



Sawfly Spells Trouble for Pine Trees in Northwest Alabama

During the last few weeks, there have been numerous reports from Northwest Alabama about dying pine trees. Most of the visible damage is occurring on reasonably healthy, mature loblolly pines, growing in well-managed stands. According to officials with the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC), the apparent culprits are larvae of the loblolly pine sawfly, feeding on and defoliating pine needles. With infestations reported in Colbert, Marion, Franklin, Lamar, and Fayette counties, the AFC is in the process of conducting aerial surveys of the affected counties. Infestation notices are being prepared for landowners where problems are detected, along with stand management recommendations.

Although approximately 20 species of pine sawflies exist in the Southeast, the loblolly pine sawfly (*Neodiprion taedae line-*

aris) is the current aggressor. This particular species produces only one generation per year. Larvae attack in the spring, mainly from April to May, and host trees can be loblolly or shortleaf pines. A mature larva is approximately 1.25 inches long with a chocolate-brown colored head. The body is dull green



with heavy black stripes along each side and lighter stripes below them.

During an outbreak, most pines will not succumb to the infestation. The best recommendation is to wait and see if the infested pines rebound from the attack. Most will recover from this partial defoliation and start to

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grow lush green needles again by the summer. Because the loblolly pine sawfly is a native

pest, population outbreaks are generally sporadic, localized, and widespread, significantly influenced by favorable climatic conditions and the presence of control biological agents. Natural predators such as birds, small mammals, and other parasitic organisms will prey on it, eventually reducing the population. Pathogens, viruses, and even starvation will also reduce the population. The use of insecticides is another option for controlling this defoliating pest,

although cost prohibitive for large acreage. Insecticides are generally only used on infested pines in residential or commercial areas where aesthetics are an issue.

If you suspect that your pine stand is under attack by the loblolly pine sawfly, please contact Gary Butler or your local AFC office.

Reprinted from the AFC website

Herbaceous Weed Control and Woody Release

As we enter another site preparation season, we thought it would be a good idea to discuss two operations often combined with site preparation treatments to improve pine seedling survival and growth. These include herbaceous weed control and woody release.

Herbaceous weed control is the process of controlling herbaceous weeds, forbs and grasses in young planted pine plantations. It is very helpful and is one of the best things a landowner can do to improve survival and early growth in a newly planted pine plantation.

Herbicides used in herbaceous weed control operations are most effective against

annual grasses and forbs that are pioneer invaders on recently disturbed sites and against weeds and grasses on old agricultural fields or pastures. Herbicides can be applied by backpack sprayers, aerially, agricultural boom type sprayers or sprayers mounted on ATVs. Applications can be broadcast, hand sprayed or spot treatments. A 4 to 6 foot band is often as beneficial as a broadcast spray and is significantly lower in cost.

Old pastures or agricultural fields usually have considerable herbaceous competition due to established grasses, a seed bank of agricultural weeds and high fertility. Good survival and growth in these sites usually requires competition control. There are a number of op-

tions for treating old fields and pastures. These include scalping, ripping or bedding followed by herbaceous weed control. Scalping removes established plant roots and seeds of weeds away from planted pines. It provides bare soil early in the first growing season. Ripping may be useful on sites where a hardpan exists while bedding may be necessary on some lower, wetter sites. Any of the above should be followed by a treatment for herbaceous weed control. It should be noted that chemical site preparation prior to planting is also an option as well as the use of herbaceous weed control without any site preparation. The success of either of these treatments depends upon the competing vegetation and the choice of herbicide.

Herbaceous weed control is often used on cutover sites that have been prepared by mechanical means such as drum chopping or shearing and raking combined with ripping, bedding or harrowing. However, it is necessary to insure that woody competition has been controlled since a herbaceous weed control treatment will have little or no effect on the woody competition.

Chemicals used in herbaceous weed control most often include Glyphosate, Hexazone, Imazapyr, Metasulfuron and Sulfometuron Methyl.

