

# Christmas Tree Cutting

## Klamath National Forest



### Christmas Tree Locations

Your Christmas tree permit allows you to go virtually anywhere on the Klamath National Forest. The Forest is open for Christmas tree cutting provided the rules on your permit are followed.

Most of the tree cutting opportunities are at least a half hour drive from Yreka. Be prepared to drive on dirt or graveled roads. During wet, snowy weather the Forest Service closes some roads to help prevent road damage.

Tree cutting is not permitted on any recreation or administrative site (such as a campground), within 300' of flowing streams, or 150' of dry creek-beds.

### Maps

A Klamath National Forest map will help you determine if you are on Forest Service or private land. Maps can be purchased at any Klamath National Forest Office.

### To the East

On the east side of the Klamath National Forest, the **Goosenest Ranger District** has a few places for you to hunt for the perfect tree. The easiest and most popular area is **Deer Mountain**, off Highway 97. Located about an hour east of Yreka, the main road is usually kept open to the Deer Mountain Snowmobile Park. White fir is common but at higher elevations you can find nice Red fir, if the snow isn't too deep. Red fir can be found east of **Whaleback Mountain** through upper **Pomeroy** and **Alder Creeks** to **Picadilly Ridge**.

Further east are other areas to cut Red fir: **Little Horse Peak**, **Squaw Peak**, **Grouse Hill** and **Fourmile Hill**. The road into the Four Corners Snowmobile Park via the Red Rock Road is usually kept plowed. Red and

White fir are available here. It can take about an hour and a half to drive to this area.

Another location for White and Red fir is the **Miller Mountain** area south of **Willow Creek Mountain**. Access is from the roads found on **Little Shasta** or **Willow Creek Mountain** or by the Martin's Dairy Campground Road (forest route #46N10), Harris Creek Road (forest route #46N05), or Shovel Creek Road (forest route #47N03) via the Meiss Lake Road.

### To the West

On the west side of the Klamath National Forest, the **Scott River Ranger District** has one of the closest areas in which to find Christmas trees. Over Greenhorn Summit, **Deadwood Creek** is the first road to the right, three miles from the summit. Most of the land is managed by the Klamath National Forest, but private lands are found throughout. Douglas fir, White fir, Incense cedar and pine are readily available. Watch out for rocks in the road.

On the Scott River District along **Canyon Creek Road**, Douglas fir, Ponderosa pine, and Incense cedar can be cut in almost any weather. Driving time from Yreka is one hour.

Red and White fir are available at **Jackson Creek** and **Carter Meadows** near Callahan. The paved, two lane Callahan-Cecilville Road is usually kept open and some parking is available along the road. The **Jackson Creek** area is not readily accessible except by snowmobile. **Carter Meadows** summit has Red fir. In **Carter Meadows**, you can find White fir, Douglas fir, Ponderosa pine, and Incense cedar.

Red and White fir can be cut at **Etna Summit**. The road is maintained in most weather. Check your map to ensure that you are on Forest Service land.

### --Reminders--

- **Respect private land and private forests -- cut only on Klamath National Forest Land.**
- **Be sure to read the conditions printed on your Christmas Tree Permit.**
- **Do not cut trees over 4" in diameter or 12" above the ground.**
- **Do not cut isolated trees growing in the open.**



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## Christmas Trees Become Brittle

For many, the holidays officially begin when the perfect Christmas tree is brought home. Whether a small fir or a tall hemlock, it is important to slow down the tree's drying-out process. You can then get the maximum use from your holiday tree.

### Selection

- \* Select a tree with needles that do not pull easily from its branches or break when gently bent.

### Coming Home

- \* Wrap it in a tarp or heavy plastic to prevent damaging "wind burn". If carrying it inside your vehicle, make sure the heater is kept on low.

### Storage

- \* If the tree is not going to be immediately used, store it in a cool, shady place outdoors in a bucket of water. (On the north side of the house or in the shade of other trees in the yard is best.)

