

CHOOSING A QUALITY LOGGER

If you have decided to sell your timber, one of the most important decisions you will make during the process is the timber harvesters that you hire to do the job. A well done harvest can improve the health and sustainability of your forest. A poorly done one can damage the land, reduce your future potential earnings, and diminish the scenic qualities that may have motivated you to purchase your property in the first place.

Fortunately, there are many professional loggers who are knowledgeable in the current policies and regulations that protect natural resources, up to date on the technology that drives their work, continue to seek opportunities to continue their education, training, and certification.

In many ways choosing a quality logger is no different than hiring a contractor to work on your house or choosing a mechanic to work on your car. Asking smart questions, getting references, and seeing samples of their work are simple things you can do to make sure that you get the right timber harvester for the job. Below are some suggested questions to ask a logger you are considering hiring to do your timber harvest:

- How long have you been in business? How long have your crew members worked with you?
- Are you and your employees covered by insurance? At what dollar amounts and for what types of accidents? Will you provide me with copies of your certificates of liability insurance coverage?
- Does your equipment match the conditions and requirements to cut the timber on my property?
- Will you handle the entire timber harvest or do you hire subcontractors to do some of the work? How do you ensure the quality of the work of your subcontractors?
- How do you construct skid trails and roads? What condition will the roads, skid trails and landing be in when the job is done?
- Have you completed any logger training/education/certification programs?
- How would you handle any disputes over timber trespass? What precautions do you take to prevent damage to my and my neighbors' property?
- What Best Management Practices do you normally use? Which ones would apply to my property?
- Can you supply me with references from previous jobs and some of the mills you deal with?

Making the final choice

Before selecting the timber harvester, follow up with the references they provided and ask to visit one of their active logging operations. Approaching the decision carefully and thoughtfully will protect the long term productivity of your forest.