Woody release is a silvicultural treatment used to reduce the level of hardwood competition in young pine stands. The objective of a woody release treatment is to reduce pine mortality in cases where dense brush or hardwood is overtopping pines and to in-

crease pine growth by controlling competition. Woody release treatments are often needed due to less than adequate site preparation. Most release operations are done aerially but they can be done using backpack sprayers. A woody release treatment is normally less costly than site preparation and is often done the fall after planting if there was no original site preparation treatment. Otherwise, treatments are usually carried out in stands 2 to 5 years old. Response to the treatment depends upon the level of competition and the age of the stand at treatment. Pine response to a treatment declines slightly each additional year.

A good visual inspection should tell you if a woody release treatment is needed. According to a publication produced by Texas A&M, woody release treatments are best suited for stands with a hardwood

component of 10% or greater.

Woody release treatments are usually conducted in late summer or early fall. A major benefit of a woody release includes the removal of unwanted vegetation competing with desirable young pines. This reduces the amount of hardwood competition thus increasing the survival and growth of recently planted pines by redistributing moisture, nutrients and available light that would have been used by hardwoods.

Herbicides used in woody release treatments include Arsenal, Accord and Garlon. A surfactant is often used with these chemicals.

Call Gary Butler if you are interested in performing a herbaceous weed control and woody release treatment on your property.

Mulching—Is It For You?

Mulchers and mowers are tools landowners may want to consider in their efforts to control underbrush and other unwanted vegetation. Fuelwood operations, herbicide spraying and burning have traditionally been used to control underbrush and mid story hardwoods. Mulchers and mowers

have come in to more use in the past few years. In addition to brush control they can be used for other operations such as pre-commercial thinning, construction and maintenance of firelines and clearing of overgrown agricultural land.

Mulching or mowing is

environmentally friendly with very little disturbance to the forest floor. Mulchers or machine heads can usually be used on several types of equipment making them applicable to a number of types of sites.

The greatest disadvantage to using mulchers is

their cost which can run from \$200.00 to \$350.00 per hour. The cost of the operation depends upon the number of acres involved, size and amount of brush to be mulched and the amount of standing timber on the site. Mulching or mowing will need to be followed by prescribed burning or herbicide treatments to maintain control

of the underbrush and other unwanted vegetation.

Call Gary Butler if you are interested in performing a mulching or mowing treatment on your property.

We want to hear from you!

Email your thoughts and requests to dawn@butlerandcompany inc.com, fax them to (334)289-1972 or mail them to P.O. Box 88, Demopolis, Alabama 36732.

Seven Smart Strategies For Remodeling Your Kitchen

Homeowners spend more money on kitchen remodeling than on any other home improvement project. And with good reason: Kitchens are the hub of home life, and a source of pride. If done right, a kitchen remodel can recoup much of its cost. Kitchen remodels in the \$50,000 to \$60,000 range recoup about 69% of the initial project cost when the home is sold. A minor kitchen remodel of about \$18,500 does even better, returning more than 75% of your investment, according to the most recent Cost vs. Value data from Remodeling magazine. To maximize your return on investment, follow these seven strategies to help keep you on budget and help you make smart remodeling choices.

1. **Plan, Plan, Plan** - Planning your kitchen remodel should take more time than the

actual construction. If you plan well, the amount of time you're inconvenienced by construction mayhem will be minimized. Plus, you're more likely to stay within your budget.

How much time should you spend planning? The National Kitchen and Bath Association recommends at least six months. That way, you won't be tempted to change your mind during construction and create change orders, which will inflate construction costs and hurt your return on investment.

Some tips on planning:

- Study your existing kitchen: How wide is the doorway into your kitchen? It's a common mistake many homeowners make: Buying the extra-large fridge only to find they can't get it in the doorway. To avoid mistakes

like this, create a drawing of your kitchen with measurements for doorways, walkways, counters, etc. And don't forget height, too.

- Think about traffic patterns: Work aisles should be a minimum of 42 inches wide and at least 48 inches wide for households with multiple cooks.
- Design with ergonomics in mind: Drawers or pull-out shelves in base cabinets; counter heights that can adjust up or down; a wall oven instead of a range: These are all features that make a kitchen accessible to everyone - and a pleasure to work in.

