

## Call Before You Cut

### Program Encourages Woodland Owners to Seek Assistance Before Harvesting

#### The Challenge

Many landowners have little knowledge about timber harvesting. As a result, they risk making uninformed decisions that can lead to negative impacts on forest resources and unintended financial consequences. Landowners may accept the first offer for a harvest without having an estimate of their woodlands' potential value. They may also unintentionally allow "high-grading," which removes high quality trees and leaves only poorer quality trees.

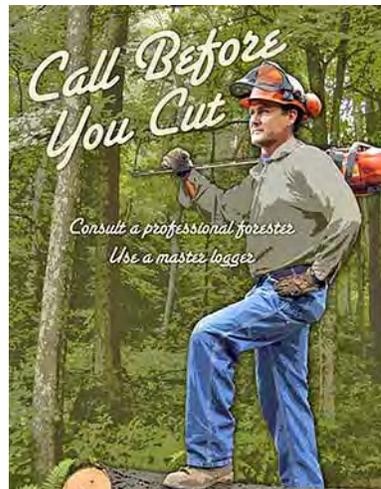
Research has shown that active management enhances the resource value. A program was needed to encourage woodland owners to consult a professional forester, in conjunction with a professional timber harvester or master logger, before making harvesting decisions.

#### The Solution

In 2006, the Ohio Division of Forestry and other partners launched the "Call Before You Cut" program. In 2008, Ohio partnered with Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, and West Virginia, to submit a multi-State Call Before You Cut proposal, and it received funding through the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry.

The work group created a Web site at which landowners select the State where their property is located. They can then request a free "Landowner's Guide for a Successful Harvest," learn about selling timber, locate a professional forester who will help to clarify the landowner's objectives, learn about partners, or contact the State Forestry office.

*"...but with one ill-planned, poorly executed cutting, all of those benefits can be squandered for a century. ... Call Before You Cut could play an important role in preserving Ohio's woodland bounty."  
—"The Columbus Dispatch" editorial;  
October 9, 2006*



*Each of the four posters created in 2006 encourages landowners to contact a professional forester when considering a timber harvest.*

The work group also partnered with the [Sustaining Family Forests Initiative](#), which helped them to understand the four types of landowners based on their orientation towards owning woodlands—having a woodland retreat, working the land, receiving supplemental income, or being uninvolved. The States developed their Call Before You Cut programs based on which type of landowner they wanted to target.

#### Resulting Benefits

- Protects consumers by making information about selling timber available
- Encourages sustainable timber harvesting
- Supports the use of professional foresters
- Facilitates developing forest management plans
- Promotes the use of trained Master Loggers to minimize impacts of timber harvesting on forests, as well as on soil and water resources

#### Sharing Success

- A Web portal at [www.callb4ucut.com](http://www.callb4ucut.com) allows regionwide access.
- The Program has expanded from one to six States, and additional States are expressing interest in joining.



U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
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[www.na.fs.fed.us](http://www.na.fs.fed.us)

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