



# Oklahoma's Renewable Resources

Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources • Oklahoma State University

## Determining a Fair Price for Timber

One of the most common and yet most difficult tasks forest landowners face is determining a value for their forest resource. Stumpage value, or the value of standing trees, is important not only for the purpose of selling timber but also for the purpose of evaluating management options such as planting, thinning, and stand improvement.

Market prices reflect the value that knowledgeable and informed parties freely trading in an open market with many buyers and sellers have set for timber. Because market prices for stumpage are not formally reported in Oklahoma, as they are in many surrounding states, determining stumpage value can very frustrating for the forest landowner.

While stumpage prices are available for surrounding states, it is important to remember that these prices may not reflect the trends in your immediate area. The value of stumpage can be estimated using the following formula:

$$\text{Stumpage Price} = \text{delivered price} - [(\text{the cost of logging and transporting the product to the mill}) + (\text{the logger's profit})]$$

It is a relatively easy matter to find the price of delivered logs by calling concentration yards and sawmills in your area. The determination of logging and transportation costs is more difficult. This cost will vary from one logging operator to the next and from one timber stand to the next. For this reason, loggers may offer vastly different prices for different stands of timber. The following are some individual sale characteristics and their effects on logging and

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## OSU Research Gives Metal Fencing Thumbs Up

By Donald Stotts

Oklahoma State University research indicates landowners looking to replace fence lines should consider using all-metal fencing.

There is something of a misperception about metal fencing by some landowners, according to Terry Bidwell, OSU Cooperative Extension rangeland specialist.

"In the past, grassland fires burned up some landowners' wooden posts," Bidwell said. "When the landowners then tried to re-stretch old metal fencing onto new posts, it broke. This led to some misperceptions that the fire somehow had damaged the metal fencing."

In actuality, recent OSU research indicates the problem lies not in fire but in natural corrosion.

"This is good news for landowners who practice prescribed burning and who were concerned about it

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## Oklahoma Christmas Tree Association Holds Summer Meeting

By Bill Ross

Hot weather and cold iced tea don't normally come to mind when we think of Christmas trees, but the fact is that Christmas tree farming is a year-round vocation involving liberal perspiration.

This year's summer meeting of the Oklahoma Christmas Tree Association (OCTA), held June 12 at the farm of Bill and Paula Jacobs at Owasso, provided many examples of the planning, labor, expense and business savvy needed for success in the Christmas tree industry.

Oklahoma's Christmas tree growers face an array of challenges, and the OCTA provides a way to address common concerns.

Drought, insects and diseases are a continual threat. Shearing and manicuring needed to produce a good product require substantial labor and investment. Also needed is business and financial planning and adequate insurance.

The Oklahoma Christmas Tree Association is an excellent resource for Christmas tree growers, whether new or veteran.



OCTA members watch a demonstration of shearing techniques at a recent association meeting.

Most of OCTA's members market their trees by the "choose and cut" method. Oklahoma's choose-and-cut farms usually feature Virginia pine. Scotch pine, Austrian pine, eastern white pine and some other exotic species also are available in some locations. As the name implies, the customers go to the farm and choose their trees alive in the field. The trees are then cut, shaken to remove dead needles, and baled. This guarantees a tree that is fresh and will last for weeks if cared for properly. It also provides an enjoyable experience for the entire family. Hot chocolate and hay

rides for the kids, special programs for school children, Christmas greenery and tree ornaments as well as berry-picking in the summer are some of the added services and products provided by many of OCTA's member farmers. Many veteran Christmas tree farmers report repeat customers who have made the annual trip to a choose-and-cut farm into a family tradition.

