

NRCS **NEWS RELEASE**

United States Department of Agriculture • Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Managed Forests Yield the Best Benefits

A tract of forestland has great potential, but it must be managed well to harness its full benefits. If your woodlands have grown unproductive or overcrowded, consider some simple management techniques like an occasional cutting or thinning to improve them.

Healthy forests are productive places. Wood can be sold to supplement income or provide a source of heat for a home or farm. Well-managed woodlots can potentially produce high quality lumber, firewood and valuable specialty forest products like maple syrup, ginseng and other medicinal plants, which are grown under shade. Healthy forests also provide the ideal habitat for wildlife and reduce the hazards of wildfires.

Improvements to forests are easy – and the best part is, trees typically respond quickly to management techniques. Thinning is often performed when a forest is overstocked with trees. Cutting the excess trees allows the remaining trees and understory plants to prosper from more sun, water and space.

Harvest cuttings are used to remove and market logs for profit. Depending on the type of forest you own and your objectives for it, you may want to consider periodic intermediate cuttings to remove some trees of marketable size. After cutting, make sure the land is replanted or has existing younger trees to continue the regeneration of the forest.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service helps private landowners make their forests healthier through conservation activities. In addition to these management techniques, NRCS helps landowners with other forest-related practices, such as using prescribed burning, installing fire lanes and establishing native grasses. When land is managed well, it not only helps you, but spurs other environmental benefits as well.

If you'd like to learn more about managing forests and the technical and financial assistance available to you, contact the Long Prairie NRCS office at 732-6618 ext. 3.

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