

A self-propelled unit - the LL-31 - is intended for overhead and semi-overhead skidding of tree-length logs (without the use of a tractor) over a distance of 700 metres in "hoist" or "lower" operating regimes and is used in various parts of the USSR.

The output per shift of these cable installations is between 40 and 80 cubic metres. Further information is obtainable from the Caucasian Branch of the Central Research Institute of Mechanization and Power Engineering in the Timber Industry (TsNIIME), 350630 Krasnodar, Ulitsa Zheleznodorozhnaya 24.

Moreover, for the mountain forests of the Urals, Siberia and the Far East the Irkutsk Research Institute of the Timber Industry has designed the self-propelled ML-43, which skids tree-length logs (without a tractor) over a distance of 350 metres. Thus, there is already a choice of models for those who want to do something tangible for the ecology. And in a year from now, in 1991, the Caucasian Branch of TsNIIME is expected to launch the ML-59 universal self-propelled unit, which will be as good as the best foreign models. Yes, it can now be said that the technical problem is, in the main, solved. But how long will it be before the destructive tractor quits the mountain forests for good?

Some astonishing figures were cited on the subject of helicopter haulage costs. Despite the fact that a cubic metre of timber moved by helicopter is three or four times dearer than one that is tractor-skidded, in the Guzeripl'skii timber industry enterprise (lespromkhoz) they are paying between 1,000 and 1,600 roubles per flying hour, depending on the type of aircraft, to transfer 50 to 60 cubic