

# FOREST SPOTLIGHT

## Modoc NF – Pacific Southwest Region

225 W. Eighth St. Alturas, CA 96101

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/modoc>

### *Timber Sale Sawlogs Support Ecosystem Restoration*



Before harvest activities, trees are marked both for cutting and to be left. The yellow paint on this large ponderosa tree tells timber contractors this tree is to be left alone.

The Craig Timber Sale on the Devils Garden Ranger District will provide 5.2 million board feet of biomass and 3.7 million board feet of lumber-quality timber. Forest health objectives include understory removal to reduce fuels and create a more resilient forest. Large, old, fire-resistant trees are marked to be left behind.

The prescription for trees to be cut on this sale is 10 inches diameter at breast height

to 21 inches in some areas and 29 inches in others, depending on the needs of the specific stand.

Logs too small to be sawed into dimensional lumber are being transported for use as biomass by Burney Forest Power. Logs of sufficient size and quality to be used for lumber production are going to the Shasta Green Mill in Burney. Franklin logging purchased the sale and is currently conducting harvest and chipping operations.



After harvest activities, space between trees is increased creating better resilience to fire and disease, while also allowing remaining trees to grow faster.

This project is part of the larger Hackamore Ecosystem Watershed Restoration Project

designed for resource protection and enhancement. Archaeological sites along with botanical and wildlife resources have been identified for protection within the project area.

A mechanical harvest system is being used, meaning trees are felled with machines called feller-bunchers instead of traditional chainsaws. The timber sale purchaser and harvester will provide a surface replacement deposit to fix any damage created to roads during harvest and slash disposal.



Loggers pile harvested logs, larger diameter logs in one pile for transport to the mill in Burney, smaller diameter in another pile for chipping.

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Here loggers feed trees too small to be used as saw logs into the chipper for transport to the biomass facility.



After the chipping is done, all that is left is a pile to be burned by Forest Fire Management personnel, along with a healthier stand of trees.

The saw-log component to a timber sale allows the value of the timber to pay for the removal of hazardous fuels and other ecosystem restoration activities. The ratio of saw logs to biomass has to be designed carefully to withstand the volatile biomass market.

Without the ability to use timber to help offset the cost of forest-health projects, Modoc National Forest personnel either cannot remove the smaller material – which acts as hazardous fuels during wildfire – or a contractor must be paid to cut and pile slash to be burned to achieve a forest more resilient to wildfire and other disturbances. The BCAP program helps make these projects more feasible.

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) was reauthorized by the 2014 Farm Bill. BCAP provides financial assistance to establish and maintain new crops of energy biomass, or harvest and deliver forest or agricultural residues to a qualifying energy facility.

Financial assistance is available through BCAP for costs associated with harvesting and transporting agriculture or forest residues to facilities that convert biomass crops into energy. Eligible crops may include corn residue, diseased or insect infested wood materials or orchard waste. The energy facility must first be approved by USDA to accept the biomass crop. Facilities can apply for, or renew, their BCAP qualification status.

Federal funds are allocated to support the delivery of biomass materials through December 2015. Last year, more than 200,000 tons of dead or diseased trees from National Forests and Bureau of Land Management lands were removed and used to produce renewable energy, while reducing the risk of forest fire. Nineteen energy facilities in 10 states participated in the program.



This is only a small part of the large herd of Pronghorn seen recently within the project area.