Plan for the unforeseeable: Even if you've planned down to the number of nails you'll need in your remodel, expect the unexpected. Build in

a little leeway for completing the remodel. Want it done by Thanksgiving? Then plan to be done before Halloween.

Choose all your fixtures and materials before starting: Contractors will be able to make more accurate bids, and you'll lessen the risk of delays because of back orders.

Don't be afraid to seek help: A professional designer can simplify your kitchen remodel. Pros help make style decisions, foresee potential problems, and schedule contractors.

2. Keep the Same Footprint - Nothing will drive up the cost of a remodel faster than changing the location of plumbing pipes and electrical outlets, and knocking down walls. This is usually where unforeseen problems occur. So if possible, keep appliances, water fixtures, and walls in the same location.

Not only will you save on demolition and reconstruction costs, you'll cut the amount of dust and debris your project generates.

3. Get Real About Appliances - It's easy to get carried away when planning your new kitchen. A six-burner commercial-grade range and luxury-brand refrigerator may make eye-catching centerpieces, but they may not fit your cooking needs or lifestyle. Appliances

are essentially tools used to cook and store food. Your kitchen remodel shouldn't be about the tools, but the design and functionality of the entire kitchen. So unless you're an exceptional cook who cooks a lot, concentrate your dollars on long-term features that add value, such as cabinets and flooring. Then choose appliances made by trusted brands that have high marks in online reviews and Consumer Reports.

4. Don't Underestimate the Power of Lighting - Lighting can make a world of difference in a kitchen. It can make it look larger and brighter. And it will help you work safely and efficiently. You should have two different types of lighting in your remodeled kitchen:

Task Lighting: Under-cabinet lighting should be on your must-do list, since cabinets create such dark work areas. And since you're remodeling, there won't be a better time to hard-wire your lights. Plan for at least two fixtures per task area to eliminate shadows. Pendant lights are good for islands and other counters without low cabinets. Recessed lights and track lights work well over sinks and general prep areas with no cabinets overhead.

Ambient lighting: Flush-mounted ceiling fixtures, wall sconces, and track lights create overall lighting in your kitchen. Include dimmer switches to

control intensity and mood.

5. Be Quality-Conscious - Functionality and durability should be top priorities during kitchen remodeling. Resist low-quality bargains, and choose products that combine low maintenance with long warranty periods. Solid-surface countertops, for instance, may cost a little more, but with the proper care, they'll look great for a long time. And if you're planning on moving soon, products with substantial warranties are a selling advantage.

6. Add Storage, Not Space - Storage will never go out of style, but if you're sticking with the same footprint, here are a couple of ideas to add more:

Install cabinets that reach the ceiling: They may cost more - and you might need a stepladder - but you'll gain valuable storage space for Christmas platters and other once-a-year items. In addition, you won't have to dust cabinet tops.

Hang it up: Mount small shelving units on unused wall areas and inside cabinet doors; hang stock pots and large skillets on a ceiling-mounted rack; and add hooks to the backs of closet doors for aprons, brooms, and mops.

Source: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®
HouseLogic.com

Listings!



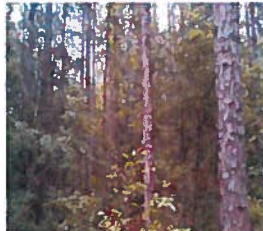
1255.15 acres, more or less: Sections 35 and 36, T15N, R9E and Section 1, T14N, R9E on Alabama River southwest of Selma in Dallas County, Alabama. Excellent timber/recreational property. \$5,500,000. CALL GARY at 334-217-0595.



520 acres in Marengo County: Located 1/2 mile from Demopolis. Cattle farm with 2 bedroom/1 bathroom log house. Lake. 2400 SF barn with shop area and office area, pole barn and large hay barn. 5 food plots with blinds. \$2,000,000. CALL BILL at 341-7966.



