

Selling Logs from Your Property: An educational symposium for small woodland owners

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Project description: In Lane County, Oregon there are roughly 3,600 small family woodland owners that help to care for and manage our forestland. For most small woodland owners, having a timber harvest happens only once or twice in a lifetime. These projects are extremely daunting and risky for those without experience. The goal of this program was to develop a two day symposia that will make available the necessary resources to help landowners make informed harvesting decisions while still meeting forest management goals, Oregon Forest Practices rules and getting a fair market price for their logs.

The symposia took place in October 2017 and featured classroom presentations on the following topics, coupled with a field tour of a recently harvested forest, woodland roads, log scaling yards, and local portable sawmills.

- OSU Extension Timber harvesting specialist and a panel of forestry consultants discussed timber harvesting fundamentals and woodland roads.
- A representative from the Oregon Department of Forestry gave a presentation on the forest practices act and how to notify the department when logging.
- OSU Extension Business and Policy specialist gave a presentation on service provider contracts, timber tax liabilities, and the forest products harvest tax.
- Log buyers and scalers spoke about market diversification and price premiums through identifying niche markets for specialty forest products, recognizing high-value products so that they don't get put in a low-value stream, and how to fell and buck logs for maximum scaling value.
- Loggers offered information on how to hire a logging professional, what to look for, and what to ask for.
- Experienced Landowners shared their experiences about the process specifically offering successes and lessons learned.

What was learned, outcomes and impacts:

There were 104 participants that attended the symposium. The participants were asked to evaluate the content and their overall experience at the symposium. All of the classroom and outdoor activities were evaluated separately. Each received an average rating of 3.08 or higher out of a possible 4.0. The overall symposium experience was rated at an average score of 3.81 out of 4.0.

The participants were also asked to assess their knowledge of 8 topics that were to be covered at the symposium. After the completion of the symposium the participants were asked to rate their knowledge again. Participants responded anonymously to the survey following approved IRB protocols. A 5-point scale with "1" = "poor knowledge" and "5" = "excellent knowledge" was used. Respondents increased their knowledge in all aspects of the program. They learned the most with regard to their knowledge of forestry consultants, portable sawmills, and the role of log buyers.

100% of respondents to the evaluation said,

- They learned something new at this symposium
- The symposium provided the information they were looking for
- They would recommend this workshop to others
- They would attend another OSU extension forestry class or field day based on their experience at this event.

Before the symposium participants were asked when they were planning on selling logs next.

- 29% of respondents are planning on selling within the next year
- 53% of respondents are planning on selling within the next 1-5 years
- 16% of respondents are planning on selling within the next 5-10 years
- 2% of respondents are planning on selling within the next 10 or more years
- 6% of respondents were unsure if they wanted to sell logs

At the completion of the symposium respondents said the symposium will make them:

- 45% said they are now more likely to sell logs
- 8% are less likely to sell logs
- 32% have not changed the likelihood of whether or not you will sell logs

95% of respondents said the symposium provided the information needed to successfully sell their logs

86% of respondents said the symposium increased the likelihood that they will use the services of a consulting forester when selling logs.

Many participants commented that they did not know selling logs was so complicated and were appreciative of the event and the knowledge they learned. They also mentioned that this is just the beginning of the learning process and that more conversations with professionals was in their future now that they have the resources and contacts.

Implications for the future:

Based on the positive feedback and the relatively low cost of this type of program, future offerings of this symposium will be offered periodically to make sure landowners are getting the information they need before taking on a hugely detail oriented management task. This type of programing is essential and should be continued throughout the state. Even the most experienced participants found they learned something. Therefore I will continue to pursue additional funding in order to create a curriculum from what I learned and offer this event with other agents around the state. Ultimately, impact surveys into the future can be done to see if landowners indeed used what they learned at this seminar.

Thank you for the opportunity to develop this resource.

Respectfully,

Lauren Grand

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