

USES FOR FOREST WASTE

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Increased attention is being directed toward the utilization of forest wastes in the interests of conservation and better business management. Information on the subject is being requested constantly of the Forest Products Laboratory by people in the forest and wood-using industries, by those who contemplate entering these industries, and by others interested in the conservation of timber supplies. For such information to be useful to the greatest number of inquirers, therefore, consideration of the problems involved necessitates the discussion of some aspects of waste utilization that are quite obvious to the experienced operator but less apparent to others.

The existence of forest waste is proverbial. Much of this waste is uncontrollable, yet a large portion of it is capable of reduction. Since wood lacks the plastic flow qualities necessary for such major reshaping as is done with metals, the irregularly round shape and varying dimensions of the tree must be reduced to the required shape and size by removal of extraneous material. Parts of the trees, or entire trees, are rejected for a specific use because of size, shape, quality, or species. Such forest residue is often increased by poor operating practice or by mismanufacture, and some woods mismanufacture is the direct cause of waste in later stages of processing.

The total amount of forest residues wasted through nonuse can be reduced by preventive measures. The portion of the residue due to the nature of the raw material is unavoidable, of course, but improvements in operating practices and processing equipment can minimize further waste of usable material. Some residues unsuited for one product may be usable for another; hence, the harvesting of several products, such as ties and pulpwood in addition to logs, rather than sawlogs alone, is both a preventive and a salvage measure.

Possibilities of using forest residues are often severely limited by difficulties in handling and segregating them, or by their unadaptability to the consumer's needs or to his manufacturing processes. The consuming market may not be favorably located with respect to the source of the material or capable of absorbing all of it. The quantities available may be

¹Maintained at Madison 5, Wis., in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin.

too limited for low-cost handling. Costs of fuel or construction materials needed to replace residues sold reduce the gains from sale of waste. Finally, wood residues may be of such form, condition, or species that serious technical difficulties will preclude their use for regular products with regular equipment.

Waste Prevention

It is a sound principle that the conversion of raw materials into their principal products is more profitable than the reworking of wastes into secondary products, because the market demand is usually greater for the principal products and they are in better form for efficient remanufacture. Within limits, then, it pays to put extra effort into increasing the yields of the primary operation, through training of labor, correction of equipment defects, and diversification of products. Logging crews can be trained to avoid breakage in falling trees and damage to the residual stand. Special attention in bucking has to be given to proper trimming allowance (so that boards will not lack an inch or two in length and have to be trimmed back, in the case of softwoods, to the next even 2 feet), to selection of log lengths that will eliminate crook, sweep, or grouped defects, and to placement of cuts to improve log grade and get additional products, such as ties or posts from the upper portions of the trees. Woods labor requires training to use wood from tops and low-value trees or species, instead of from straight young trees of desirable species, for road construction, cribbing, corduroy, drains, cordwood stakes, truck stakes, load-tightening levers, skidways, camp structures, or like purposes. Camp fuel should be derived from logging slash or unmarketable species.

Harvesting Equipment

Harvesting equipment is recognized to have an important bearing on both waste prevention and salvage of waste. When the equipment is not adapted to the logging chance, or it is too heavy for the material handled, it may not be able to handle profitably material that could be taken, at a profit, with lighter or better-adapted equipment. For example, in cutting small southern pine for pulpwood on the flatlands of the South, the wheel-mounted circular power saw makes ground-level stumps possible at a 0.2 cord per acre increase in yield, and light tractors in the Northwest can profitably recover slash and small trees on which the customary heavy equipment would lose money. Maintenance of equipment in first-class working condition, plus organization of work to minimize handling, makes it possible to recover more material profitably and to reduce waste accordingly.

Careful planning of the operation also makes it possible to remove a diversity of products, instead of some such single product as sawlogs. Multiple products not only utilize more of the tree but permit raising of grades by providing a greater range for selection. Poles, pulpwood, mine props, ties, posts, boxboard bolts, and cordwood are some of the products that may be removed in conjunction with veneer or sawlog cuttings.

