



The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) Forest Aesthetics



Louisiana Sustainable Forestry Initiative

www.laforestry.com

There are numerous aspects of forestry aesthetics management which should be considered for all management activities. While they vary regionally and locally, the following considerations are common to most tracts and can help to prioritize efforts to improve the visual and other aesthetic impacts:

Who visits or sees this forest? Is the area residential in nature, or are there other high visitor considerations such as scenic sites, trails or other recreation areas? What type of roads pass by or through the tract, and what level of use do they receive?

Would the aesthetics be helped by doing the planned operations during a particular time of the year? Seasonal limitations may reduce the impact of harvests and reduce the cost of overall aesthetic management. Are there water resources that need special considerations? Knowing and implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) improve the visual quality of forestry operations.

Are there non-visual considerations for this tract, such as sound limitations during harvesting or other operations, or does the stand provide a sound buffer locally? How does the property appear currently, and what will it look like during and after the management operation? Having predetermined goals, pre-planning and good communication are critical to the success of aesthetic management.

Does the planned management activity need a visual buffer, known as an Aesthetic Management Zone (AMZ) with special management considerations such as more residual trees left, or is it better to leave a cleaner condition such as is done by removing all woody debris from that area? Is the visual buffer needed only temporarily?

Do conditions call for planting or managing for different species in the AMZ? Post-management grass seeding of areas can enhance the visual quality of the operations as well.

Can natural features such as Streamside Management Zones (SMZs) or topographic features be used to enhance the aesthetics of the operation?

To avoid appearing wasteful, harvested forest products should not be visible to the public for long periods of time after harvests are complete, and all waste should be removed from all operations daily.

Can wildlife considerations such as perch trees or den

trees be used to enhance the visual aesthetics of the operations?

A discussion of these and any other site-specific considerations should be undertaken with your Resource Professional prior to beginning forest management activities. Other resources available through the Louisiana Forestry Association may prove helpful in the planning process, such as:

Forestry Aesthetics Guide, A Guide to the Aesthetics of Forest Operations in the South
<http://www.aces.edu/natural-resources/forestry/harvesting-roads/siteprep.php>

Information on the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)
<http://www.sfiprogram.org/>

A list of Certified Master Loggers in Louisiana, who have all had training in Forestry Aesthetics <http://www.laforestry.com>



If your property is adjacent to an aesthetically sensitive area (a church, public road, school) you may need to implement forestry practices to advance the aesthetics of your land.