Persons interested in going into the Christmas tree business will find many helpful growers and a wealth of expertise in the OCTA. People who would like to enjoy the experience of choosing their own tree where it's growing, rather than a hot, noisy parking lot, should also contact the OCTA for a listing of nearby growers. OCTA's web page may be viewed at [www.okchristmastrees.com](http://www.okchristmastrees.com). Literature will be available at OCTA booths at both State Fairs. Further information may be had by contacting OCTA President Robert Bierschenk at (405) 771-4373 or Extension Forester Bill Ross at (405) 744-3854, [rossw@okstate.edu](mailto:rossw@okstate.edu), 008C Agriculture Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078.

### FIP's Fate in Question

Although the 1996 Farm Bill extended the Forestry Incentives Program through the year 2002, the program may not be funded in the coming fiscal year.

FIP received no funding in budget proposals submitted by both the President and the House of Representatives. The senate's proposed budget included FIP funding of 6.3 million dollars nationwide. This proposed amount is consistent with funding levels which have been approved in recent years.

The matter has now moved into committee where a final decision will be made.

FIP is a nationwide program available in counties the U.S. Forest Service has designated as potentially suitable for timber production. The program provides federal cost shares to qualified forest landowners for a variety of forest conservation practices. These practices include tree planting, timber stand improvement and site preparation for regeneration.

In addition to helping assure a reliable supply of timber for forest industry, FIP's forest maintenance and reforestation activities have provided numerous natural resource benefits, including reduced wind and soil erosion, enhanced water quality, and improved wildlife habitat. In the recent past, Oklahoma has received approximately \$55,000 annually for FIP projects. If you would like more information on the FIP program, contact your local NRCS Field Office or OSU Extension Forestry at (405) 744-6432.

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## Price *Continued from page 1*

transportation costs, and ultimately on the value of stumpage.

*Volume of the sale* will have a dramatic effect on stumpage prices. There are fixed costs associated with the start-up of a harvest operation, which must be recovered. Larger sales allow the fixed costs to be spread over more units than small-volume sales. If all else is equal, large-volume sales will always yield higher stumpage prices than small-volume sales.

*Tree Species* can have a dramatic effect on offered prices. Pine and walnut are used to produce very different end-products and, therefore, yield vastly different delivered prices. Species that are in short demand or that have high-value end products should command a higher offered price.

*Quality of the timber* in the sale area will also affect the stumpage price. High-quality logs, select species, and high-value product classes will yield higher delivered prices at the mill and, therefore, will have higher stumpage values. Also, high-quality products tend to be in short demand and receive more interested bidders, which can raise prices. Low-quality products may receive few interested bidders, which may reduce the offered price.

*Size of individual trees* within the sale will affect stumpage prices in two ways. First, as previously described, larger trees may have higher quality products. Second, larger trees may have lower associated handling costs for the logger, as he will have to handle fewer trees to harvest the same volume. If all else is equal, sales with large trees generally yield higher stumpage prices than those with small trees.

*Distance to markets* will effect the offered price due to increased operating costs on the part of the logger. As haul distances increase, stumpage prices decrease.

*Presence and condition of access roads* will affect the price of stumpage on individual tracts. Haul roads are expensive to construct and maintain. In many instances, the construction of these roads will add significant value to the residual stand and property. This increase in property and timber value should be considered if roads will be constructed or improved by the timber buyer. Roads that are already

present will increase the value of stumpage if they are in usable condition for large trucks, and if they are properly located for efficient removal of the timber to be sold. Tracts that are located close to all-weather roads will generally receive higher prices than more remotely located tracts.

*Logging difficulty and conditions* will impact the price paid for stumpage on individual tracts. Areas with excessive slopes, rocky or highly erodible soils, and limitations due to drainage or flooding will receive a lower price than those areas without these restrictions. Tracts that can be logged during wet periods should receive higher prices since they can be logged when timber may be in short supply. Restrictions placed on the logger by the seller, such as limited access points, maintenance of roads, hours of operation, and duration of the harvest activities, may reduce the offered price.