Salvage of Waste

The woods operator has some opportunities to utilize waste in his own operation, as indicated previously. Additional and more extensive opportunity is provided by the recovery of marketable secondary products. The sale of cordwood for fuel or pulpwood is an important outlet in some regions for material from tops, defective trees, noncommercial species, or thinnings. The production of charcoal, or of chipped wood for various uses, may be practical. Short logs of good material may be recovered for sawed products, such as boards, squares, and the like, or for staves and numerous small products. Short billets of clear material may be cut from between branch whorls for such items as rotary-cut or sliced box veneer and paper cores. Slicer billets may be cut from hollow butts or from trimmings cut from logs to improve their grade. Other outlets for forest waste, especially from thinnings, include fencing of varied types, bean and hop poles, grape, tree, and oyster-bed stakes.

Unfortunately, there are no dealers purchasing woods waste for resale to a variety of users; the nearest approach to it is the retail fuel wood dealer. Both for the finished items made from waste (posts, ties, etc.) and the rough billets for other products, individual customers usually must be sought. For some products produced in relatively small quantity by individual operators, where sales or processing are difficult and costly, a cooperative concentration yard or secondary processing plant serving a group of operators may be feasible.

Field of Utilization

Forest waste is potentially usable in varied forms: (1) in original or natural form (fuelwood, posts, litter for mulch); (2) in mechanically modified form (sawed or shaped, chipped, defibered, ground, laminated); (3) in chemically modified form (chemical pulp, distillation, saccharification, extraction, hydrogenation, impregnation); and (4) in biochemically modified form (as in composted litter or in yeast and other fermentation products following saccharification).

Numerous properties and characteristics are exploitable, and in many products it is the mechanical and physical properties that are employed. Uses for mechanical properties are common-place. Waste wood constitutes a large source of fiber, heat energy, or chemicals. In some cases, appearance is the exploited characteristic, as in rustic furniture, in figured veneer products made from burls, stumps, crotches, etc., and in novelty or decorative products, such as holly leaves, mistletoe, pine boughs and cones, autumn leaves, tops of evergreens as Christmas trees, and birch bark. Also, odor is exploited in fir pillows and pine-oil soaps. Bulk and heat-insulating values of forest litter are utilized in bedding and mulching. Sound and thermal insulation, as well as strength properties of wood fiber, are employed in insulating boards, papers, and other pulp products. Use of wood for chemicals may involve simply the extraction of soluble constituents by leaching (tannin), vaporizing by steam (wood oils), or chemical treatment

to liberate the desired constituents. Other chemicals not present as such may be derived by conversion of the wood by hydrogenation, hydrolysis, bacterial action, or destructive distillation. By combustion, useful heat energy is released for power and other uses. The resulting chemical products are discarded, except for some use of ashes as fertilizer.

Any program for the utilization of forest waste will depend in large measure on the vigor and the business acumen of the individual management in adapting the program to the circumstances peculiar to the materials and location and on the seizing of temporary market opportunities as well as the finding of existing or the encouraging of new stable outlets. Best control of marketing obviously results from internal adjustments of the operation by which the needs of the operator can be met by using waste or lower-quality material to release better material for production, or by which secondary products from waste can be produced by the operator and marketed through the regular sales channels. For example, a sawmill cutting its own timber and selling part of it as box material may work with the box manufacturer to develop a line of boxes to be made from veneer sliced from billets taken from tops, branches, broken trees, or partially defective logs; or a forest owner may promote a cooperative concentration yard for accumulating salable quantities of props, veneer-grade logs, or other specialty items for which the quantity produced by the individual operator is too small for ready sale.

