



Training Alabama's Loggers

Impact Statement

The Problem/Issue:

Loggers harvest and transport the wood fiber necessary to supply Alabama's largest manufacturing industry. Loggers across Alabama and the United States are committed to completing basic logger training programs and continuing education. The forest products industry made this commitment to provide assurance to consumers of wood products that forest sustainability is being practiced in the United States. The problem for loggers has been getting this training in a way that is both economical and convenient.

What's Been Done:

In Alabama, the Professional Logging Manager Training program, a joint effort of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Alabama Forestry Association and the Alabama Sustainable Forestry Initiative, provides vital training. In order to be certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, a program promoting the sustainable management of Alabama's forests, professional loggers must complete a five-day PLM that includes instruction in logging safety, water quality and stream protection, logging business management, forest management and first aid.

Extension also used a number of distance education efforts to provide continuing education to those already certified through the PLM program.

Why We Care:

Sixty-one loggers completed the PLM program in 2003. Extension was an integral part of this course through classroom instruction and curriculum materials development. Not only must Alabama loggers complete the PLM course, but the 2,398 certified loggers in the state are required to maintain their certification through continuing education credits. In 2003, Extension provided approximately 20 percent of the total 14,000 hours of logger continuing education offered in Alabama.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is leading the way in primary and continuing education efforts of the state's logging industry. Loggers believe Extension programs offer good information with good value. Value is critical since it is estimated that a full-day training program costs a logging business as much as \$1,000 per person per day.

