

Establishing Priorities for Salvaging Storm-Damaged Timber

EPSDT101718

When storms damage forest stands and shade trees, woodland owners have many questions about what to do with their damaged trees. The following outline provides guidelines for quick decision-making and priority setting. No set of simple guidelines can fit all storm, seasonal and timber market conditions or the availability of harvesting resources. Forest landowners will unfortunately face situations where the salvage harvest of their damaged timber will be dangerous and expensive. In addition, many timber owners will be attempting to market their damaged timber before it spoils.



As a result, harvesting and manufacturing firms will not be able to handle all of the available timber: priorities in salvaging damaged timber must be made.

When establishing priorities for salvaging storm-damaged timber, the first and highest priority should be given to salvaging:

1. The timber which has the highest potential product value (in most cases sawtimber and veneer);
2. The timber which is the easiest to cut (stands blown or felled in one direction);
3. The timber which is the most perishable (in most cases sawtimber and veneer).

In order to minimize the logging costs in storm-damaged stands of mixed sawtimber and pulpwood, all salvageable sawtimber and pulpwood should be removed during the same operation.

Type of Tree or Stand	Woodlands	Shade Trees
Wind-blown in one direction. Trunk not broken. Most roots out of ground.	Salvage as soon as possible for best product. In mixed stands, remove all merchantable timber.	Remove with caution. Split and use for firewood.
Large trees heavily skinned by flying debris. Trees standing or leaning less than a 45-degree angle from vertical. At least 4 or more live limbs.	Salvage as soon as possible for best product. In mixed stands, remove all merchantable timber.	Remove. Split for firewood.

Trunk broken. 0-3 live limbs.	Salvage for pulpwood if and when possible in next 6-12 months. If salvage not possible; burn, site prepare and reforest by simplest means.	Remove. Split for firewood.
Trunk broken. At least 4-7 lives limbs. Trunk not leaning. No root damage.	Can delay salvage for pulpwood or other management decision until later or better market conditions.	Tree should live. Remove broken branches and trim broken tops.
Wind-blown in one direction. Trees leaning in less than a 45-degree angle from vertical. Most roots in ground. Trunk not broken. At least 4-7 live limbs.	Can delay salvage for sawtimber or pulpwood or other management decision until later or better market conditions.	Tree should live. Remove all trees that pose hazard to people, structures, utility lines, etc.
Large trees lightly skinned by flying debris. Trees standing or leaning less than 45 degree angle from vertical. At least 4 or more live limbs.	Can delay salvage or other management decisions until later or better market conditions.	Tree should live. Trim away loose bark.
	Beware of Bark Beetles, Borers, and Decay	
Trees in jack-straw jumble.	Salvage if possible. Logging extremely hazardous. Site prepare and reforest by simplest means.	Remove with CAUTION. Split and use for firewood.
Small non-merchantable trees skinned and broken by flying debris.	Site prepare and reforest by simplest means.	Remove. Plant new tree.



This information is provided by the Alabama Forestry Commission
For more information please visit: www.forestry.alabama.gov