



FORESTRY

A Guide For Geauga County Landowners

Interested in Harvesting Your Timber?

Landowners or loggers are encouraged to submit a Notice of intent (NOI) to Geauga SWCD to inform us of some basic information prior to beginning the harvest.

By submitting a NOI, Geauga SWCD can simply be informed of the location, responsible parties/forester, schedule, acres to be harvested, and stream crossings.

After submitting an NOI, one may also be inclined to submit a Forestry Pollution Prevention Plan (FP3) to Geauga SWCD. By submitting this, Geauga SWCD can be made aware of what Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented (if necessary) as well as the type of harvest and what machinery is being used.

Ohio's Forestry Pollution Abatement Program

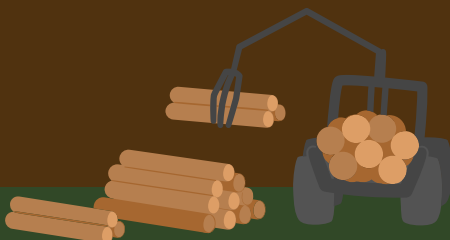
Geauga SWCD works closely with the Ohio Division of Forestry when dealing with incorrect logging practices. Both entities have legal authority to investigate complaints alleging violations of Ohio's Pollution Abatement Rules and Standards.

Forestry pollution is defined in the Ohio Revised Code as the "failure to use management or conservation practices in silvicultural operations to abate wind or water erosion of the soil or to abate the degradation of waters of the state by soil sediment, including attached substances, from silvicultural operations."

Generally, silviculture related complaints can be solved by implementing BMP's if they are absent, or installing additional BMPs.

BMPs in forestry are both encouraged and required, to be the most effective means of preventing or reducing agricultural forestry pollution sources.

When individuals choose to send in an NOI or FP3, Geauga SWCD can already be aware, in the case of a complaint being made, if a logging operation has BMPs in place and who to contact to resolve any issues.



Forestry Related Inquiries?

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Division of Forestry is the best entity to reach out to for anything forestry related. For more in depth questions regarding harvesting timber or forestry programs, the Division of Forestry will be able to provide their expansive knowledge on the topic at hand. The Division of Forestry will also be able to put you into contact with a certified State Forester, who can offer their expertise on harvesting and forest health.

Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District is happy to provide assistance on what our expertise allows when it comes to forestry related topics.



Common BMP's Used Before, During, and After Logging

- Filter strips between perennial streams and roads, landings, and other areas of disturbance.
- Constructing skid trails at grades of 20% or less
- Graveled haul roads to reduce mud tracking onto road
- Constructing landings as small as practically possible
- Water bar installation

Forestry Program Overview

Call Before You Cut

This is a multi-state initiative to assist landowners in effectively managing their land for both the good of the environment and the landowner. This emphasizes the importance of working with a qualified professional forester before cutting down trees, no matter the reason why a landowner wants to cut. Receiving advice from a qualified forester can not only benefit what is left of your wooded lot after harvesting, but also provide co-benefits like wildlife habitat diversity, hunting quality, land value, and overall forest health and conservation.

Contact ODNR Division of Forestry - (877)-424-8288 - for more information.

Current Agricultural Use Value

Although administered by the Ohio Department of Taxation, this program applies to farmlands devoted exclusively to commercial agriculture. Growing and harvesting timber does count as an agricultural practice through this program. This program is meant to lower property taxes for working farms by evaluating the land for its current use, rather than its potential future use. This can be extremely useful when examining a piece of land for farming versus a million dollar shopping center.

To be eligible for this program, the land must have 10 or more acres exclusively used for commercial agriculture. If an individual has less than 10 acres but is still interested in this program, the farm must produce an average yearly income of at least \$2,500.

Ohio Forest Tax Law

Administered through the ODNR Division of Forestry, this program offers a 50% tax reduction on managed forested acres. Through this program, "managed" means that landowners are agreeing to manage their forested land for the commercial production of timber.

Concerns may come from homeowners about what their forested lot will look like after a harvesting. When a certified forester is in charge of what happens to your land, there should be no worries about how your lot will look afterwards. Foresters will strategically choose what trees to cut, which to leave alone, as well as conduct maintenance to keep the general health of the forest in tiptop shape.

Although an area of trees may not look like much, wooded areas can take hundreds of years to end up at the point they are now, so foresters strive to keep as many trees present as possible so as to reinforce a positive growth pattern for the next century.

Q & A

I am planning on doing a 1+ acre harvest, should I let anyone know?

If you are interested in doing any kind of timber harvest, please contact your local SWCD to submit an NOI or THP or the Division of Forestry for consulting advice.

A private buyer is reaching out to me because they'd like to harvest an area of trees on my lot and are providing great estimates for a payout. Should I do it?

Before anyone begins harvesting timber on your property, you want to be sure that they are thinking with your best interest in mind. Will they strategically cut trees so as to not leave behind the undesirable and/or sick trees? Will this harvest benefit your land or potentially lower its value? Have you compared other potential offers on the desired harvest? Will they restore the disturbed areas upon finishing?

If you're receiving estimates that you think sound great, call the Division of Forestry before you cut! They could provide you with valuable information regarding a potential harvest and if the offer you are receiving is not from a reputable source, they can point you in the right direction.

I am planning on clearing a parcel for future construction purposes, will I need to submit a plan?

Yes, a clearing plan must be submitted to Geauga SWCD if a landowner desires to begin parcel clearing operations by mechanized means. Approval must be granted through the form of a Water Management and Sediment Control (WMSC) Plan for soil-disturbing clearing activities on a site by Geauga SWCD.