

Comments: “Good Forestry” 2nd draft.

Bill Leak, 3/17/2010

Looks great overall! Deals well with the importance of owner objectives!!

A few comments, trying not to be picky!

p. 30.—In the 2nd table, could we tuck balsam fir (and its soils) in with red spruce and hemlock?

p. 35.—second and third bullets. Could we say: where there is minimal undesirable understory in a stand with overstory beech, harvest in winter to prevent development of beech suckers, unless scarification is required for regeneration purposes. And: Where there is an undesirable understory of beech and/or other species, harvest in snow-free seasons to help reduce/eliminate the understory and provide a scarified seedbed.

p. 65.—Oh dear, here I go again! Soil Productivity Chapter. Campbell et al (cited) and Chris Johnson (Can. J. For. Res. 27:859-868, 1997) say no nutrient loss from clearcutting and whole-tree (plus acid rain); both studies on the same watershed. These are the only two local whole-tree studies that measured the soils to my knowledge. If whole-tree clearcutting (plus acid rain) did not degrade soils, it is doubtful whether any sort of harvesting would. We could caution on repeated short-rotation whole-tree, saying that we just don't know. We could say whole-tree has some early wildlife implications – no brush. I recall that Rick Lessard said almost all large harvesting operations in NH are whole-tree, but sometimes we drag the tops back (a little ways) and call it a conventional harvest. He also said he is hopeful that biomass will fill the role of the declining pulp markets, provide another energy source, and help sustain good silviculture. So, we shouldn't unnecessarily limit reasonable applications of this practice.

We stress concerns about poor soils – the ones that grow hemlock, spruce-fir, white pine etc. However, perhaps the real concern would be better sites that support nutrient-demanding species such as ash and sugar maple. The species we watch most closely for signs of nutrient problems is sugar maple, which is quite non aggressive on mediocre soils – those derived from granite for example.

Not sure that compaction is much of a problem on most Nh soils. However, direct root damage is a problem.

Trying to be helpful!!!

Bill