommended herbicides are a practical and powerful tool for on-the-ground forest management.

FORESTRY  
RESEARCH

Dr. Shepard M. Zedaker of Virginia Tech's Forest Biology Section conducts research focused in two areas. The first examines alternative techniques available to accomplish silvicultural objectives. Current and completed projects include using herbicides on small ownerships to control hardwood stump sprouting as a site preparation method and using hand-held herbicide application tools for more efficient release of crop trees from competing species. He is also involved in evaluating the effects on yield of controlling competitive herbaceous and woody weeds in young pine plantations and of controlling understory vegetation in mature pine stands. Projects not oriented toward timber production include uses of herbicides to maintain grass cover in Christmas tree plantations and the use of prescribed burning to control obstructing vegetation on vistas of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Dr. Zedaker's second major area of research is concerned with measuring growth patterns in high-altitude spruce-fir forests in the southern Appalachians, where the effects of acid rain and gaseous pollutants have been implicated as causes of forest decline.

FORESTRY  
COST-  
SHARING  
PROGRAMS

Although the cost of many forest land practices such as planting and crop tree release is considered so high as to prevent their execution, a number of state and federal programs have been designed to ease the cost burden of these needed operations for owners of small woodlands. An introductory explanation of these programs follows.

ACP: The Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP) is administered by the federal Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The program seeks to conserve soil, water, and woodlands by helping pay for projects that control soil erosion, livestock waste pollution, and reduction of forest land.

Specific to forestry, ACP assists in advising on and funding tree planting and stand improvement operations. ACP will reimburse 40-80% of the project's cost, up to \$3,500 per landowner per year. Application for the program is in December for the following year, and each application is reviewed by the county ASCS committee before approval. Each county in Virginia has an ASCS office that may be contacted for more information.

CRP: The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is new this year as part of the 1985 Farm Bill. It is administered cooperatively by different Services of the USDA, but application is made to the county ASCS office. The basic goal of the program is to conserve soil and water by encouraging that land most susceptible to erosion be taken out of agricultural production.

Farmers must submit bids for the minimum acceptable rent for their eligible land, what conservation use they intend to pursue, and the recent history of the land. Tree planting is one of the eligible uses. The U.S. Forest Service and VDF provide technical assistance for this practice, and the federal government assumes a 50% share of the cost of

planting. Each accepted bid requires a commitment to keep the land out of non-forestry production for 10 years, with no harvesting allowed. One benefit of opting for planting commercial tree species as the conservation practice is that an additional financial reward can be obtained when the stand is harvested compared to the other practices eligible.

Sign-up for 1986 and 1987 will be May 5-16, and later sign-up for 1987 is scheduled for August. County ASCS offices will know what land qualifies and are sources of more information.

FIP: The Forestry Incentives Program (FIP) is run by the ASCS, U.S. Forest Service, and VDF to help private landowners produce more and better timber for the future. FIP is not active in all counties, depending on the availability of eligible tracts of land.

The federal government's cost share of approved projects is 60%. Landowners must first contact the county ASCS office, which will arrange for a VDF forester to visit the property and help develop a forest management plan with the landowner.

Eligibility requires at least 10 acres, and all practices must be approved by the VDF forester for cost-share payments to be received. VDF personnel can also assist in locating suitable contractors to do any recommended work.

Planting, including site preparation; crop tree release; precommercial thinning; pruning; and site preparation for natural regeneration are all practices that qualify for financial assistance. Not all tree species qualify depending on the proposed project, but the forester will know which ones are suitable in each case under the program. Again, ASCS offices will know if FIP is offered in the county and can provide more details.

RT: The Reforestation of Timberlands (RT) program is Virginia's own system for cost-assistance to landowners and is run by the VDF. In the fiscal year 1982, over 1,000 projects were funded under this program statewide.

Upon recommendation and certification by a VDF forester, private non-industrial landowners may receive 50% of the cost for preparation of the site, tree planting, and release of crop trees, up to \$60 per acre. The program is directed at reforestation to pines only.

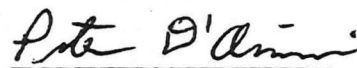
Additionally, the VDF rents specialized equipment to forest landowners at low rates. This includes hand and machine planting equipment and mechanical and prescribed burning site-preparation tools. The VDF also provides pine seedlings from its nursery at production cost. For operations that the landowner cannot carry out himself, such as helicopter use for aerial herbicide application, or if the owner prefers to have contracted workers do the specified job, the VDF will refer the landowner to contractors able to complete the job.

Detailed information can be obtained by inquiring at the nearest VDF office about receiving technical advice and financial assistance for reforestation.

FURTHER INFO If you have questions on forest management, please contact your local Extension agent or VDF office.



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#### VIRGINIA TECH WORKSHOPS and CONFERENCES

- \* May 16-17 East Coast Logging and Sawmill Expo, Richmond (McElwee)
- \* May-June Forestry and Wildlife Bus Tours (Haney)
  - May 13 Buckingham area
  - 20 Winchester area
  - 27 Reynolds Homestead/Patrick County area
  - June 3 Carroll and Grayson counties area
- \* June 5-7 Growing and Marketing Christmas Trees, Blacksburg (Nichols)
- \* June 9-11 Christmas Tree Management Field Demonstrations, Alleghany, Louisa, and James City counties (Nichols)
- \* July 8 Gypsy Moth and the Professional Forester, Loudoun County (Nichols)
- \* Sept. 4-5 Essentials of Forestry Investment Analysis, Blacksburg (Haney)

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