

WOODLAND SUMMARY

CLIENT/SELLER

FOR WILSON-HARVEY AUCTION GROUP AUCTION: 9/30/09

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The following is a description of the wooded tracts in the auction of Client/Seller's woodland acreage west of Bellefontaine near the airport. I worked in these woods as the service forester for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry as early as 1978. The previous owners of Tract 8 had sought professional forestry help from the state as early as 1960 according to service forestry records. Tracts 10-13 received timber stand improvement work, mainly vine control and thorn and cull tree deadening, under a USDA Soil Conservation Service (now NRCS) Long Tern Agreement cost-share program. The white oak and walnut timber in Tract 8 was harvested in 1978. The timber in tract 13 was marked by me and was then selectively harvested in 1986. No timber has been cut since that time. The ice storm of January, 2005 did no significant damage to any of these stands. White ash is not a major component of the stands so the introduced emerald ash borer, which is actively killing ash in Logan County, will not significantly affect these woods. Soils information is available from the Logan Soil and Water Conservation District office on County Road 11 and the Logan County auditor's website. I have recently visited all 8 wooded tracts to assess current conditions and will comment on the species and volume of timber, growing conditions, timber potential, and to some degree wildlife management, recreation and home site potential of the tracts.

The large woods on both sides of Township Road 46 have stakes along the road to delineate the tract boundaries. A detailed cruise of each tract was not attempted because the proposed property lines are not marked and the time involved for such an undertaking. I used my familiarity with the woods and over 35 years timber marketing experience in western Ohio to make the conservative estimates in this report. Prospective buyers should make their own on the ground inspection possibly with their own real estate or forestry expert.

Tract 3, 58.8 acres

Tract 3 contains a walnut grove that developed in a pasture and in low ground in a natural bowl. While the soils there are not considered optimum for walnut establishment and growth, an almost pure stand of walnut has gotten established. There are over 100 walnut trees in the stand of 12" to 20" in diameter at chest height. Only a small percentage of the trees are veneer quality because of the open grown nature of the trees. Some of the larger trees could be sold and the rest managed for further growth. Many of the larger lumber quality trees are currently worth \$100 apiece or less on the stump, however. There are other scattered overmature oaks in the pasture with large wildlife dens. The tract may have as much or more appeal to the recreation and hunting enthusiasts than the tree farmer because of the buildings, topography and wildlife cover.

Tract 8, 47.0 acres

This 47 acre woods is back a gravel right-of-way on the north side of SR 47, east of the entrance to the Bellefontaine Regional Airport. I worked with the previous owners to market the timber in 1978. The 1978 harvest was a fairly heavy cut of veneer and lumber quality white oak and walnut trees that had been protected from grazing for some time. Current conditions show a regenerated stand of quality timber species with few thorn trees or vines in the stand. The higher ground at both the north and south ends of the woods contains the more upland species like sugar maple, red oak and white oak. Hickory predominates in the middle part of the woods. The seasonally wet spot, also called a vernal pool, contains silver maple, swamp white oak, burr oak, willow and elm. There is a good stand of white oak with diameters of 14-22" at chest height in the north and northwest part of the woods. These trees have added up to 6" in diameter growth since the cut was made. Other desirable trees seeded into the openings created by the timber harvest. These include black cherry, red oak, walnut, sugar maple and white ash. The density of the trees and their rate of establishment has helped to create shady conditions throughout much of the woods. This has limited the number of invasive shrubs like bush honeysuckle. Grapevines are present, but are not heavy. Blackhaw viburnum and flowering dogwood are among the native species with wildlife value in the understory.

This woods is well stocked and has good timber potential, but is still several decades away from another harvest. The larger white oak could be selectively cut for income in the near future, but have the potential to grow to 28-30" in diameter before declining in vigor or value. The tract would be a good source for firewood from dead elm and trees thinned out in

crop tree release practices. The combination of mast producing species present, source of water from the vernal pool and size of the tract adds to its appeal to a wide variety of wildlife species.

Tract 10, 50.0 acres

This tract has many attributes that make it desirable including high ground at the road for a possible home site, running water in the creek, vernal pools for wildlife, topography changes for recreational vehicles or bridal trails and enough timber volume in high value species to recoup some of the purchase price.

Because of Client/Owner's longer term ownership and conservative timber harvesting policy their woodlots are in much better shape than most others in Logan County and western Ohio. The recent rash of diameter limit sales where the buyers can cut their choice of any tree over 14" at chest height has depleted local woodlots of quality timber and makes woods like this in the definite minority. A marked sale of individual trees, open to a select group of bidders all looking at the same trees, can yield a good periodic (say every ten years or so) income without damaging good growing stock and creating a jumble of tree tops. Tract 10 has quality white oak in the 18-26" diameter range in the east central part of the woods and a good number of walnut of 16-20" scattered throughout the woods on lower slopes and high ground. There is an area of young timber and pole sized trees on the high ground by the road. The major species in this part of the woods are sugar maple, hickory, walnut, red oak, white oak and hackberry. There is also a good deal of the acreage in creek bottom and low ground with muck and other poorly drained soils where silver maple is the predominate species along with cottonwood, boxelder, buckeye and willow. Wind and ice storms in the last 5 years have left some down trees in these wetter areas. This is also where the waist to chest high stinging nettles and skunk cabbage grow. The rolling topography, creek bottom and wet spots that were hard to drain in the 1800's were the major reasons that this area was never cleared for crops or pastured heavily.

