

With Continued Economic Turmoil And Political Uncertainty In 2012, What Specific Changes Are You Considering In Your Forest Management Plans?

Economic and Political stability (or instability) are variables in the external environment which can affect landowner management plans. We found that our members were making some changes based on these variables—responses varied from decisions considering selling, buying, to standing pat.

YOUR ANSWERS:

Continue to thin for forest health and wait for sawtimber prices to come back. The great thing about trees is they don't care about all this stuff...they just keep growing.

Troy Harris, *Norcross, GA*

We are not planning any changes in our forest management. As stewards of the timber, wildlife and land, we still believe that we are responsible for the maintenance of these assets. Our management will include prescribed burns, chemical treatments, select cutting and maintenance of roads and wildlife openings. We do pray that we see a significant change for the better in Washington.

Phillip Jones, *Andalusia, AL*

We have not had a formal plan — it's been ad hoc, case by case. I have hired a member of American Consulting Foresters (ACF) to help us develop a plan. I plan to increase our sales activity slightly this

year partly to get used to working with our new consultant and learning how to take a more systematic approach on an overall basis, partly to help cash flow, and partly to develop an overall management plan.

Robert Harrison, *Crossville, TN*

Sell Sell Sell SELL!

Land taxes are crushing me!

Joseph McEver, *Milledgeville, GA*

As a state forestry advisor to landowners, and not a landowner myself, I expect continued deferrals in tree planting, thinning and forest improvement practices due to economic and political uncertainties. The current administration's reliance on onerous rules and regulations, most of which place additional costly burdens on the regulated community (landowners, vendors, businesses), and the inability of a divided Congress to overturn them, make the current investment climate very difficult. Cash on hand will remain so, or capital will flee to more stable

alternatives until after the 2012 elections.

Kurt Atkinson, *Oklahoma City, OK*

Remove invasive species, price of timber only down 10%. Little change economically at my lands (LA).

Joseph Mitchell, *South Barrington, IL*

None — except to maybe build some needed roads before the EPA requires a permit.

Will Varn, *Hoboken, GA*

None. Continue to plug along with good forest management until timber prices improve. I have delayed thinning for a couple of years but plan to proceed with it this year even though prices have not rebounded yet.

David Kimbrough, *Charlotte, NC*

Taking time to update plans from recent deferred cuts. May seek to market pole-quality trees in small quantity

Sara Baldwin, *Athens, GA*

Considered changes: Very little replanting. Continue controlled burns as trees mature. Possible sale of hunting tracts.

Mardelle Rockwell, Auburn, AL

I call it a “hanging on” management strategy. Markets are so bad and the inventory of unsold timber in our state is so high that thinnings are planned to help delay final harvests at least 5 years (2017).

Stephen Dicke, Raymond, MS

I believe we will enter (or have entered) a deflationary spiral that will drag the world into another great depression. The response from the bankrupt nations of the world (including the US) will be to print money to infinity trying to stimulate growth. First comes the depression, then the attempts to inflate our way out of it. I am actively purchasing more timberland on the way down, and will hold standing timber as a hedge for the future inflation that will surely come from the money printing. Conclusion: Own “things,” not pieces of paper called money. Caveat! I am often wrong, but never in doubt.

Wayne Alexander, Victoria, TX

There is no plan until I learn the direction of the country in 2012. The result of the 2012 election will be a much larger factor in planning going forward.

Josh Gravely, Pickens, SC

Politics make no difference to us. Economic conditions do. We are conserving resources and waiting for timber prices to rise so we can continue our long term THP.

Dave Richenbach, Hillsborough, CA

Plan to proceed with a 90-acre pine sawtimber harvest that we have been delaying for 4-5 years hoping for a better economy. A better economy may still be 5 years away. For an over mature timber stand, the NPV of waiting another 5+ years for the possibility of a better market becomes strained — especially in the face of tornadoes, beetles, and other causes of mortality. Continuing with scheduled pine plantations thinnings based on biological needs.

Ken Booker, Jackson, MS

May delay some harvests until prices rebound. But fuelwood (biomass) chips & hardwood pulpwood prices seem to be somewhat stable in our area currently so planned harvest of those products should continue as planned.

Allen Braswell, Martinez, GA

Clear cutting the balance of the mature sawtimber I have been holding for the past five years and replanting with more of an eye to a pulpwood rotation.

Kevin Brown, Hampton, SC

Will need to initiate more aggressive (premature) harvesting or sell some or all of my timberland.

S. Morrison, Durham, NC

No real change due to economic turmoil or political uncertainty. I am more concerned about low stumpage prices in U.S. South. We are excited about selling timber right now; but will have to maintain biological growth and pest prevention.

Jeff Portwood, Lufkin, TX

I am going to be forced to not thin any timber (that currently needs thinning) for a while until prices come back up. The cost of labor exceeds the value of the timber. Several mills in our state of Louisiana have closed in past few years due to contraction of building industry and excessive government controls and permitting issues. It has crippled our state in many ways. I also will not plant any new acreage in trees until I see a change.

Charles May, Ruston, LA

Selling some land for cash to pay off loans. Conservation easements to reduce ad valorem taxes, intensive management of remainder of land, maybe sell some equipment.

J. Meadows, Summerville, GA

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