

# THE News Note

## Forest Practices Program



### SUMMARY OF HARVEST UNIT SIZE LIMITATIONS

Under provisions of the Oregon Forest Practices Act, the Oregon Department of Forestry administers limits on the size of clear-cuts and similar types of harvest units. This summary briefly describes the conditions under which these requirements apply. By using this summary, operators and landowners can determine whether to further investigate the requirements and options under this statute (Forest Practices Act, ORS 527.740 and 527.750, revised 1996). Forestry Department offices can supply copies.

Harvest units are limited to 120 acres when so few trees will be left on the site that both of the following conditions will apply.

1. First, the remaining number of free to grow trees is low enough that reforestation will be required (Table A).
2. Second, the remaining number of free to grow trees 11 inch diameter (DBH) and larger will be low enough that wildlife trees and downed logs must be retained (Table B).

Traditional clear-cuts qualify for this acreage limit, along with some seed-tree and overstory removal harvests. Thinning operation acreages are not limited. The minimum remaining number of trees for these conditions are listed in Tables A and B below.



TABLE A

MINIMUM FREE TO GROW TREE STOCKING STANDARDS FOR SINGLE-STORY STANDS

\* NOTE: Basal area means the area of a cross section of a tree or group of trees at breast height, expressed in square feet. A 14 inch DBH tree is roughly equivalent to 1 square foot of basal area; an 11 inch DBH tree is equivalent to 0.66 square feet. When an area after harvest contains a mixture of free to grow seedlings, saplings, poles, and/or larger trees, the stocking in each size class can be weighted to determine if stocking is adequate. Refer to Forest Practices Note 2: Reforestation (1994) for the details.

| Site Productivity<br>Cubic Foot Site<br>Class | Seedlings (less<br>than 1 inch<br>diameter at<br>breast height<br>(DBH), or | Saplings<br>and poles<br>(1 to 10<br>inches DBH),<br>or | Trees 11 inches<br>and larger                |
|---|---|---|--|
| Site Class 1, 2,<br>and 3                     | 200 per acre,<br>or   | 120 trees per<br>acre, or                               | 80 square feet<br>of basal area*<br>per acre |
| Site Class 4<br>and 5                         | 125 per acre,<br>or   | 75 trees per<br>acre, or                                | 50 square feet<br>of basal area<br>per acre  |
| Site Class 6                                  | 100 per acre,<br>or   | 60 trees per<br>acre, or                                | 40 square feet<br>of basal area<br>per acre  |

**TABLE B**  
**MINIMUM REMAINING TREE STOCKING**  
**NOT REQUIRING WILDLIFE TREES,**  
**SNAGS, LOGS**

| Site Productivity<br>Cubic Foot Site<br>Class | Trees 11 inches<br>DBH, or | Basal Area of<br>Trees Larger<br>than 11 inches<br>DBH |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| Site Class 1, 2,<br>and 3                     | 50 trees per acre,<br>or   | 33 square feet<br>of basal area<br>per acre            |
| Site Class 4<br>and 5                         | 30 trees per acre,<br>or   | 20 square feet<br>of basal area<br>per acre            |
| Site Class 6                                  | 15 trees per acre,<br>or   | 10 square feet<br>of basal area<br>per acre            |

The combined acreage of two harvest units on the same ownership with borders closer than 300 feet is limited to 120 acres when the first unit harvested does not yet support an adequately stocked stand that:

- Has trees at least four feet tall, or
- Was planted or seeded at least four years ago and has trees now free to grow.

Exceptions to the unit size limitation are granted with prior written approval of the Forestry Department for certain types of salvage operations. The same applies to harvests that convert hardwood stands, containing less

than 80 square feet of basal area per acre of trees 11 inches diameter (DBH) and larger, to managed conifer or hardwood stands. Clear-cuts and other similar harvest units may also be allowed to be as large as 240 acres, or more in a few cases, under very specific conditions through an approved written plan. Such plans must demonstrate that the expanded unit size will produce overall better resource protection than the existing statutory provisions require. Rigorous review will be applied before approving any such plan.

The Forest Practices Forester at the local Oregon Department of Forestry office can answer detailed questions about harvest unit size limitations.