

## What is My Timber Worth?

A timber harvest typically is one of the greatest sources of income a forest landowner receives from the property. If done properly, a harvest can provide an economic return, minimize the environmental and aesthetic impacts, and improve wildlife habitat and recreational access. Since timber harvesting occurs only once or twice in the lifetime of many forest landowners, it is vital that the landowner use all the information and resources available to make sound decisions. But, how is a landowner to know “What is my timber worth?”

### Competitive Timber Market

It is said the timber market is purely competitive---where the landowner can sell timber to anyone willing to buy it. However, for the market to be purely competitive, it must have several characteristics.

- There are many buyers and sellers so that each buys or sells a small fraction of the market. **Mostly true.**
- Firms produce a homogeneous product, e.g., hardwood dimension lumber, pulp, post, etc. **True.**
- Firms are free to move. **True, though capital costs and timber supply can limit mobility.**
- All market participants are fully informed about the price. **Not always.**

Forest landowners usually sell timber as stumpage, which is the value of the standing trees. Stumpage prices

fluctuate with market conditions. Because of their limited experience in timber sales, landowners may not be aware of the current market price of stumpage. Since timber usually is not a perishable product, the landowner should consider stumpage prices and their trends and work with a professional forester to schedule sales to take advantage of this information.

### New Resource for Maryland/Delaware

Maryland and Delaware forest landowners now have a new resource to help them make timber harvest decisions. A quarterly report on stumpage prices debuted this winter and included the results of 149 timber sales across the two states. The report lists the range of prices received and the volume of sales by species and products. Because of the uniqueness of the timber markets within the Maryland-Delaware area, sales also are separated into four geographical regions: Eastern Shore, southern, central, and western.

The majority of the prices in the report are for saw-timber and veneer products timber and are reported in dollars per thousand board feet of stumpage. Species include oak, ash, cherry, sugar maple, tulip poplar, beech, loblolly pine, and other hardwoods and softwoods. For each species the following information is reported: the number of reports; an average value; and the range of values. In some categories there may be a small number of reports. Other prices reported are for hardwood and softwood poles, fuelwood, pulpwood, and biomass.

The Maryland/Delaware stumpage price report is based primarily on timber sales reported by consulting foresters and public agencies. It is intended to describe general trends in the timber market and cannot take into account specific factors that might affect individual timber tracts and future

markets. Therefore, it is to serve *only as a guide*.

### Factors Affecting Timber Value

Depending on the location, any of the factors listed below can have a significant effect on the stumpage price. This explains how the range of value for stumpage of a particular species in a certain region can vary widely.

- Quality of timber
- Timber species
- Volume of harvest
- Market demand
- Distance to market
- Woods labor costs
- End product
- Season of year
- Insurance costs
- Average size of trees to cut
- Volume to cut per acre
- Distance to public roads
- Logging terrain, accessibility
- Type of logging equipment
- Landowner requirements
- Landowner knowledge of market value
- Performance bond requirements

### Your Partners in Timber Sales

While the report can provide information such as dollars per thousand board feet, the actual volume of timber harvested and of what species should depend on your objectives. Selecting trees based solely on diameter or the wishes of the buyer is not usually in the best interest of the landowner.

It is wise to first contact your state forester to develop a forest stewardship plan for your property before you initiate a harvest. This will provide the roadmap for your future activities and allow you to initiate timber harvests that will consider other values such as wildlife, aesthetics, and recreation.

**Maryland Stumpage Price Survey Results**  
October – December 1999

orted prices paid for standing timber during October – December. Prices for ¼ inch scale). Pulpwood and fuelwood are reported in \$ per cord, biomass reported. Reporting is voluntary, and this is not a complete record of sale activity. Total responses, 38; total number of timber sales, 149; and total sales in a totals. Sale characteristics:

	#	%	Reported by	#	%	Buyer/Seller	#
Consulting foresters	17	45	Buyer	1			
Public lands foresters	3	8	Seller	36			
Industrial foresters	3	8	No data	17			

To learn about the factors involved in a timber sale on your property, obtain the best price for your timber, and maintain and improve the future health and potential of your forest, include these three people working together:

- you, the forest landowner;
- a licensed professional forester to help you determine what trees to harvest and to work with the logger; and
- the logger who harvests the trees.

