

## UI Extension Forestry Information Series

### Re-examining Timber Management Assumptions

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Markets for forest products have changed considerably in the last 20 years and will continue to do so. Yet, we often use traditional assumptions based on markets of twenty years ago, without examining how well that information applies now or is likely to in the future.

**Mills are buying smaller logs.** Small logs are much more merchantable than in the past. Mills that produce paper, wafer board and similar products commonly

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professional associations, such as the Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF).

Examine other services you employ in managing your forest property. For example, it may be worth paying more for a logger who uses low-compaction equipment or demonstrates professionalism by participating in education programs, such as LEAP (Logger Education to Advance Professionalism).

Forest management is a long-term endeavor. Will current market trends continue? New standards (smaller materials, wider variety of species) are likely here to stay. Regardless of current timber prices, remember that many market forces are cyclical. One advantage of growing trees rather than more perish-

able commodities, such as barley or wheat, is that you can wait to cut until a more favorable market cycle. Your trees will continue to appreciate in value, unless there are impending insect or disease problems.

It makes sense to periodically re-examine your management assumptions based on market trends, changes in goals, and other developments. Don't forget to make sure any changes you make are reflected in your forest management planning and activities.

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