

"Is it after this that permission is given to begin the fellings"? I asked the forest ranger M. Garafutdinov. "Oh no!" he exclaimed. "Every tree that is to be felled with be stamped and have a mandatory blaze on it. Only then is the flowsheet developed for felling the trees, skidding and removing them."

Whereupon the ranger laid out on the table the flowsheet for the selective fellings. At first glance the working arrangements are similar to those used in clear cutting. Felling is done by gasoline-driven power saw and a low stump is left. Skidding is by tractors over a distance of up to 300 metres, with preservation of the regrowth etc. But a technology such as this is only partly suitable when felling selectively, when doing only the first, opening felling. Indeed, the work in connection with non-clear felling is only carried out after a committee has selected the trees and the plots have been divided into sections. It takes place in the following manner.

After marking out the felling area a skidding track is cut through all or half of its length, but not exceeding 600-700 metres. All of the trees are felled to a width of four metres on the skidding track. Collecting sites are established at intervals of 300 metres and it is from there that the long logs are shipped. The felling procedure is such that without leaving the track, the skidder is able to hook the fallen tree onto the pull rope at a distance of 20 metres and tighten it by the butt end to the load tailplate. Thereafter, skidding of trees to the collection area takes place only along this track. This means the skidder does not even turn around in the track: for the next group of trees it moves in reverse, so as to cause less disturbance to the rooting system and preserve the regrowth. With the first stage of the non-clear fellings all of the diseased and damaged trees are removed from the plot. This is tree doctoring. That is why during the initial stage 100 and more cubic metres of timber are harvested per hectare through removal of all of the trees in the skidding track, picking up windfalls and doing sanitary fellings.