*Market conditions*, or the supply and demand for timber, in your area will affect the price paid for stumpage at a given point in time. Log prices, and therefore stumpage prices, fluctuate on a daily basis. History has shown that timber prices will go up. Timber, unlike grains and other farm commodities, can be stored for extended periods. If the market is soft and there is no dire need for capital, a landowner can easily wait a few months for the market to again rise. Also, contracts that allow extended periods for removal of timber may allow the purchaser to ride out a slow market period and receive a higher offered price.

These individual components combine and interact to determine the costs associated with an individual logging operation, and, therefore, the price offered for stumpage. Generally, a landowner can expect to receive from 33 to 66 percent of the delivered price for standing timber. However, the only sure way to determine the fair market value for your individual tract is to offer it for sale. When selling timber, you should contact as many potential bidders as possible in order to receive the highest price. It is not uncommon for bids on a single sale to vary by as much as 60 percent.

Whether the offered price is acceptable to you will depend on the values you have placed on your timber. These values could include recreational opportunities, aesthetic beauty, social benefits, and future investment potential. Before beginning the sale process, consult

***Before beginning the sale process, consult with a professional forester and develop a management plan that includes long-term goals and objectives.***

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## Forests and Wildlife Focus of Youth Camp

The 43rd Annual Oklahoma Youth Forestry and Wildlife Camp was held June 14-19, at Beaver's Bend State Park near Broken Bow, Okla. The camp is a residential camp for youth ages 13-16 with an interest in Oklahoma's natural resources.

This year's camp had the participation of 36 youth and nine adult volunteers from 26 counties across the state. The week provided campers an opportunity to learn about Oklahoma's forest industries and the varied forest resources of beautiful southeastern Oklahoma.

Campers spent each day learning about natural resources from the perspective of professional foresters, wildlife managers and other natural resource personnel.



Campers explore habitats and learn the importance of diversity and niche during a multiple resources tour.

Campers gained insight into the dynamics of forest and wildlife communities through instruction in tree identification, orienteering, tree measurements, urban forestry, wildlife identification and management, wood products, fire management, soil science and stream ecology. Campers also explored various natural resource careers by spending an afternoon "on the job" with a professional natural resource manager.

The Oklahoma Youth Forestry and Wildlife Camp is made possible by generous contributions from Oklahoma's forest industries, private citizens and organizations with a stake in Oklahoma's natural

resources.

Instruction was provided by personnel from The Chickasaw National Recreation Area, Forest Heritage Center, Georgia Pacific, McCoy Tree Surgery, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture - Forestry Services, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Oklahoma State University, U.S. Forest Service, and Weyerhaeuser Company.

The 2000 camp is scheduled for June 4-9, 2000, at the same location. If you know of someone age 13-16 who has an interest in natural resources, contact your Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service county office after March 3, 2000 for registration materials, or visit the Oklahoma Youth Forestry and Wildlife Camp Web Site at [agweb.okstate.edu/fwa/yfwcpage.html](http://agweb.okstate.edu/fwa/yfwcpage.html)

### New Publications Available

If you're interested in wildlife foods, then the most recent OSU Extension Facts, titled "A Checklist of Prairie, Shrubland, and Forest Understory Plants of Oklahoma," by Dr. Terry Bidwell, Dr. Ron Masters and Dr. Ron Tyrrel is for you. The publication identifies some 206 plants and classifies them by their plant characteristics and value to deer, quail, turkey and cattle. OSU Extension Facts F-2872 is available at your county Extension office or by calling OSU Extension Forestry at (405)744-6432.

NE<sup>1</sup>, S<sup>0</sup>, SE<sup>1</sup>, Sec. 2, T.18 N., R. 6 W., I.M.. If you think this looks like some cryptic code used by the CIA during the Cold War, you should read OSU Extension Facts F-9407, "Legal Land Descriptions in Oklahoma" by Dr. Darrel Kletke. The Fact sheet gives a good description of the rectangular survey system, which is used for all legal transactions within the state including sales, leases and liens. To obtain a copy of this useful publication, visit your county Extension office or contact OSU Extension Forestry at (405) 744-6432.