### STUMPAGE PRICE DEFINITIONS

**Stumpage price:** monetary amount a landowner receives for standing trees

**Thousand Board Feet** - stumpage prices for sawtimber are expressed in this term, also abbreviated as MBF. One board foot is one foot square and one inch thick.

**Dbh:** diameter at breast height (4.5 feet from the ground)

**Sawtimber:** trees typically >12" dbh, having at least one harvestable 8-foot log; cut into boards, railroad ties, and other dimensional products at a sawmill

**Veneer:** quality timber typically of larger diameter, from the bottom (butt) log of the tree, that has no branches or imperfections; veneer is sliced at a special mill

**Fuelwood:** timber sold for firewood markets; includes poorer quality trees, dead trees, and tree tops

**Pulpwood:** trees used to produce paper products

**Biomass:** trees burned for power generation

It is not wise to sell timber to someone who approaches you unsolicited until you learn about the market and find a professional to help you. A list of licensed professional foresters in Maryland is available from the county Extension office, the local Department of Natural Resources Forest Services office, or [www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/oflists/caif.html](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/oflists/caif.html). In Delaware, call the Forest Service at 302-739-4811. Consultant foresters typically are paid on a commission basis and work as your agent representing your interests in the sale of forest products. The commission paid usually is recovered easily through the increased income of the sale. Industrial foresters work for a specific mill.

Starting this year, the Maryland-Delaware stumpage price report is being compiled three times per year by Maryland Cooperative Extension. It is funded by the MD Department of Agriculture, MD DNR Forest Service, Delaware Department of Agriculture-Forest Service, and Maryland Cooperative Extension. Contact your county Extension office [www.agnr.umd.edu/ces/cooffices.html](http://www.agnr.umd.edu/ces/cooffices.html) or your county DNR forester for a copy. If your timber is in a county bordering Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania stumpage price report may be helpful: [www.cas.psu.edu/docs/casdept/forest/tmr/tmr.htm](http://www.cas.psu.edu/docs/casdept/forest/tmr/tmr.htm).

### Branching Out

Vol. 8, No. 2, Summer 2000

Editors: Jonathan Kays, Vera Mae Schultz, Denni Johnson  
Contributors: Gary Allen, Ken Gibbs; photo by Ken Gibbs  
**Supported by the Maryland Tree Farm Committee**

\*\*\*\*\*

Published quarterly and distributed to more than 4,500 woodland owners, resource professionals, and others interested in forest stewardship. For a free subscription or to send news items, dates, and comments, phone 301-432-2767 x310; fax 301-432-4089; e-mail [vs12@umail.umd.edu](mailto:vs12@umail.umd.edu); or mail to Maryland Cooperative Extension, 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville MD 21756. Deadlines are the 10th of January, April, July, and October.

The sponsoring agencies' programs are open to all citizens without regard to race, color, sex, or physical ability.

# Volunteers Wanted

Every year thirty people in Maryland are selected to receive intensive training in forest and wildlife management. In return, they practice sound forest stewardship and share their knowledge with neighbors and others.

The all expenses-paid training is through the Coverts (*kuh-verts*) Project, sponsored by the Maryland Cooperative Extension and the Ruffed Grouse Society. The three-day training includes classroom and field experiences. Participants also receive many publications that supplement their learning and serve as a reference for their outreach activities.

Maryland forest landowners and others who work with landowners are invited to apply. Training will be September 22-26 at Shepherd's Spring Retreat Center, Sharpsburg. To apply, contact Cindy Mason, 301-432-2767 x301 or [ct11@umail.umd.edu](mailto:ct11@umail.umd.edu). Applications are due June 27.



## Task Force Collects Data

According to data gathered by the Maryland Forestry Task Force, the state loses about 14,000 acres of forest lands annually. Collecting this data is one of the five areas receiving attention by the Task Force. One of the biggest's challenges for the group is assessing the financial impact of the forest products industry on the state's economy.

A February interim report of the Task Force included 24 recommendations for the viability of the forest products industry and for a program to promote the stewardship of the state's private forest landowners. Among the recommendations are funds for forest landowner education through Cooperative Extension and the Department of Natural Resources.

The Maryland Forestry Task Force was appointed for two years in February 1998 by Governor Glendening. Its work has been extended until December 2000. Forest landowners are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings of the Task Force or express their views to chair Gary Allen, 410-267-8598 or [gallenbay@aol.com](mailto:gallenbay@aol.com).



