



Regrowth

Harvest vs. Fire: Which is Better for the Future of Our Forests?

It's no secret that harvesting affects forest composition, structure and function while providing a renewable resource vital to both people and our economy. Natural disturbances such as wildfire also affect plant composition and resource availability. So which has more impact on how our forests evolve over time?

- ◆ There is evidence that overgrown forests are more susceptible to wildfire than ones that are carefully managed and harvested.
- ◆ According to a study by the University of Minnesota Department of Forest Resources, a harvested forest site will often have greater diversity and species richness in a shorter period of time than a site affected by fire, particularly in areas where fire was intense.
- ◆ Studies by the U of M Department of Forest Resources indicate that timber harvesting has not diminished

productivity or plant diversity in comparison to the common natural disturbance of wildfire.

HOW FIRE AFFECTS THE REGROWTH OF A FOREST.

When a fire occurs, the top layers of soil are frequently burned, reducing organic matter and removing nutrients. Natural regeneration will occur within five-to-10 years, but tree spacing will not allow for adequate sunlight to reach the forest floor once mature. This tight spacing makes the forest more susceptible to other casualties such as blowdown, wildfire, insects and disease.

HOW HARVESTING AFFECTS THE REGROWTH OF A FOREST.

When a site is harvested, it is naturally regenerated, seeded or planted. This allows shrubs, grasses and other plant species to re-grow more quickly than where fire has occurred.

EVER WONDER WHAT AN OVERGROWN FOREST LOOKS LIKE TO MOTHER NATURE?



Some people think our forests should be left to nature. Unfortunately, an overgrown forest is far more susceptible to wildfire than one that is carefully harvested. And when you consider the uses for burnt wood, harvesting seems like a logical decision.

www.minnesotaforests.com

MINNESOTA FOREST INDUSTRIES



MINNESOTA FOREST INDUSTRIES