Tract 11, 30.8 acres

This middle tract on the east side of T-46 contains higher ground in the west half of the tract and low ground in the northwest corner and east half. The larger timber trees on the high ground are red oak, black oak, white oak, cherry and hickory. The red oak species outnumber the white oak in this tract. The eastern part of the tract contains walnut, white ash, hackberry and hickory. The value of the timber that might be cut in a conservative single tree selection harvest would not be significant with the average value of the standing trees in the range of \$75 to \$100 apiece, with walnut lumber quality trees being the most valuable. Of course there may be individual veneer quality walnut trees that are worth much in the tract that were missed on this cursory inspection.

Tract 12, 27.7 acres

This part of the woods contains a high percentage of bottomland with large silver maple. The low ground is in the east part of the woods and along the south line. The wind and ice storms seem to have been harder on the trees here with a higher number of trees down in the low part of this tract than in the two other tracts on the east side of T-46.

The higher ground along the north line and out by the road contains pole sized trees of hickory and sugar maple with larger walnut, red oak, white ash and walnut. There is not a significant enough volume of larger sawtimber trees to make a sale. The woods contains dead red elm for firewood and the pole stand could be thinned for this use. This is more of a recreation and wildlife tract than counting on timber income in the future.

Tract 13, 25.0 acres

Tract 13 has the highest volume of timber per acre of any of the tracts in the sale. This is the area where the selective harvest was made in 1986. At that time only a few of the white oak were cut. The sale concentrated on utilizing the red and black oak which become economically mature at an earlier age and smaller diameter. The white oak have had more growing room for over 20 years and have increased in value not only by being larger in diameter, but because of the scarcity of high quality white oak left in the region. These trees are 22-28" in diameter with two 16' logs on the average. That amounts to about 300-500 board feet per tree. All stumpage prices have been off significantly for the last 18 months, but I expect that lumber logs in these trees would bring \$.50 per board foot for the standing timber. Competitive bidding establishes the value at the time of the sale. There are probably over 100 white oak in the stand and at least 25 walnut over 16" at chest height. There are also a few remaining red oak of good size along with white ash. The pole stand out by the road and mixed through the sawtimber stand is composed of white ash, hickory, elm, cherry and walnut.

A partial sale of the larger trees could be made with out impacting the esthetic appeal of the site as a home site, recreation area or for hunting. The squirrel and deer hunting on such a site should be as good as any tract in the sale.

Tract 14, 22.8 acres

Most of tract 14 had been grazed for a long time prior to about 1960 . There is some timber along the line with tract 13, a few scattered large oaks in the west end and pole sized trees throughout . This tract has a high percentage of upland soils good for growing trees and it is becoming fully stocked with hickory, walnut, white ash, cherry and sugar maple in the pole stand. These trees could be worked with to increase their potential as future timber trees. This work would include vine control, thinning of thorn tree species and crop tree release of the higher quality trees. This work along with trail building and utilizing deadwood could produce firewood for home heating. There are more non-native invasive shrubs in this tract because of the more recent open condition of the stand.

This is one of the better tracts for recreation and woodland wildlife because of the species present, the large den trees and because the brushy sections of the site could be used for escape cover. Depending on where the south line runs, there may be part of the wet bottomland/vernal pool area on this tract.

Tract 15, 21.2 acres

Tract 15 is at the southern end of the three tracts on the west side of T-46. It has the old railroad right-of-way running through it and has been the most accessible to off road recreation over the years. This access has also led to some illegal dumping. There are higher quality walnut on the slopes and close to the bottom ground. Other saleable timber species are red oak, cherry, white oak and white ash. A large part of the tract, especially the east end and along the line with tract 14, is in bottomland with large cottonwood and silver maple. This tract has as much diversity as far as topography and woodland sites as any in the sale.

There is a good system of trails and a built-in logging trail provided by the old railroad bed, but limiting the access from T-46 will be a first priority.

There are several sources of information available about making a timber sale, managing younger stands using timber stand improvement techniques and wildlife management for mammals and waterfowl. Ohio State University Extension has natural resource management pamphlets on-line. The ODNR Divisions of Forestry and Wildlife also have many information pamphlets. The upcoming Farm Science Review will be held September 22-24 in the London area. The Gwynne Conservation area will have experts talking on a wide variety of forestry and wildlife topics. The ODNR has foresters and wildlife biologists available for on the ground assistance once the property has been purchased.