Both of these publications and many more are available online at [agweb.okstate.edu/pearl](http://agweb.okstate.edu/pearl)

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## Okfuskee County Team Captures State WHEP Title

More than 45 participants from seven Oklahoma Counties competed in the State 4-H Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Contest held May 22, 1999 at Lake Carl Blackwell near Stillwater, Okla.

An Okfuskee County team consisting of Sara Ann Elliott and Robert Vansant Jr. of Henryetta and J.R. Oaks of Weleetka captured top honors in the senior division. The Okfuskee County went on to finish seventh in a field of 27 teams at the national competition held in Manhattan, Kan.

The 4-H wildlife habitat evaluation program is a nationally recognized and award-winning program that teaches youth the principles of wildlife conservation and leadership development skills. The competition consists of three activities: wildlife food identification, interpretation of habitat from aerial photographs and prescribing wildlife management practices.

The state 4-H wildlife habitat evaluation program is supported by OSU Extension Forestry, State Chapter of Quail Unlimited, Oklahoma Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Payne County Audubon Society, and Grand National Quail Foundation.

For more information about the program, please contact your local county Extension office or Ron Masters, Extension Wildlife Specialist, Department of Forestry, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-6432.

## Oklahoma Deer Hunters Reap Record Harvest

Despite poor weather conditions and low harvest numbers during the 1998 primitive arms season, Oklahoma hunters were able to harvest a record 80,008 deer during the 1998 combined archery, primitive and gun seasons.

Near perfect weather and high rut activity during the gun season played a major role in the increased harvest level for this past year.

The new record more than doubles the record harvest of 1988, which was less than 40,000.

Does accounted for over a third of the 1998 harvest with hunters taking 28,871. Hunters also took 51,137 bucks during the season.

*See Harvest on page 7*

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## Fort Towson Youths Compete in National Forestry Contest

The 4-H Forestry Judging Team from Fort Towson, Okla., traveled to Weston, W.Va., in early August to compete in the National 4-H Forestry Judging Contest.

The team, coached by Alicia Brents, consists of Cass Davis, Jesica Cochnauer, Ashley Hitch and Tandra Nowell.

The Fort Towson team earned the right to compete nationally by winning the State Forestry Judging Contest held at Robber's Cave State Park in April.

During the contest, 63 youths from across eastern Oklahoma competed in insect and disease identification, tree identification, compass and pacing, a forestry quiz and forest practices.

The team placed eighth in a field of 20 teams from across the country. In addition to the great team performance, Cass Davis received the National Leadership Award while at the competition.

The Oklahoma Youth Forestry Judging Contests are sponsored by Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture - Forestry Services, Eastern Oklahoma State College, Ouachita Mountains RC&D, Cherokee Hills RC&D, Oklahoma Forestry Association, Oklahoma Conservation Districts and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For more information on the Oklahoma Youth Forestry Judging Contest, contact Bill Ross, Extension Forestry Specialist, at (405) 744-3854 or by e-mail at [rossw@okstate.edu](mailto:rossw@okstate.edu)

## OWOA Fall Meeting Scheduled for October 9

The Oklahoma Woodland Owner's Association has announced that their annual meeting will be held October 9, 1999, at the Forest Heritage Center in Beaver's Bend State Park near Broken Bow, Oklahoma.

The meeting will consist of a business meeting at 9:00 a.m., followed by presentations by Steve Mattax and John Norris, both with the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture - Forestry Services.

The afternoon will include field trips to either Weyerhaeuser's Wright City Sawmill or Georgia Pacific's Sawmill near Idabel. For more information contact Patt Nelson at (918)743-0458.

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## Master Woodland Owner Program Begins

A group of about 20 Oklahoma woodland owners and county Extension educators has begun a Master Woodland Owner (MWO) Program.

