

WHY ARE SOME FORESTS CLEARCUT?

Different forest landowners have different objectives. Those who are producing timber for wood products have a variety of options when it comes to harvesting trees. One of those is clearcutting, in which most of the trees are removed, and then seedlings are planted over the whole area to grow a new forest. Not every location is suitable for clearcutting. The landowner's choice is influenced by the species of tree as well as climate, landscape, economics and conditions that affect how the forest will best regenerate.



OREGON'S WESTERN FORESTS

West of the Cascades, forest landowners often choose to clearcut, because the Douglas-fir seedlings planted after harvest will grow best in full sunlight. Yet, remember that even in a clearcut, Oregon law requires that trees be left as buffers alongside streams to protect water and fish. And in the clearcut area, a few trees are retained for wildlife habitat. Also, the seedlings must be planted within two years after harvest.

OREGON'S EASTERN FORESTS

In other climates – such as the dryer, sunnier pine forests east of the Cascades – the forest canopy helps protect fragile seedlings from heat and frost, so clearcutting is less common. Trees are usually harvested individually or in small groups.



Clearcutting is often chosen for **TREE SPECIES** that grow best in full sunlight.

In western Oregon, where eight in 10 trees are sun-loving Douglas-firs, open clearcut areas allow seedlings to thrive when the forest is replanted.



LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY

A variety of harvest methods and ownership priorities help to create a mosaic of forest ages and habitat characteristics. This pattern is similar to landscapes affected by natural disturbances, such as intense windstorms and forest fires. Scientists say the worst approach would be to manage all forestlands the same way.

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