**Correction:** A table on page 2 of the last Branching Out contained an error. The correct table is printed below. We sincerely apologize for the error.

**If a tree that yields a log 8 inches x 16 feet is allowed to grow 1 inch in diameter, it adds 1.5 cubic feet.**  
**If a tree that yields a log 14 inches x 16 feet is allowed to grow 1 inch in diameter, it adds 2.5 cubic feet.**  
**An inch of growth on a larger tree adds more value than an inch of growth on a smaller tree.**

**Allegany High School environmental students help plant pine seedlings on the farm of Roy and Mary Lou Shryock.**

## Tree Farmer of the Year

Roy and Mary Lou Shryock, Allegany County, are Maryland's 2000 Tree Farmer of the Year. The Shryocks manage their tree farm for recreation, wildlife, and timber while also educating youth in forestry practices.

In the 17 years the farm has been a certified Tree Farm, the Shryocks have planted or reforested more than 70 acres in loblolly pine and hardwoods. With the assistance of professional foresters from Westvaco Corporation, they have developed a forest management plan, conducted prescribed burns, released regenerated crop trees, harvested hardwoods and pines twice, and maintained the interior road system.

Others have benefitted from the Shryocks' forest stewardship. Each year the Allegany High School Environmental Class has an educational tour of the property and plants five acres of pine. Although more trees could be planted each year, the number is limited so more students will have the experience. Friends and neighbors are allowed to hunt the Tree Farm and provide some security for the property since the Shryocks live in Reading, Pennsylvania.

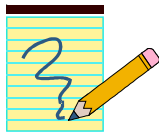
Mr. Shryock retired from the Soil Conservation Service in Pennsylvania, having begun his career in Maryland's Allegany County. Located between Oldtown and Flintstone, the Tree Farm has been in the family since the mid-1800s. With the involvement of the second and third generations, there are plans to "keep it in the family." The Shryocks find satisfaction in their forest management and over the years enjoy seeing the effects of practices they implement. They were nominated by Westvaco forester Ken Gibbs.

The Shryocks were to be honored at the annual Tree Farm meeting, June 15, in Easton. Selected as county 2000 Tree Farmers of the Year are Charles Abell, Charles; Robert Frazer Jr., St. Mary's; Mr. and Mrs. Larry Sharpe, Frederick; and the Harford County 4-H Camp.



# GPS More Accurate

If you use the Global Positioning System (GPS) in your forest management activities, May 1, 2000 was a historic day for you. On that day, the U.S. government removed a degradation feature known as Selective Availability (SA) in the GPS network. The feature introduced random errors in satellite positioning and was a defense mechanism. With the removal of SA, GPS is up to ten times more accurate for civilian use. Now computed locations have an accuracy of 20 to 30 feet. GPS is used by forest landowners for land management, timber sales, and even for locating a hunting stand or where they left the truck. For some dramatic illustrations of the effect of this change, look at <http://www.igeb.gov/sa/diagram.shtml>.



## Take Note

- **Maryland-Delaware Stumpage Price Report.** Available from your County Extension office.
- **When a Landowner Adopts a Riparian Buffer—Benefits and Costs,** Maryland Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet 774. Available from your County Extension office or <http://www.agnr.umd.edu/ces/>.
- **Farming the Forest for Specialty Products.** Recently-published proceedings from 1998 Minnesota conference. Contact 612-624-4296 or <http://www.cnr.umn.edu/FR/cinram>.
- Computer software to estimate value of timber and timberlands. Download free from <http://www.cfr.msstate.edu/products/software/forval.html>.
- Forestry web page: <http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/forestrypage>.

---

**Branching Out** Vol. 8, No. 2 - Summer 2000

See page 2 for address and phone number.

---

## Upcoming Stewardship Events

**June 27: Deadline for applications for the Coverts Project** training in forest and wildlife management. Contact Cindy Mason, 301-432-2767 x301, [ct11@umail.umd.edu](mailto:ct11@umail.umd.edu).

**July 20 (and every third Thursday): Meeting of Maryland Forestry Task Force,** Annapolis; forest landowners welcome. Contact Gary Allen, 410-267-8598, or [gallenbay@aol.com](mailto:gallenbay@aol.com).