613.8 acres of timberland located on AL Highway 17 approximately 5 miles NE of Butler and 4 – 5 miles S of Jachin in the NE portion of Choctaw County, AL. Access to and over this tract is by AL Highway 17 and woods roads . Features pine, pine plantation, premerchanted pine plantation, pine upland hardwood, upland hardwood and streamside management zone timber types. Soils on the property include the following soil types: Bibb, Iuka, Luverne and Smithdale. These are good to excellent soils with site indexes, base age 50, ranging from 85 to 100 for loblolly pine. Seller reserving all mineral rights it owns in the property. \$1,372,077. Call Gary Butler at 334-217-0595.



460 acres in Crenshaw and Covington Counties: Located 5 miles southwest of Brantley and 6 miles northwest of the Rose Hill community. Forest stands on the property include premerchanted pine plantation, pine, bottomland hardwood, and streamside management zone timber types. There is one wildlife food plot on the property and a number of sites that could easily be put into wildlife food plots. This tract has frontage on the Conecuh River and is well suited for timber production and recreation in the form of hunting. \$1,072,482. CALL GARY at 334-217-0595.



3469 County Road 19, Greensboro: 3 bedroom/2 bath ranch-style home on 200 acres just north of Greensboro in Hale County. Truck shed, horse stable, 3 barns, 4 small shooting houses, 1 large shooting house, a water well and 2 5-acre lakes with a pier each are all featured on this great property! \$550,000. CALL GARY for more information.



80 acres in Greene County: Borders the City Limits of Eutaw on its north side. Excellent timber and recreational property with pine and streamside management zone timber types. 10 acres of lime rock outcropping serve as excellent wildlife areas. There are several areas on the tract that could be utilized as wildlife food plots. \$245,000. CALL GARY for more information.



140 acres on YC Stone Road: East central part of Perry County, Alabama. Premier merchantable pine plantations and standing timber. 3 wildlife food plots with shooting house. Good hunting and investment property. \$210,000. CALL GARY for more information.



40 acres in Bibb County: Timberland located near Randolph in the southeast portion of Bibb County, Alabama. Forest stands include well-stocked 20-year old pine plantation ready to be thinned. Good site index for loblolly pine. Priced at \$75,000. CALL GARY at 334-217-0595.



40 acres in Tuscaloosa County: This tract is located on the Tuscaloosa-Hale County line near the Talladega National Forest and is bordered by timber companies on the south and east boundaries. This secluded tract is well stocked with stands of pine and mixed pine hardwood timber and should be an excellent timber investment and recreational property. \$62,500. CALL GARY for more information.



54 acres in Lamar County: Located near the Detroit Community in the NW portion of Lamar County. Forest stands consist of 11-13 year old natural hardwood regeneration and a streamside management zone. Priced at \$50,000. CALL GARY.



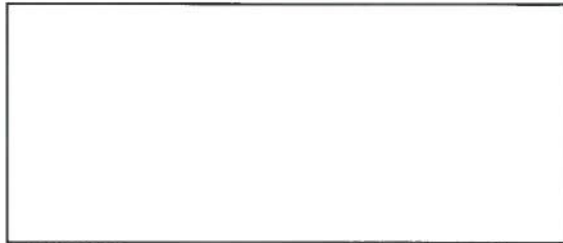
36 acres in Marion County: Located in the SW section of Marion County. Forest stands include pine plantation, pine, pine upland hardwood and streamside management zone timber types. Priced at \$50,000. CALL GARY.



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Housing Market Update

Existing home sales increased 4.9% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.89 million in May from 4.66 million in April. This is 5% less than May 2013 sales.

Single-family home sales rose 6.4% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 433,000 million in April from 407,000 million in March, and are 4.2% below the 452,000 million-unit level in April 2013.

Existing condominium and co-op sales were unchanged at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 590,000 in May and are unchanged from the pace one year ago.

Total housing inventory at the end of May rose 2.2% to 2.28 million existing homes available for sale, which represents a 5.6-month supply at the current sales pace.

Building permits dropped 6.4% from 1,059,000 in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 991,000. Builders broke ground on 1,001,000 homes in May, a 6.5% decrease over April's totals.

Source: Department of Commerce and National Association of Realtors Press Releases

We hope that you have enjoyed this newsletter, but if you haven't and wish to opt out of future issues, please send an email to dawn@butlerandcompanyinc.com with your name or organization.