

Utah Forest News

Utah Forest Landowner
Education Program Newsletter

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Timber Harvest Tour October 11

Join us on the second annual Timber Harvest Tour, featuring fall colors and fresh air on the Wasatch Plateau where we will examine a selective timber harvest operation in progress.

See Harvest Tour on page seven for details

Creating a Forestry Demonstration Site

Editor's note: For most landowners, it takes more than just a good logger to conduct a successful timber harvest. This issue focuses on three people involved with a logging operation near Electric Lake. Area Forester Bill Zanotti, with the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, & State Lands, is working with Emery County Forester Len Stull, Art Northrup Logging, and landowner Pacificorp, to create a forestry practices demonstration site that is designed to showcase Utah's Forest Water Quality Guidelines. These sites are the focus of our upcoming Timber Harvest Tour.

Southeastern Area Forester Bill Zanotti

Area Forester Bill Zanotti deserves considerable credit for creating the Division of Forestry, Fire, & State Land's first demonstration forest site. It takes confidence and motivation to set up any timber sale these days, as many people take offense to the idea of cutting trees. The challenge of this operation at Electric Lake is even greater because its proximity to the Energy Loop Scenic Byway and the shore of a popular fishing lake.

As if that were not enough pressure, this harvest is intended to showcase good forestry practices and will invite the critical eyes of colleagues, landowners and loggers alike, and each of these groups have a different take on how things should be done. Zanotti knows too well how easy it is to second guess someone else's work.



Bill Zanotti

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He said “For example, the loggers may want it done one way, but they don’t necessarily know the landowner’s intentions and objectives.” As these areas are so visually sensitive. Landowner Pacificorp is striving to minimize visual impacts. But the unusual objective is to retain a generous amount of shade on the site to slow snowpack melt and retain more usable water in the reservoir adjacent to the sale area.

Walking the line between these different interests is no easy task, even in cases where the biological aspects of management are fairly straightforward. When a stand is surrounded by a spruce beetle epidemic, however, the biology becomes much more complex. Nearby stands have been decimated by the beetle, and if a manager is not careful in how the harvest is managed, it can make matters worse.

One complicating aspect, for example, is that the landowner wants shade, but so do the beetles. This can create a situation in which the beetle is likely to kill the same trees the manager is trying to save.

Some argue that it is best to yield to the beetles, and cut every tree with a diameter of eight inches or greater. This creates an environment with little shade, and therefore little chance of a successful beetle attack.

Although Zanotti readily admits to fighting a losing battle he also points out that if you don’t save some of the large trees, you are guaranteed to have none. One of the recognized consequences of this approach

is the likelihood of having to re-enter the stand to harvest trees the beetles killed, which has economic and ecological consequences of its own. These decisions are difficult to make and carry out on behalf of a landowner, and Zanotti takes these decisions to heart.



Bill Zanotti and Len Stull inspect a landing together.

Zanotti holds a forestry degree from Humboldt State University and has been the Southeastern Area Forester for the Division since 1991. Setting up timber sales and preparing forest management plans for private landowners in Grand, San Juan, Carbon, and Emery counties is one of Zanotti’s primary responsibilities. His other duties include preparing agroforestry plans, helping landowners with windbreak creation, providing technical advice, responding to wildfires, and talking to school groups.

Utah State University’s Grand County Extension Agent Mike Johnson worked with Zanotti and others to set up a lecture series in Moab last winter, and said that Zanotti “has a consistently positive attitude about working with other people and with the public. The bottom line is that he is an extremely helpful individual to work with, and people appreciate the work he does.”

Zanotti’s understated style can be misleading. A visiting forestry professor from Spain, Mercedes Bermoteu Garcia, recently met Zanotti and afterwards asked, “Does he remind you of Colombo?” in reference to the 1970s television detective. You might not think he is on track, but before you know it he has cracked the case.

County Forester Lenard Stull

Lenard Stull will be the first one to tell you that he wears many hats. In his involvement with the Electric Lake Timber Sale (see editor's note on page 1) he wears the hat of Emery County forester. If the same activity were taking place in neighboring Carbon County, he may be wearing the hat of Carbon County forester. If he were working directly with a landowner in Duchesne County, he would be wearing the hat of owner of LS Forest Management Services Inc., his forestry consulting business in Manti.

Prior to retirement, Stull was a lead forester in the Washington, D.C. Office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Since then he has settled in Manti, where his wife grew up, and has been actively developing LS Forest Management Services, as well as fulfilling the roles of County forester in Carbon and Emery counties. Since the adoption of timber harvesting ordinances in each of these central Utah counties, there has been a need for a forester to enforce their measures, and each county chose Stull to represent its needs.

His job as County forester is to see that the job is done in accordance with the county timber harvesting ordinance which closely follows Utah's Forest Water Quality Guidelines (see related article).

Stull's expertise and energy have not gone unnoticed in a state that has few active consultants. Emery

County Planning and Zoning Board member Bryant Anderson commented, "We were worried about who was going to enforce this new ordinance, but Stull

has been a great resource for the county, not only for the work that he is doing on the ground, but also for the work he has undertaken at the legislative level."