In setting up a program for waste utilization, the individual operator must make his own selection of outlets, since uses that are profitable in one region or under one set of circumstances may be money losers in another. Knowledge of conditions on the operation and of kinds and quantities of waste available, plus knowledge of nearby markets, is necessary to an intelligent choice of product to be made from the waste. To assist in such choice, the following tables 1-4 give, as fully as present information permits, a fairly complete list of uses for forest waste, with supplementary information on specifications, markets, consumption, and the like.

In column two of these tables the heading "Unmerchantable" applies to species of wood.

Table 1. -- Physical uses of forest waste

Use	Material											Specifications requirements	Purchasers markets	Min. - Total min. tonnage per year	Developing	Remarks		
	Underbrush	Limbs and tops	Limbs	Stumps	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs							
Building, shingles, mulch																		
Fuel, bedding																		
Nursery mulch																		
Open-air beds																		
Boys, shingles, floor																		
Shingles																		
Excelsior																		
Plaster lath																		
*Saw-logs lath																		
*Coarse lath																		
*Coarse - handing, slaves, logs																		
*Handline																		
*Dimension stock																		
*Brush back																		
*Woodcut and cutting																		
Box veneer, sliced																		
Roofing																		
Figured veneer: stimp																		
unshaded																		
Turning stock																		
*Box, shade rollers																		
*Shims, pligs																		
*Sigs, clogs																		
*Sigs, clogs																		
Laminated flooring																		

*Items thus marked also may be produced from solid small forests.

Table 1.—Physical uses of forest timbers (continued)

Use	Material						Condition	Species	Sizes	Specifications, requirements	Purchasers, markets	Min. diam. of log	Total volume	Shipping	Remarks
	Timberland	Plantation	Mill	Stock	Wharf	Other									
Loggia ends,枕木															
Electricity	X	X	X	X	X	X		Any	1 to 8 inches, post-width	Material straightness same from material cut along diagonal	Self-consumed, usually				Same as for Logging Equipment
Crabbing	X	X	X	X	X	X		Any	5 to 12 inches, various lengths	Moderate durability in temporary posts	Do. along diagonal				Do.
Shingles, drain	X	X	X	X	X	X		Any	1/4 to 3/8 inches, various lengths	Do.	Do.				Do.
Triggers, handles	X	X	X	X	X	X		Hard species	Various	Strength, strength	Do.				Do.
Shovel handles (best class)	X	X	X	X	X	X		Any	2 to 6 inches, various lengths	Moderate straightness	Do.				Do.
Board posts	X	X	X	X	X	X		Stronger hardwoods, softwoods	Any size purchaser	Straight, few knots, few imperfections of burs	Public highway depart-ments throughout the country	Medium			Also used for corn storage bins
Shard nails	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	4-foot bolts, 3/4 inch diameter	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Shore fence	X	X	X	X	X	X		Various	2 to 6 inches, various lengths	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Public highway depart-ments throughout the country	Medium			Do.
Miscellaneous	X	X	X	X	X	X		Oaks, hickory, ash, sugar maple, 2-1/4 to 2-1/8 inch diameter, 21 inches long conical pointed ends	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Public highway depart-ments throughout the country	Small			Do.
Springs	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	30 foot long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Fence	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Timbers	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Wire line	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Wire nails	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Waxtail	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Wood bark	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Shanty pole	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Electric poles	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Piling	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Man poles	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Step poles	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Tobacco-stem tent	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Emergency support	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Cylindered slabs	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Driveway poles	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Tree slabs	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Cable slabs	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Converter poles	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Timbers stacked	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Witch	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Narrow-gauge	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Box sticks	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Knouting and knouting	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Leaving-back fronde-tions	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Water transportation	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Truss hays	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Truss timbers	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Truss supports, and	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Structural impressions	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Log houses	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Box construction	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.
Box construction	X	X	X	X	X	X		Do.	2 to 4 inch long	Strength of large knots and not shamble	Loggers, super-sawyers, sawmills	Small			Do.

