

# SALVAGING ASH FROM URBAN WOODLANDS IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO

Peter A. Williams<sup>1</sup>

Ash species (*Fraxinus* spp.) are important upland and frequently dominant lowland trees in southern Ontario that are being affected by emerald ash borer (EAB; *Agrilus planipennis*). Ash can dominate in urban forests because of their agricultural history and site characteristics. Since it is cost-prohibitive to chemically protect woodland ash from EAB, most will be killed and might become hazards.

A harvest-salvage strategy can remove ash from urban woodlands, reducing potentially hazardous situations and debris and at the same time, recover some removal costs. Oakville and Toronto have successfully implemented harvest strategies to remove dead and dying ash from parklands. This includes developing forest management plans and regeneration prescriptions approved by a registered professional forester, designating trees for removal, and planning the work using an integrated logging/arboricultural approach where conventional and small-scale harvesting methods are used. Arboricultural methods are important to help remove trees that may damage property, workers, or other trees. Cable skidders, tracked mini-skidders, and tractor skidders and forwarders have been used. The equipment used depends on site and weather conditions, equipment availability, access, and tree/forest conditions. A communication strategy aimed at the public is critical and should include public meetings, advertising, and direct contact with adjoining landowners and the neighborhood. Contractor diligence, landing management, and prompt trucking with appropriate use of the arboricultural methods and equipment are important in minimizing site and stand disturbance. Seventy-thousand board feet of logs and 150 full cords of fuelwood were salvaged and marketed from seven Oakville parks in 2013, recovering about 15 percent of the planning and removal costs.

The content of this paper reflects the views of the authors(s), who are responsible for the facts and accuracy of the information presented herein.

---

<sup>1</sup> Principal, Williams & Associates, Forestry Consulting Ltd, 5369 Wellington Rd. 27, RR1, Rockwood, Ontario. To contact, call 519-856-1286 or email at forstar@execulink.com.