



Assessing Timber Damage for Landowners

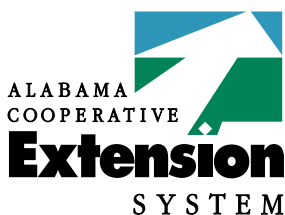
Timber damage assessment is probably not the first thing people think following a round of storms. But it is one of the regrettable duties that occur during the tenure of most forest owners.

First determine if you have damage. If you live near or on the property, you know firsthand what happened. If you live some distance from the property and have a forest consultant, he or she will have already been on the scene with other clients and may be able to tell you what to expect before making a specific visit to your property. Without a consultant, you can call neighbors of your property, hunting lease holders, the county forester, or anyone who knows where your property is located and who has travelled there recently.

If you have damage, you have two related tasks. The first is to assess the amount of lost value, so you can determine the casualty loss. If you have worked with a consultant, he or she likely will have already done some preparation for this moment. If you have not faced such a situation in the past, you can find helpful information at www.timbertax.org.

The second task is to determine what to do with the damaged stand. You will probably need assistance for this also. Check the procedure referenced in the publication at <http://www.forestry.uga.edu/outreach/pubs/pdf/WSFNR08-29.pdf>.

Remember that storm-damaged stands can be dangerous with widow-makers (broken limbs in trees) that can come down at any time. Hardhats are cheap and can save your life. Travel with a buddy if possible or organize regular contact by phone or text message with someone who knows your location and your plan. If you do not check-in, that person can probably determine where you are likely to be and can direct assistance. Don't count on being able to make a phone call when you are injured. If you expect to cut your way in with a chainsaw, read and heed the manufacturer's directions, and wear safety gear. Don't be another storm casualty.



For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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