

# Instructional Scenario



TITLE: Timber Harvest Concerns

Course/Duty Area: Forestry Management / Exploring Forest Trends, Threats, and Conditions

## Scenario:

You are a consulting forester to a landowner who owns 800 acres of mature loblolly pine. The landowner wishes to replant the tract after it is harvested. The tract is adjoined by a public park, a scenic highway, and a housing development. Current forest practices call for clearcutting the timber, but the adjoining landowners are concerned about the aesthetics of that type of timber harvest. What can you do to harvest the timber to complete the financial and regeneration requirements of the landowner and mitigate the concerns of the adjoining landowners?

## Focused Questions:

1. Who are the stakeholders that are affected by the harvesting of the timber?
2. How do the forest management decisions affect each of the stakeholders?
3. What are visual buffers?
4. Why do loblolly pines require this type of harvest method to regenerate?

## Project-Based Assessment:

Develop a plan to present to the landowner that will help to mitigate the concerns of his neighbors while allowing him to fulfill his goals.

The plan should include either ways to use visual buffers or group selection methods to mitigate aesthetic loss and still harvest the trees.

## Teacher Resources:

Forestry Guide to Agriculture Education in Virginia Buffers for visual screening  
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/nac/buffers/docs/6/6.7ref.pdf>

*Instructional scenario submitted by Derek Mays, Instructor, Amherst County High School, Amherst County Public Schools*

#### Answers to Focused Questions:

1. The landowners, the public who use the park and the highway, and the homeowners in the housing development are all stakeholders.
2. The landowner will be concerned about income generated from the timber sale and the effects the timber harvest will have on the regeneration efforts afterwards. Also, they could be concerned about public perception. After the harvest and while the trees planted are still young, the visual impact of a clearcut area is most noticeable in the first few years following the harvest. The public using the park will be concerned with the change of scenery viewed from the park. The homeowners may be concerned with property values because of less desirable aesthetics, displaced wildlife, changes in wind patterns that could cause property damage, and the time that it will take for the forest to regenerate to the level that they are accustomed to.
3. Visual buffers are strips of timber of varying widths that can be used to block the view of a timber harvest.
4. Loblolly pines prefer a clearcut harvesting method because they are shade intolerant. Loblolly pines are also artificially regenerated through planted seedlings because superior genetically selected seedlings can be used to shorten rotations, increase timber productivity, improve quality, and make healthier more disease and pest resistant trees.