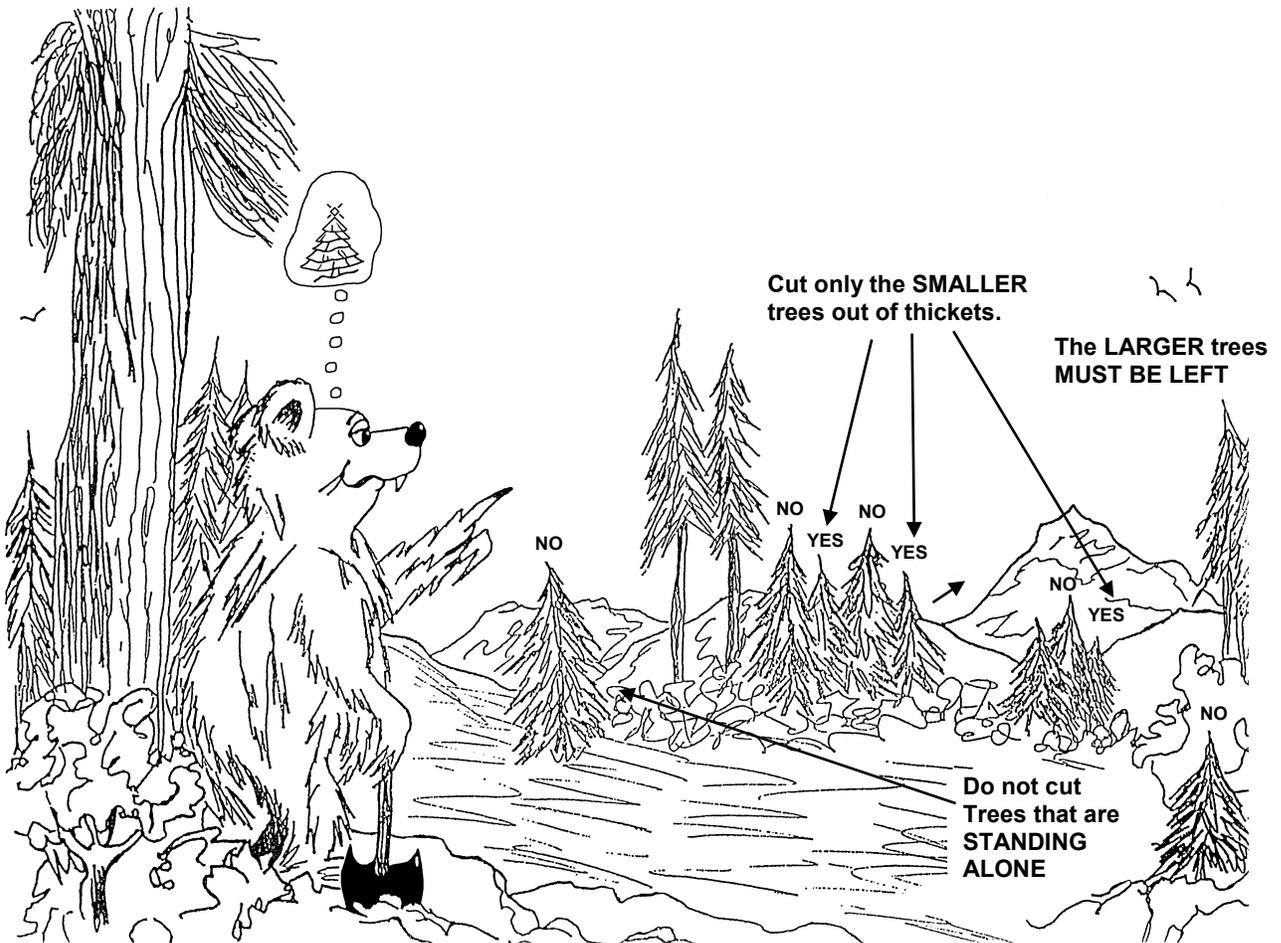
## Set Up

- \* Clean the tree stand with a mixture of one cup of water and a capful of bleach.
- \* Re-cut the trunk 1 or 2 inches above the old cut and immediately place in water.
- \* Keep the water level in the tree stand above the cut line.
- \* A 6-foot tree can "drink" a quart or two of water every day. Sprinkling the branches and foliage with water will also lengthen its life.
- \* Consider using a commercial floral preservative in the water.

## In the House

- \* The cooler the room, the longer it will last; keep the tree away from heat (including sunny windows).
- \* Turn down room heat when leaving the house or retiring for the night.

With a bit of care, your tree should easily last for four weeks -- lots of time to enjoy its fragrance and beauty.



**REMEMBER:** Don't cut trees on any recreation or administration site (such as campground), within 300' of a perennial stream, or 150' of an intermittent stream

# History, Types, and Altitudes

## History

The traditional use of evergreen trees during the Christmas season brings most Americans close to the fragrance and freshness of the forest. Christmas trees bring more joy to many families at the holiday season than any other natural product.

The custom of having a decorated tree in the home at Christmas seems to have originated in Germany about 1500 AD; the first in the U.S. may have been introduced during the American Revolution by Hessian mercenary soldiers. Decorating trees may have been an outgrowth of a practice of early forest dwellers. Some foods were hung in trees to keep them out of reach of animals.

The fir is most commonly mentioned in historical accounts of the Christmas tree. This is probably because fir was abundant in German forests as well as in New England and New York, in the U.S.

## Types

The fir is still a favorite today. The Klamath National Forest not only offers the traditional firs but also Douglas fir, Ponderosa pine, and Incense cedar. The forest provides many species and areas where your favorite tree can be found.

When choosing a lasting, memorable tree, some characteristics to look for are; 1) Trees that retain needles through the Christmas holidays, 2) Full, bushy symmetrical shape, 3) Limb strength adequate to support ornaments and electric lights, 4) fragrance.

It's not easy to tell one evergreen from another in normal Christmas tree sizes because they don't have cones and the bark is not fully developed. The best way to identify them is to look at their needles. Incense cedar needles are segmented and look "lacy". Evergreens with needles in clusters of twos, threes or fives are pines. Fir tree needles usually are shorter and stiffer than pines and attach individually to a stem.



## Altitudes

The two types of firs commonly used as Christmas trees are Red fir, also known as "silvertip" and White fir. They look very similar. Red fir grows at or above the 6,000-foot elevation. Since they grow at such high elevations, Red fir can be difficult to harvest since snow comes early to those elevations. White fir usually grows between 4,000- and 6,000-foot elevations and is a good substitute. Both trees retain their needles well; have strong limbs to hold ornaments and lights, and a pleasing fragrance.

Douglas fir is similar to the White and Red fir and grows between 2,000- and 4,500-foot elevations. Since Douglas fir is available at lower elevations, it is easier to find when the snow levels are low. It looks bushier than the White or Red firs and the branches tend to droop more. The needles are attached all around the stem, so may be more "prickly".

The Incense cedar can make a beautiful and different Christmas tree. Incense cedar needles are flat and "scale-like", not smooth like fir or pine needles. The tree limbs are very limber and not as strong as the White and Red fir, so tend to droop more. This tree has a pleasant fragrance. Incense cedar is found at elevations ranging from 2,000 to 5,000 feet.

The needles of the Ponderosa pine are long (from 3 to 6 inches), unlike the short fir needles. The branches have sparse needles but are strong enough to hold ornaments and lights well. Ponderosa pine is found between 2,000- and 4,500-foot elevations.



