

FOREST PRODUCTS

Timber, for sawmills and other wood processing facilities, is the primary forest commodity. But there are many other products removed from the forest. Many are removed in a combined recreational/subsistence pursuit, such as game animals, fish, and edible plants. The pursuit of wildlife and fish is covered in the section on **Forest Recreation**. Besides animals, there are several forest resources that are gathered and used.

Firewood

Public firewood cutting can provide several benefits. It is a service to the public, and provides people an opportunity to reduce home heating bills. Firewood cutting can be used to reduce logging yard debris and harvest treetops, especially where aesthetics is a concern. Firewood cutting has broad environmental advantages. Firewood, a renewable resource, usually replaces nonrenewable fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas. If firewood is substituted for a fossil fuel, there is a net saving in carbon release to the atmosphere. Firewood contains carbon that already exists in the biosphere, whereas burning fossil fuels release carbon sequestered for millions of years. For these reasons, the state forests and forest recreation areas will encourage and maintain, where appropriate, public firewood cutting on the properties.

Public firewood areas should be readily accessible to the public and visibly identified as a firewood cutting area. If the access is via a fire/access road, there must be sufficient signs along the road to direct the cutters to the appropriate area (Carsonite-type posts work well). Firewood cutting area boundaries should be identified. A map will be available to cutters showing the layout of the firewood cutting area. The property should also develop a short information sheet on firewood cutting with various rules and conditions.

Firewood cutting is limited to material on the ground. No standing trees, live or dead, may be taken by public firewood cutters.

It is at the discretion of the properties where and when to sell firewood cutting permits. Where possible, the convenience of users should be considered in setting up a property firewood cutting program. Where normal office hours are difficult for many people to make in order to buy a permit, permits can be sold through the mail (cutter sends check to property, then property mails out receipt, firewood area map, and firewood cutting information).

It is at the discretion of the properties where and when to open firewood cutting areas. Firewood areas may receive the most public interest if they are open at least during some weekends. Areas with high vandalism or abuse potential may not be suitable. Access to and within the firewood areas should be sufficiently firm to support the use. Firewood areas should be closed when weather conditions make access difficult or damaging. Cutters who are closed out of firewood areas because of abrupt weather or access condition changes will be allowed opportunities to complete their permit when conditions improve.

Interest in commercial firewood cutting has waned in recent years. If a property receives

interest in commercial firewood cutting and wishes to pursue it, contact the Property Specialist.

Properties will not sell already cut firewood to the public for home use.

Firewood prices are listed in the Appendix.

Poles and Posts

Poles and posts are requested by the public for home uses ranging from setting a fence to building a log home. The properties have the discretion about whether they will provide poles and posts. Similar to firewood, no standing trees, live or dead, may be cut by users. Only downed material may be taken.

It is at the discretion of the property to use property personnel to drop standing material for use as posts and poles. If material is dropped, it must be based on the tract management guide or an appropriate amendment to the guide, and done with a management objective. A tally of the trees removed will be put in the appropriate tract file.

Prices for the sale of poles and posts are in the Appendix.

Plant Material Gathering

DNR regulations allow public gathering of nuts, berries, and mushrooms without permit. Other plant material gathering was usually overlooked, although it required a permit. There has been considerable concern recently regarding the overharvest of some plants for commercial use. Because of this, gathering of ginseng and goldenseal from state forests is prohibited.

All gathering of plant materials except for nuts, berries, fruits, leaves and mushrooms requires a permit from the property. Properties will not issue permits for the gathering of ginseng and goldenseal. Properties will not issue gathering permits for gathering that essentially kills, removes, or destroys plants or their reproductive capacity. An exception to this are cases where the plant is an exotic, such as dandelion and garlic mustard. Properties may issue gathering permits for dead plant material that is not essential for species reproduction. Properties may issue permits for gathering that has minimal effect on plant survival or reproduction. These permits must only be for home use. No permits will be issued for commercial gathering. Following the above guidelines, it is at the discretion of the property to issue permits for gathering.

There is no charge for gathering permits.

Properties may receive requests for research gathering of plant materials. These are processed through Central Office. Inquiries for research permits should be forwarded to Central

Office.

Other Material Gathering

Properties occasionally receive requests from the public to gather or collect animals. Removal of animals by individuals is prohibited except as provided by hunting, fishing and trapping laws and regulations, or for legitimate research. Properties will not issue permits for animal gathering. Research that requires animal collection is processed through Central Office.

Properties regularly receive requests for rock and mineral gathering. Permits may be issued by the properties for recreational gold panning. The disturbance created by this activity is generally very limited and minor. Other rock and mineral collection often require greater disturbance than gold. Also, these resources are not renewable. Properties will not issue permits for rock and mineral collection, except gold panning. Requests for research permits should be referred to Central Office.

There is no charge for gold panning permits. Sample gold panning permits may be found in the appendices of the Recreation Procedures Manual.

Section Bullet Summary

- Properties will provide public firewood cutting programs where practical.
- Properties may sell poles and posts to the public.
- Nuts, berries and mushrooms may be gathered without permit. With strict limitation, some other plant materials may be gathered by permit.
- Recreational gold panning is allowed by permit.