Anyone who has spoken with Stull about forestry in Utah knows he intends to change the way forestry is practiced, or not practiced, here. He makes regular trips to Washington, D.C., maintaining contacts and expressing his concerns about forestry in Utah to legislators and administrators. But the best part of working around Stull is that he seems to be

having a great time promoting good forestry in the Beehive State.



Len Stull checks the loader for load tickets.

Utah Forest News Receives Silver Award

For the third year in a row the *Utah Forest News* was given the Silver Award in the annual Educational Materials Awards, a national competition hosted by the Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals (ANREP).

Pedro Larralde: A Utah Logger from Spain

On a recent walk through a timber harvest near Electric Lake, I could see that whoever had just felled the neatly stacked trees we were climbing over was a professional logger. The level of production and quality of felling was obvious; the trees were laid down in an orderly fashion, parallel to each other, butt ends pointing toward the landing at the bottom of the gentle slope. This way they come out easily, minimizing the damage to the surrounding forest.

As we balanced on one log and then the next, making our way up the slope, Emery County forester Len Stull exclaimed, “Ahhh, Pedro must have been here!” referring to logger Pedro Larralde.

As it was late, the crew had already left the woods for the day, so I looked forward to returning to the harvest area the next morning to catch a glimpse of Larralde in action.

Upon meeting him the next day I was surprised to find that Larralde hails from the Basque region of northern Spain, near Navarra, which is known for the running of the bulls. A European logger working in America is fairly uncommon, so a barrage of questions came as soon as he put down his chainsaw to fill the gas tank.

Larralde began running a chain saw and logging at the age of 13, while growing up in Lesaka, in the Basque region of northern Spain. He got started working with his father and grandfather who were charcoal producers, but he has been working as a logger in the Western U.S. for most of his life.

At 17, he came to the United States to herd sheep in Wyoming, which he did for four years. When he discovered he was unlikely to receive the wages he had been promised, he went back to what he knew, and took a logging job in the Saratoga area. He has been at it ever since.



Pedro Larralde on the work site

He has logged in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Utah, both as a timber faller and foreman, known as a Bull Buck. This level of experience was demonstrated in the work we saw that first afternoon. The stumps remaining at the base of each log were cut low to the ground, leaving a flat and level surface. There was at least an equal number of standing trees, almost all of them unharmed by

the falling operation.

Larralde’s good work is supported by his employer, Art Northrup Logging, who, according to Len Stull, “provides the direction for much of the quality work that he does.”

This further demonstrates the point that it takes several dedicated and professional individuals working together to conduct a successful timber harvest.



Larralde's handy work: trees felled in an orderly fashion without damaging the residual stand.

Bull Buck

Bull Buck is a logging term that means the boss of the fallers and buckers.

Logging lingo includes many terms that start with the word bull, such as bull of the woods, or perhaps the more familiar bulldozer, and is used to describe something that is big and strong.

Prior to the introduction of logging machinery, oxen were commonly used to skid logs. Oxen were loosely referred to as bulls.

“Bulls” played a big role in early Utah logging and settlement. The original Mormon pioneers brought with them hundreds of oxen. Their use is demonstrated by the presence of such names as Oxkiller Canyon.

Timber Sale Administration

The role of timber sale administrator involves making sure the logger is doing the job in accordance with written (and sometimes verbal) agreements made with the landowner.

It is not uncommon in Utah to see a good job done in the timber sale set-up phase. However when there is no technical assistance available to administer the job on the ground, the landowner sometimes gets bullied into cutting more timber, or doing things that are not quite up to par with high quality management practices. By hiring a forestry consultant to act as a sale administrator, landowners do themselves a favor and better forestry practices are the likely result.

Darce Guymon is the Pacificorp representative who has overseen the Electric Lake Timber Sale on behalf of the power provider. Guymon's advice to landowners who are considering a timber sale on their property is to have “as many eyes as possible watching the operation.”

A good business practice is to have a contract between the landowner and the consulting forester that clearly points out that the forester is working solely on behalf of the landowner and has no conflicts of interest in representing the landowner in their forestry matters. This is a separate contract from the timber sale contract, which is between the logger and the landowner.

The forest management consulting contract often makes reference to the timber sale contract, designating the forester in charge of the timber sale process and authorizing them to enforce the landowners rights, such as the right to shut-down the timber sale if the contract is not being adhered to.

Understanding Forest Disturbances: How Did We Get Here?

Regional Entomologist Steve Munson, the USDA Forest Service's Forest Health Protection Field Office in Ogden, likes to point out that over the last 25 years spruce beetles have killed more large trees in Utah than fire has. Up to 80 percent of the spruce trees on large portions of the Dixie, Fish Lake, and Manti-LaSal National Forests have been killed by spruce beetles.

Some would argue that this massive loss of mature spruce is a natural condition. Others point out that heavy logging and burning associated with settlement, followed by excessive livestock grazing and 100 years of fire suppression, have created an unnatural forest condition.

