



Developing a Management Plan

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Why have a plan?

Who would consider building a house without a blueprint or taking a vacation without a road map? Most people carefully plan before undertaking these activities. The work goes more easily and efficiently when a plan of action is developed and followed.

This is especially true for the stewardship forest. Management planning is essential for those who wish to accomplish their objectives while maximizing returns, minimizing expenses and ensuring the long-term productivity of their property. One example that illustrates this is the sale of timber. Studies have shown that landowners who properly plan timber sales in advance receive significantly higher returns and leave stands of timber that are in better shape than those who do not (Figure 2).

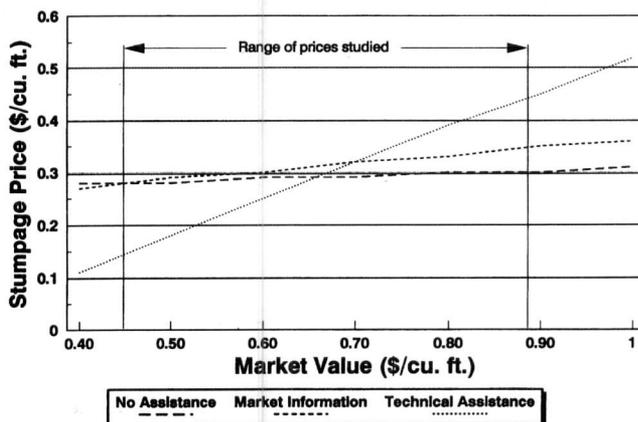


Figure 2. Planning and assistance pays off as this graphic shows that as the value of the stand increases, information and assistance becomes quite valuable (from "The effect of timber sale assistance on returns to landowners," Hubbard and Abt, 1989, Resource Management and Optimization, vol 6(3), pp. 225-234).

Planning other forest management activities in a similar manner also results in higher revenues, lower costs, reduced tax liability, more efficient scheduling and fewer negative environmental

impacts. Landowners should remember that treatments which enhance one resource should not adversely affect others on the same site. However, it takes advanced planning to minimize these impacts and provide for each of the resources.

Beginning the plan

Because a stewardship management plan involves all resources on a landowner's property, a team of professionals with expertise in managing each resource works together to develop the plan (Figure 3). The team is composed of the following individuals:

- property owner;
- forester;
- resource biologist (ecologist, wildlife biologist or related field);
- soil conservation specialist;
- others as needed or desired (recreation, fisheries or grazing specialist, historian, archeologist, etc.).



Figure 3. The stewardship Planning Team is assembled with professionals from various backgrounds.