

Salvage Logging

Large disturbances, such as wind storms or tornados can cause many trees in a forest to fall down. Some of the trees that fall would not make good lumber because they are too small or are rotten. Some of the fallen trees, however, would be good for lumber. Instead of letting this lumber go to waste, salvage logging can be done. Salvage logging means taking the fallen trees that are good for lumber out of the forest and leaving the rest. It may be tempting to take out all the trees so the forest looks cleaned up, but leaving some of the trees creates habitat. It has been found that if done correctly, salvage logging can contribute to greater vegetation diversity.

Many trees along the Lost Creek Hiking Trail blew down in a large storm in 2010. Trees that could be salvaged for lumber were taken right away, but not everything was salvageable. Instead of cleaning up what may look like a mess, the unsalvageable branches and trees were left where they fell to create habitat and protect tree seedlings from browsing deer. Tree-tops and shattered stems have been cut low enough to become covered by broadleaf ground cover, permitting faster decay and recycling nutrients.

MORE RESOURCES:

Bottomland hardwood forest recovery following tornado disturbance and salvage logging

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http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/ja/ja_nelson008.pdf



Trees that were unsalvageable for lumber and were left for habitat