



North Carolina
Forest Service

FORESTRY

Leaflets

July 2012

FM-9

Maintaining & Managing Your White Pine Plantation

Now that you have invested the time and funding to establish your new white pine plantation, the responsibility to manage these seedlings has just begun. The recommendations on this leaflet may be used as a basic template or starting point for the long term maintenance of your forest plantation. The suggested timelines will vary according to the site conditions and your overall objectives. You are encouraged to document and keep records of all management activities that are done on your forestland. Consult with a forester or the N.C. Forest Service for advice on how to tend to your trees.

Management Activity

Suggested Timeline

Inspect and maintain property boundary lines.
Maintain firebreaks, access trails and roads.

Annually or more frequently,
as needed.

Inspect for signs of disease, damage from animals, or insect infestation. If livestock grazing is desired within the plantation, wait until the trees reach an average height of about 30 feet.

Annually, in spring and summer
when disease/insect activity
usually increases.

Check for competing vegetation or presence of invasive plant species. Assess whether or not your tree seedlings are being suppressed by surrounding trees, shrubs, vines or grass. Take action to eliminate the competition and 'release' your seedlings if needed to enhance growth.

Annually, in summer.
Continue checking until age 10
to 15, or when the pine treetops
start to close-in together.

Additional income may be obtained by clipping the tips off of the white pines, for use in Christmas wreaths and other ornamental arrangements. Tips should be removed from the lower branches. Never remove more than half of the tree's total needles at one time.

From age 8 to 15.
Tips can usually be harvested
only twice during this entire
period, to limit stress on the tree.

Thin the plantation to remove suppressed, diseased, poorly-formed, or damaged trees. Thinning will open up more growing space for the best quality trees that are retained. Obtain professional forestry advice to assess the need for a thinning and before timber harvest begins.

Sometime between age 20 to 25.
Future thinnings at 5 to 10 year
intervals may be appropriate,
depending on site factors.

Harvest the plantation timber and begin plans for site prep and reforestation. Obtain professional forestry advice to help plan the timber harvest and develop a reforestation plan.

Between age 35 to 50. White
pine generally begins to decline
and succumb to natural mortality
after 50+ years and can lose
significant economic value.



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