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This is the first in a series of articles providing landowner feedback on challenging planting sites and what can be done to limit problems.

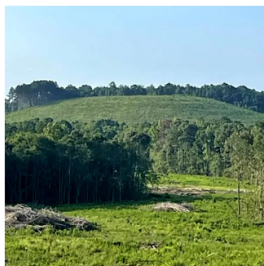
Most landowners try to identify the needs of their property and consider what the project will entail after harvesting and how to manage the best outcome. Many things are not within our control, and thinking about simple problem-solving, I would like to consider the aspects we can manage to limit our exposure to self-made problems. I will be going to different challenging sites and speaking with people about what was done to limit the potential issues and good practices to give the property its best shot at maximizing the final results. These are instances where topography, soil types, average rainfall, and even markets play an essential role in the success of the tracts. Financial conditions have always been an important driver when making decisions. Smart forestry considers several avenues to give a landowner a good return on their investment. For this series, I will leave some of the other “reasons for land ownership” alone and focus mainly on growing quality logs as an end game.

When preparing to complete a final harvest, consider planning ahead for the reforestation project so that timing will not interfere with the results you are trying to achieve. With that in mind, timing and financial considerations become a valid concern in today’s economy. It is also important to think about the availability of workers and equipment that is feasible or effective and how to manage all these colliding items that may take place in short order to put you on the best path forward to achieve the results you are looking for in the future.

So, to start, I want to look at this 1,500-acre tract in Morris County, Texas. Half of it has been harvested, and 2.5, 1.5, and 0.5-year-old seedlings are currently present, with more on the way this next season.



The site shows several large iron ore mounds and some extreme side slopes with old timber standing. With these slopes, you expect to see a fair amount of erosion and silty soil down below, which begs the question about managing this like two or more different sites. What do we do with the potential for drought conditions and extremely high, prolonged temperatures in Texas combined with differing soil types and other woody competition? What is the appropriate prescription for the site?



You also have to think about some unknowns, like what the market will be like and how you can be prepared for changes. You have to wonder about releasing problem weeds, wood, and grasses when harvesting and what the impact could be on the new stand. Maybe some problem areas naturally take themselves out of the

equation altogether, and it makes more sense to do another unrelated practice there. Ultimately, you roll all of this up and find that you cannot afford to do everything, or it has some other impact you cannot ignore.

How do you prioritize and complete tasks that will give you the best chance of success?

In the next TreeLines, I will address these issues and factors to consider, including soil composition, competition management, erosion control, and drainage. I want to thank [Buddy Rosser](#) of [Dean, Youens & Rosser](#) for allowing me to share this example with you in hopes that it will promote more questions and thinking through the impact you can have on the property you manage.

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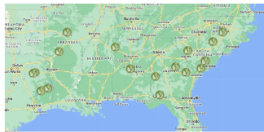


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