

SELLING TIMBER? YOU SHOULD KNOW THIS!

Lindsey Barney – DNR District Forester

I have been contacted several times this fall by landowners who have been approached by log buyers primarily interested in buying black walnut. What do you think is the first question that I ask the landowner about the interested buyer? “Is this log buyer bonded with the State of Iowa?” Well, if the landowner doesn’t know – I can look up this information for them. You too can check the list of bonded timber buyers for Iowa – which is found at:

<http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/Forestry/WoodIndustryLogging/BondedTimberBuyers.aspx>.

According to Iowa Code 456A.36: "A person who engages in business as a timber buyer without filing a bond or surety with the commission (DNR Forestry) is guilty of a serious misdemeanor." A person actively buying timber without a bond or listed as a buyer under a company who is bonded, instantly becomes a red flag for me and should be a red flag to you now. You should not do business with a non-bonded timber buyer. DNR Conservation Officers across the state are actively enforcing this law – it is not to be taken lightly.

There is a difference between a Forester and a Log Buyer. The goal of a professional Forester is to help you achieve your woodland management objectives (which can include timber harvest) while still managing for long-term sustainability and forest health. A Log Buyer is a businessperson interested in buying and marketing trees. While some log buyers may be foresters by education – not all may have your forest’s best interests in mind. If a buyer approaches you about buying timber – you should think about these things:

1. How did the buyer know you have merchantable timber – did they trespass to look at your trees?
2. Give yourself plenty of time to think about selling timber. I hear a lot about non-bonded buyers that approach landowners with a sum of money that sounds good to the landowner – but in actuality is a very low price for the volume of sold timber. Do not be afraid to turn down the log buyer until you have had more time to do your research. Make sure you read and adhere to the recommendations in the following document:

http://www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/forestry/topten_sellingtimber.pdf?amp;tabid=1282 .

If you are primarily interested in liquidating timber (i.e. land clearing or salvage) a private consulting forester can assist you with marketing your timber for a fee. DNR Foresters cannot assist with timber sales that are not prescribed in a Woodland Stewardship Plan. That said – if you are interested in having a Woodland Stewardship Plan created for your timber – please contact me at 712.482.6245 or by e-mail at:

Lindsey.barney@dnr.iowa.gov.

Additional links on Selling Timber can be found at:

<http://www.callb4ucut.com/iowa/Home/tabid/227/Default.aspx>

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM413.pdf>

http://www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/forestry/hardwood_ira.pdf

http://www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/forestry/bwalnut_economics.pdf?amp;tabid=1282