

Timber

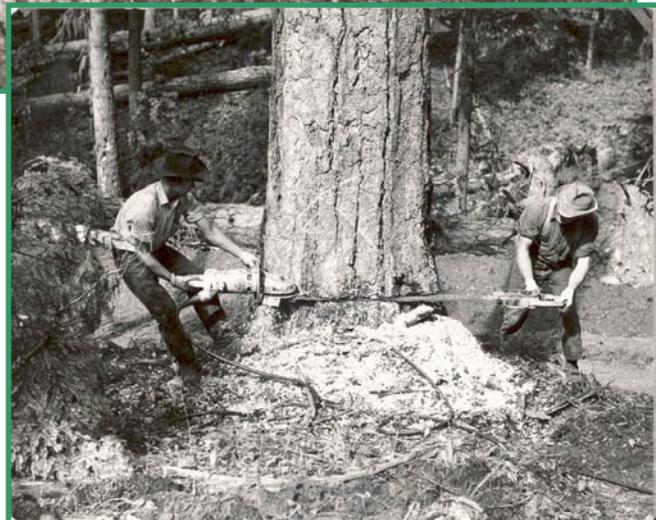
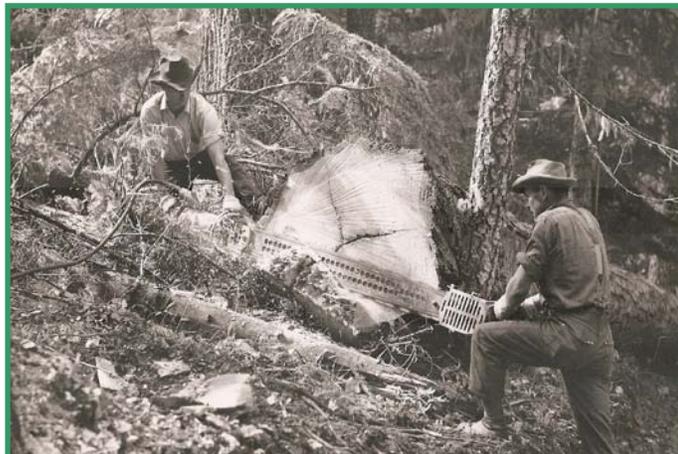
The Organic Administration Act of 1897 was written in part, to “furnish a continuous supply of timber for the use and necessities of citizens of the United States...” However, the congressional debate and the 1897 Act’s implementing regulations made it clear that timber cutting was always considered to be permitted, not a required part of forest management.

Although minimal, there was some logging done in 1910 on the Nez Perce. According to Forest Supervisor George Ring, “we would like to see a little more activity in the Timber Sale business. Timber sold since the beginning of the fiscal year—July 1, 1910 amounts to green, 22900 feet and dead, 47500 feet”.

Early logging more or less bypassed the Nez Perce National Forest. Timber barons and the men they employed were attracted to the great white pine stands and more easily accessible ground found to the north on the Clearwater, St. Joe, and Coeur d’ Alene national forests. There are no old logging towns, shay engines, donkey engines, splash dams, log flumes, or other remnants of early day logging. There was one logging camp, Camp 58. It was located at McComas Meadows on private property. Camp 58 was in operation from the early 1940’s to late 1950’s.

—Edward E. Laven, The Nez Perce National Forest Story

Meadow Creek Timber Sale to Potlatch Forest Inc. on the Nez Perce NF. Using an electric felling saw, August 1944. Power furnished by a generator in a caterpillar tractor.
USFS photographs.



Today timber harvest involves much more than the sale of timber and its removal. It includes a comprehensive approach to forest management. The Forest is working to achieve a balance between providing land stewardship services and meeting public demands for various uses of the National Forest System lands.

The timber species removed and average size has changed to focus on restoring resiliency of the forest ecosystems. Both silvicultural prescriptions and harvest methods have evolved with more emphasis on intermediate cuts utilizing mechanized harvest equipment like feller-bunchers. Today harvest systems include: tractor, cable, skyline, and helicopter.



Upper left: cat skidding a tree-length log into a stroke delimeter where the tree is processed into log lengths, Dixie Summit Timber Sale in 2006.

Upper right: Checking the sawyers for best falling practices, stump height, and breakage for the 2021 Timber Sale in 2004.

Lower left: Helicopter landing, loader piling logs after sawyers manufacture them into log lengths to meet mill specifications for the 2021 Timber Sale in 2004.

USFS Photographs

New objectives include: restoring fire adapted ecosystems, treating areas within wildland urban interface areas for community wildfire protection, reducing hazardous fuels and balancing restoration treatments. Timber salvage continues to be used to remove wood products where forest areas have been affected by insect and disease epidemics or wildfires.

The amount of timber removed from the Nez Perce National Forest has varied over the past 100 years at the same time public interest and involvement regarding timber harvest has increased. In 2007, the amount of timber sold from the forest was 6.5 million board feet green and 13.0 million board feet dead.