The program is directed by Dr. Bill Ross of Oklahoma State University Extension Forestry and is made possible by grants from Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Southern Region Training Consortium and Oklahoma Department of Agriculture - Forestry Services.

The purpose of the MWO program is to train a cadre of leaders among Oklahoma's non-industrial forest landowners who will themselves become a resource to other landowners.

In exchange for about 100 hours of training in ten sessions held over about a year, MWO participants will return an equal amount of volunteer time on behalf of Oklahoma's private woodland owners.

Making resources available for the creation of science-based demonstration areas, writing articles for local papers and helping lead field tours are just some of the possible ways to fulfill the obligation.



Participants learn to identify common trees of Oklahoma at a recent MWO program in Sallisaw.

The purpose of such a program is not merely to educate but to create "lay" educators among opinion-leading landowners who serve as conduits of innovations in forest management to other landowners.

Training will emphasize forest management that is economically and ecologically sustainable and so-

cially acceptable. Similar programs in other states have been successful in promoting sustainable forestry practices.

The program began concurrently with 1999's Timber Utilization Conference. Since then, a tree identification clinic was held in Sallisaw. Other sessions will include pine and hardwood management, Best Management Practices, conflict resolution and contemporary issues, wildlife management and estate planning.

The training phase of the program is scheduled to end in the summer of 2000.

## Forestry Community Turns Out to Support Children's Medical Research

The Oklahoma Forestry Association recently raised \$9,775 by sponsoring a Log a Load for Kids event at the Owa-Chito Festival of the Forest held at Beaver's Bend State Park.

Georgia Pacific and OFA each donated a load of logs, which were auctioned off to benefit the Children's Miracle Network.

The first load of logs was purchased by Weyerhaeuser Company for \$4,150 and a second load was purchased by Wood Lumber Company for \$2,500. An additional \$1,125 was raised through donations from forest industry, forest landowners and other individuals.

Log a Load for Kids is a national fund raising opportunity for loggers and other forest industry personnel in conjunction with forestry organizations and associations to raise money for local Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

The funds raised by the OFA will go to the Children's Medical Research Institute in Oklahoma City.

Although this is the first year for OFA to participate in the nationally recognized program, it appears as though they are off to a great start.

Paul Fuller, Executive Director for OFA, says that the organization plans to continue the project and make it an annual event.

OFA would like to thank the entire forestry community for supporting this worthwhile cause.

If you would like more information on Log a Load for Kids in Oklahoma, contact Paul Fuller at (580)286-3970.

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## **Price** *Continued from page 3*

with a professional forester and develop a management plan that includes long-term goals and objectives. A professional forester can also assist you in estimating the expected value of a sale and determining whether the offered price is reasonable. For more information on selling timber, consult OSU Extension Facts F-5035, "Selling Your Timber," or contact OSU Extension Forestry at (405) 744-6432.

## **Fences** *Continued from page 1*

affecting the service life of their fencing," Bidwell said.

One time-saving management application of this recently discovered fact is that landowners no longer need to construct fire breaks inside their fence line, as many have done in the past when preparing to do prescribed burns.

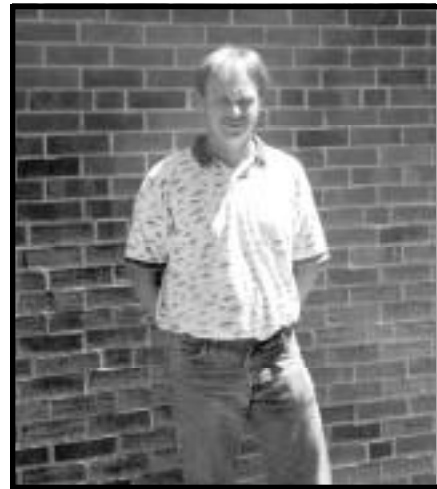
"I've actually worked with landowners who decided not to prescribe burn for no other reason than the extra time and expense they thought was needed to protect their fences," Bidwell said. "Bottom line is grassland fires do not reduce the service life of metal fences, as long as wooden posts are not used."

The Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station experiments on grassland fires and metal fencing was conducted at the Cross Timbers Experimental Range near Stillwater. The research was led by OSU rangeland scientist Dave Engle and John Weir, Cross Timbers range superintendent.

"No studies, to our knowledge, have been conducted on the effects of fire on barbed wire before this one," Bidwell said. "We disproved a few notions that some people had on grassland fires having a negative effect on metal fencing."

Bidwell said the study focused on the effect varying fire frequencies had on the breaking strength and zinc coating of traditional two-point, double-stranded barbed wire.

The OAES is the statewide research arm of OSU's Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.



**Kenneth L. Hitch**

## **RREA Extension Specialist Joins OSU Forestry Department**

Kenneth Hitch has joined the faculty of the Forestry Department at Oklahoma State University as RREA Extension Specialist.

He is a graduate of OSU, having received a Bachelor's in forestry 1991 and a Master's degree in forest management 1994.

Since leaving OSU, he has worked as Research Coordinator for the Plantation Management Research Cooperative at the University of Georgia and as State Utilization Forester for the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture - Forestry Services. Most recently, he worked with the Ouachita Mountains RC&D on economic development and environmental education projects.

Kenneth's new duties will include Youth and 4-H programs, Extension outreach, and multiple resource programs.

He can be reached at (405) 744-5442 or by e-mail at [hitchk@okstate.edu](mailto:hitchk@okstate.edu).

## **Harvest** *Continued from page 5*


Of the bucks harvested, 12 were large enough to be eligible for recognition from the Boone & Crockett Club. Delaware County produced the largest buck of 1998. Chuck Tullis of Grove took a nontypical scoring 238 2/8 points on the Boone & Crockett scale. Pittsburg County produced seven Cy Curtis bucks to retain its title as the top trophy-producing county in the state. Osage County produced 4,185 deer to lead the state in number of deer harvested.

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Renewable Resources Managing Editor      Kenneth Hitch  
Agricultural Communications Editor      Jeff Miller

Cooperative Extension forest, wildlife, and range specialists are available to assist your land management education needs. Feel free to contact them at the phone number or address listed below. Thank you for your interest in Oklahoma's renewable resources.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Hitch, RREA Extension Specialist

State Office:  
008C Agricultural Hall, OSU, Stillwater, OK 74078 • (405) 744-6432  
[http://www.okstate.edu/OSU\\_Ag/asnr/fore/ext/exten01.htm](http://www.okstate.edu/OSU_Ag/asnr/fore/ext/exten01.htm)

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## Upcoming Events

For more information on upcoming events call Extension Forestry and Wildlife @ (405) 744-6432.

**Range Management Workshop** - Date TBA in Grady County - Bus tour to the Noble Foundation will cover many aspects of range management. For information, contact Ron Justice with the OCES at (405) 224-2216.

**Range Management Workshop** - August 19, 1999 at Taloga, Okla. Will cover plant identification, grazing systems management, and wildlife management. Contact Trina Curtis or Brooke Taylor with the NRCS at (580) 328-5331, ext. 102.

**Riparian/Range Management Workshop** - Sept./Oct., 1999 in Tillman County. Will cover the management of riparian areas. Contact Mary Stoll with NRCS at (580) 335-2817.

**Oklahoma Woodland Owners Association Annual Meeting** - October 9, 1999 beginning at 9:00 am in the Forest Heritage Center at Beaver's Bend State Park near Broken Bow, Okla. For information, contact Patt Nelson President OWOA at (918)743-0458.

**Oklahoma Redcedar Association Annual Meeting** - October 30, 1999 Geary, Okla. Contact Carl Bode at (580) 893-2383.



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