

# Finger Lakes Forests Forest Land and Timber Harvesting Best Management Practices (BMPs)

[Home](#) | [Index](#) | [Tools for Planning a Harvest](#)

## “Do It Yourself” Best Management Practices

### Introduction

This section of the CD-ROM focuses on what forest owners can and should do to protect the soil, water, and ecological quality of their woodlots through do-it-yourself best management practices.



**The key concepts in when doing your own forest work is to minimize soil disturbance, work efficiently, and prevent collateral damage to remaining trees.**

As noted at the beginning of this resource, New York forest owners own much more than forests. They own the source waters of creeks, hundreds of tons of rich organic soil, trillions of microscopic animals, and enough biological energy to make any electric producer envious. These ecological aspects of forests require proper stewardship and maintenance to continue providing the many benefits for our communities.

When it comes to firewood harvesting, trail building, wildlife projects, and tree planting, most forest owners become do-it-yourselfers. Best management practices, normally thought to apply only to commercial loggers, form important habits for private forest owners. Despite the majority of NY forests being owned by these individuals and families, management of these woodlots is inconsistent.

Unfortunately, many forest owners inadvertently abuse their woodlots. The activities that tend to cause the most harm to woodlots in the long run are:

- Lack of planning for long term uses of forests
- Timber harvesting based on financial need or possibly unexpected windfalls
- Removing trees without a forest management plan or advice from professional foresters
- Unaware of personal goals for the woodlot
- Unnecessarily restrict hunting of whitetail deer

Forest owners should consider following these best management practices for do-it-yourselfers:

**Do-it-yourself introduction**  
**General tips**  
**Crossing streams & gullies**  
**Harvesting firewood**  
**Chainsaw use**  
**Moving logs**  
**Making vehicle trails**



**General tips**

**Crossing streams & gullies**

**Harvesting firewood**

**Chainsaw use**

**Moving logs**

**Making trails for power equipment**

**Improving wildlife habitat**

[top](#)

[next page>>](#)

[Home](#) | [Index](#) | [Tools for Planning a Harvest](#)

Please cite source: Cornell Cooperative Extension, 2004  
Written by James Ochterski, CCE - Schuyler County

**CORNELL** Cooperative Extension