For most of our lives, a forest fire or its effects have been a rare sight. A demonstration of one way our forests have changed is offered by a quote from John Wesley Powell on his 1878 expedition:

“Everywhere throughout the Rocky Mountain Region the explorer away from the beaten paths of civilization meets with great areas of dead forests: pines with naked arms and charred trunks attesting to the former presence of this great destroyer. The younger forests are everywhere beset with fallen timber, attesting to the rigor of the flames, and in seasons of great drought the

mountaineer sees the heavens filled with clouds of smoke.”

While it is recognized that aiming for pre-settlement conditions is not necessarily obtainable or desirable,



Mountains of dead spruce can be seen on any drive over the Wasatch Plateau.

it is equally important to understand that the way our forests are now is not the way they used to be. Therefore they cannot and should not be managed in the same way they were naturally maintained prior to settlement.

Some scientists refer to today's massive spruce tree die-off as an ecological rotation. This idea is similar to a harvest rotation, where trees of a

certain species and location are expected to mature to harvestable size in a determined number of years.

What many scientists suspect is that similar massive spruce beetle induced mortality events may have occurred four to five hundred years ago, thereby creating the evenly-aged forest that we commonly see today. At that time, however, occasional fires that occurred naturally created openings in which younger trees grew, providing a diversity of ages and sizes that is lacking in many Utah forests today.

A commonly asked question is: Were we capable of stopping this spruce beetle invasion? Although no clear answer exists, it is believed by some resource

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professionals that if the outbreak had been attacked with the same vigor applied to suppressing wildfires, we could have bought enough time to mitigate some of the impacts. Perhaps by occasionally thinning these stands, and using fire in some locations, we would almost certainly have had conditions more favorable to tree regeneration. The resulting increase in age and size diversity may have led to a reduced risk of severe spruce beetle outbreak.

Spruce beetles prefer large diameter trees. Continually creating conditions that promote the growth of small

trees while also retaining many large trees results in a greater diversity of tree ages and sizes. Diversity lends itself to stability, making these stands more resistant to the kind of large scale tree mortality witnessed on many Utah forests today.

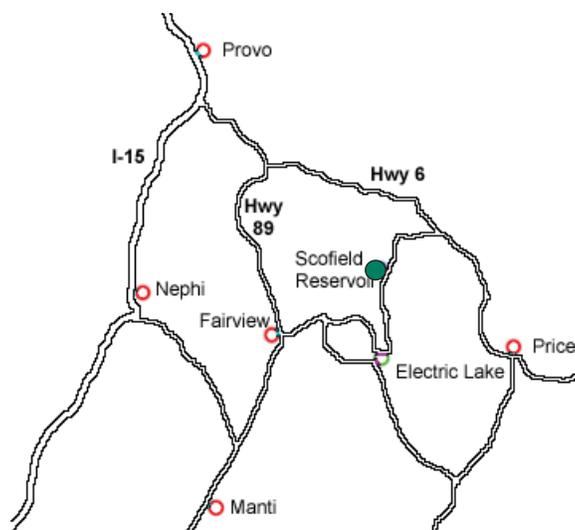
Although more research is needed to fully understand these relationships, some foresters are concerned that the level of spruce mortality has resulted in a near total loss of spruce seed source, and the result will be a long term loss of spruce in these forests.

Harvest Tour

Our Second Annual Timber Harvest Tour will take place on Oct. 11, 2003. From Fairview we will drive up and over the Energy Loop Scenic Byway, through the Manti La Sal National Forest, and cross over Skyline Drive to the south shore of Electric Lake. Come see the application of Utah's Forest Water Quality Guidelines, facilitated by foresters from USU Extension, the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands, and Emery County.

Schedule: Meet at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 11, 2003 at the Fairview Museum on the corner of First North and First East in Fairview (50 miles south of Provo, 20 miles north of Ephraim). Transportation will be provided from the museum.

An alternate meeting location for those traveling from eastern Utah is the large parking lot at Cleveland Reservoir, on the Energy Loop Scenic Byway just south of Electric Lake, at 9:20 a.m. Lunch and beverages will be provided, we are scheduled to return to the Fairview Museum by 2 p.m. Please RSVP Justin Black by Thursday Oct. 9 at 435-797-8116 or to jub@cc.usu.edu.



Distance to Electric Lake: (all paved roads)
From Provo- 70 miles
From Price- 50 miles
From Fairview- 20 miles



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Forest Landowner Education Program
College of Natural Resources
5230 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-5230

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For More Information:

Please contact Darren McAvoy at Utah State University regarding any of the information presented in this newsletter: 435-797-0560, 5230 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT 84322-5230, or darren.mcavoy@usu.edu.

State of Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands (DFF&SL) service foresters for your area can be contacted by calling 801-538-5555.

Ideas and written contributions to this newsletter are encouraged. Send your comments to the return address above, or call 435-797-0560, or email darren.mcavoy@usu.edu.

extension.usu.edu/forestry

COMING EVENTS:

- **Ecosystem Management Course**, Oct. 27-Nov. 7, 2003, Utah State University, Logan, 797-0423
- **Wilderness First Aid**, Nov. 22-23, 2003, Logan, 797-0423