Forest products

Sawlogs – grapple skidder

The purpose of this fact sheet is to give an outline of forest products that can be harvested from timber on freehold land. Forest products that are available vary from mill logs through to fencing timber. If timber is managed as a sustainable crop and the potential trees are given room to grow there will be a continued product to harvest. Timber is available from all regional ecosystems (coloured or white) and can be harvested by notifying the Department of Natural Resources and Water (NRW) of an ongoing forest practice. This form is available from NRW offices, and the application is free.

Mill timber is harvested from trees 40 cm plus (DBH); **D**iameter of a tree at **B**reast **H**eight which is measured 1.3 m from the ground on the highest side of the tree. Logs must have a minimum length of 2.4 m and be 30 cm at the top end of the log to be classed as a first class log, unless they have defect in either end of the log or have a bend of over 2.5 degrees. Logs which are smaller size would be classed as 2nds or as salvage. Timber cutters would know the compulsory or (first class) sawlog specifications and would cut to the specifications of the contract between the landholder and log buyer.

Prepared by
Reg Connolly

for further details phone
4936 0204

Fitzroy Basin Association
Central Queensland Forest Association
Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Queensland Government
Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries

Power poles

Poles are amongst the highest valued forest product, larger sizes are by far more valuable. Electrical transmission poles vary from a minimum of 9.5 m x 150 mm top, through to stems 30.5 m long with a D-line 565 mm diameter under bark. Trees for poles should have no fault in the critical zone 1 m to 3 m from the butt end of the stem. As the specifications are very thorough it is advisable to have an experienced cutter, if not, timber could be wasted and the full potential of the product would be lost.

Mine props can be processed from small commercial trees such as Spotted gum and Ironbark with 10–15 cm diameter top, with a minimum length of 3.0 m. Harvesting small trees for mine props can reduce the amount of trees in overstocked areas, instead of paying contractors to thin by stem injection these trees can be thinned as mine props.

Mine props (used in underground mining)

Salvage timber can be sourced from head of trees which have been harvested for mill logs. Also trees which are of poor quality, such as being crooked, have blood rings, also non-commercial species like Bloodwood and Moreton Bay ash which are 2.1 m in length, and only have 15 cm small end diameter can be used as salvage timber. The price for this timber is not very high as it is used in underground mining; but gives return than having to pay for a thinning contractor.

Salvaged timber (mining)

Link blocks (underground mining)

6 inch twin edger used for cutting mining timber

Yards using round and split posts

Fencing timber mainly ironbark is processed from all sizes of trees from the smallest 10–15 cm diameter top with a minimum length 2.1 m for round posts. Yard posts can vary between 25–40 cm diameter top with length 2.4 m and longer. Split posts can be cut from head logs and poorer quality stems, split post measurement usually 12.5–15 cm small end diameter with a length of 2.1 m. The durability of ironbark allows it to last along time in the ground and does not need any treatment.

Management

While it is difficult to get one sawmill to harvest all of the products in one operation, the easiest way to negotiate product specifications, have a sample load cut and snug to a log dump, then have a purchaser inspect the product before haulage. A timber sale agreement giving product specifications and agreed price per cubic metre (m^3) be signed by all parties to avoid any misunderstanding.

A contractor can harvest all products at the same time, with an agreement that they will be given a bonus as an incentive, providing all the timber is used to its maximum potential. The harvesting area has been rehabilitated after logging, including drainage of tracks and log dumps are covered by debris that has been pushed aside during harvesting.

Landholders who have suitable skills and equipment can achieve higher timber value by doing all or part of the harvest operations such as cut, snig and haul timber.

Trees not required for future forests and not needed for recruitment or habitat trees can be thinned by stem injection.