**August 3: Agriculture Field Day,** Western Maryland Research & Education Center, Keedysville. Contact 301-432-2767.

**August 17: Agriculture Field Day,** Wye Research & Education Center, Queenstown. Contact 410-827-8056.

**September 8-10: American Ginseng Production in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century conference** with speakers, workshops, tours, and trade show; held in the Catskills. Registration fee. Contact Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County, 518-622-9820, or [www.cce.cornell.edu/greene/](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/greene/).

**September 18-20: Fragmentation 2000—A Conference on Sustaining Private Forests in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,** Radisson Hotel, Annapolis. Contact Terri Bates, 703-538-1134.

**September 22-24: Coverts Training,** Keedysville, for selected participants. See article on page 3.

**October 27 & 28: Maryland Forests Association Annual Meeting,** Columbia MD. Contact Karin Miller, 301-895-5369; [mfa@hereintown.net](mailto:mfa@hereintown.net); or <http://mdforests.org>.

**November 4: Mid-Atlantic Forest Stewardship Seminar,** Frederick. Contact Terry Poole, 301-694-1594 x3577 or [tp8@umail.umd.edu](mailto:tp8@umail.umd.edu).

**October or November : Delmarva Forest Stewardship Seminar.** Contact Bob Tjaden, 410-827-8056 x112 or [rt20@umail.umd.edu](mailto:rt20@umail.umd.edu).



## OTHER POSSIBLE ARTICLES:

### WOODLAND ROADS IN THE WINTER

Winter is a good time to prepare your woodland roads for spring rains. As you enjoy a winter walk in your woodlot, check your roads and trails. Are they stable? Are they too steep? Does the water soak in or run off? How long does water lay on them? Does sunlight hit the surfaces? What impact do the trails and roads have on wildlife? Are the roads aesthetically appealing?

For help with your woodland trails and woods, contact your DNR project forester.

## RESOURCES

Software and e-mail:

Software on *Woody Plant Identification*, Kendall/Hunt, ISBN 0-7872-3803-1; \$50; call 1-800-228-0810.

*VegSpec* is a web-based program to help landowners/managers make sound decisions on what to plant on specific sites, e.g., reforested areas, buffer strips, and wildlife habitats. It also provides native plant alternatives to traditional introduced plant materials. Developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Construction Engineering Research Labs, and the U.S. Geological Survey, it is accessed on the Internet at [www.plants.usda.gov](http://www.plants.usda.gov), or contact Keith Ticknor, 202-720-8578.

Free agroforestry e-mail newsletter, *The Overstory*, features sustainable, tree-based agriculture in the tropics. For a sampling of past issues, visit <http://www.agroforester.com/overstory/osprev.html>. [Since this is "the tropics," should it be omitted?]

## SALT LICKS

Many hunters and wildlife watchers put out supplemental mineral licks to enhance the body size and antler development of white-tailed deer. A recent article in the *Wildlife Society Bulletin* questions this.

Wildlife biologists evaluated a sampling of commercially-available mineral supplements sold for deer. Body and antler size of deer harvested in areas with mineral blocks were compared with those in comparable habitats without supplemental blocks. The biologists found no difference in either body or antler mass of deer from the two areas. Instead of placing salt licks, woodland owners may consider improving browse or allowing bucks to mature more before harvesting.

## Maryland Stumpage Price Survey Results

October – December 1999

The table below summarizes reported prices paid for standing timber during October – December. Prices for sawtimber are in \$ per thousand board feet (International ¼ inch scale). Pulpwood and fuelwood are reported in \$ per cord, biomass in \$ per ton. The Range shows the high and low prices reported. Reporting is voluntary, and this is not a complete record of sale activity in Maryland. A total of 149 timber sales were reported. Total responses, 38; total number of timber sales, 149; and total sales in acres, 1214. Total # of reports does not add up to column totals. Sale characteristics:

Size	#	%	Type	#	%	Reported by	#	%	Buyer/Seller	#	%	Location	#	%
<50 Mbf	10	7	Lump sum	32	21	Consulting foresters	17	55	Buyer	1	1	Eastern Shore	3	2
\$1,000 Mbf	4	4	Mill/daily	5	3	Public lands foresters	3	8	Seller	36	24	Southern	4	3