Table 2.—Other uses of forest wood

Use	Material										Condition				Species	Sizes	Specifications, requirements	Purchasers, markets	Miscellaneous	Shipping	Remarks	
	Dimensional	Plank	Timber	Shingles	Slabs	Boards	Shakes	Staves	Posts	Other	Other	Other	Other	Other								Other
Boards																						
Masonite process:	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Cork																						
Fiberglass and padding																						
Fillers																						
Insecticide carriers																						
Pulp																						
Roofing Sawmill falls																						
Fiberglass wool:																						
Asphalt fiber:																						

Table 3.--Fuel uses of forest waste

Use	Material											Condition	Species	Size	Specifications, requirements	Purchasers, Markets	Minimum lot	Total consumption	Shipping	Remarks
	Unmerchantable	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs	Limbs									
Charcoal	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Hardwoods, softwoods	2-5-foot lengths, maximum width of face, 6 inches	Free of serious rot, straight enough to permit close stacking	What he needs by owner. Fuel dealers, heating companies, railways (dining cars), chemical firms, individuals	Barrel	Large	Special types of charcoal produced for use in distillation products processed in some permanent plants, not used in pit, cylinder-block kiln, portable-steel-kiln method. Can be saved with portable Larsons kiln	
Local Logging Operations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Any	Stovewood size preferred	Used on logging operations only	Used on logging operations only	None	Small	Local: Some substitution of coal and oil is occurring	
Camp heating	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Any	Stovewood size, heavy species preferred	Used on logging operations only	Used on logging operations only	None	Small	Local: Some substitution of coal and oil is occurring	
Donkey engines	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Any	4-foot lengths	Used on logging operations only	Used on logging operations only	None	Small	Local: Obsolete uses - converting to coal or oil	
Locomotives	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Any	4-foot lengths	Used on logging operations only	Used on logging operations only	None	Small	Local: Obsolete uses - converting to coal or oil	
Sales to Dealers, Users	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Any	Stove and fireplace	Larger diameters usually split to 5-inch face	Wood and fuel dealers, direct consumers	Truck, 150 million cords	150 million cords	Local: Fine cones, dry; also used as kindling	
Industrial processing (brass)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Hardwoods	Cartwood	Larger diameters usually split to 5-inch face	Press works	Truck, small cartwood (large per user)	50 to 100 million cords	Used for annealing carriage brass; being replaced by gas with sulphurizing accessories	
Public utilities	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Any	Any	Only one utility (at Portland) operates on wood fuel, chiefly mill waste	Only one utility (at Portland) operates on wood fuel, chiefly mill waste	Large cartwood	100 million cords	Major portion of fuel used is mill refuse, but some of bogged wood is important	

Table 4. - Data for production of chemicals from forest waste

Use	Material											Specifications, requirements	Purchasers, markets	Minimum lot consumption	Shipping	Remarks			
	Unusable	Thinnings	Branches	Stems	Stumps	Bark	Foliage	Green	Dry	Bough	Peeled						Sawed	Chipped	
Derived Chemicals																			
Lignin																			Byproduct of pulp and steryl alcohol processes
Acid, acetic																			Byproduct of wood-distillation plants
Lactic																			Produced by fermentation of hydrolyzed wood
gluconic																			Do.
malic																			Do.
Alcohol: ethyl																			Local; Commercial market results of current pilot-plant operation using small waste
methyl																			None 150 to 200 ml.
butyl																			Synthesized from lignin
Vanillin																			Derived from pulp
2-3 butylene glycol																			Produced in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Terpene																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Carboxymethyl-cellulose																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Charcoal																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Asbes																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Phenol																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Formaldehyde																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Formic acid																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Acetic acid																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Chlorophyll																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Gum																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Glycerol																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Methane																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Serine diarsite																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Heat exchanger																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot
Flattig																			Planned in portable steel, horizontal, fixed cylinder-kiln, pilot