

The attached guidance is a revision to the Silviculture Handbook (Handbook 2431.5), Chapters 23 & 24, regarding salvage cutting and course woody debris retention. The Silviculture Handbook is used primarily by State, County, industrial, and cooperating consultant foresters to provide appropriate silvicultural information and recommendations for managing forested lands.

This Silviculture Handbook revision was led and approved by the Wisconsin Silviculture Guidance Team following its December 17, 2013 meeting. The purpose is to provide additional guidance on the retention of unsalvaged patches during salvage harvest operations, as well as guidance on the retention course woody debris already present in forested stands. The salvage harvest guidance will be located in Chapter 23, which deals with intermediate silvicultural treatments. The course woody debris guidance will be located in Chapter 24, which deals with tree marking and retention. The proposed additional guidance is highlighted in yellow.

Comments related to this draft guidance document should be sent to Greg Edge, [Gregory.Edge@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Gregory.Edge@wisconsin.gov); (608) 785-9011. Once the 21 day notice is complete, all comments will be considered and revisions will be made to the guidance as needed. Final guidance will be made available to appropriate internal and external stakeholders, and will be posted at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestmanagement/silviculture.html>

**Division of Forestry – Silviculture Handbook**  
**Draft Guidance – Salvage Cutting and Course Woody Debris Retention**  
**May 19, 2014**

**Chapter 23 – Salvage Cutting (add yellow highlighted wording to page 23-21):**

Before implementing salvage operations, consider management goals and objectives relative to wildlife and biodiversity. Large diameter decaying trees, snags, and down coarse woody debris provide critical habitat for many organisms. Following severe stand disturbance, these structures can provide habitat that facilitates species perpetuation on site, re-colonization, dispersion, and landscape connectivity.

During salvage operations, consider retaining some unsalvaged patches at least one tenth acre in size to provide habitat structure. These patches should include large diameter reserve trees, mast trees, cavity trees, snags, and down coarse woody debris if present. Unsalvaged patches can often be located to complement multiple management objectives and stand conditions; such as the protection of critical areas, riparian management zones, travel corridors, or areas with poor logging access. Many salvage operations will contain significant unsalvaged patches simply due to the operational constraints of working in severely disturbed stands. The extent and distribution of unsalvaged patches may need to be modified if retention would interfere with effective sanitation methods to control insect and disease outbreaks or be deemed a threat to human health and safety (e.g., wildland fire fuel treatments).

**Chapter 24 (add yellow highlighted wording to page 24-17):**

When applying retention recommendations, be sure to consider:

Retaining down coarse woody debris already present. Minimize disturbance, including crushing, fragmenting, and displacing existing down coarse woody debris except on roads, skid trails, and landings.