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## *Editor's Note*

The papers in this issue are as varied by topic as they are geographically, describing operations projects in South Australia and New South Wales, Australia, and West Virginia and Oregon, USA. One paper goes back to the basics of measuring logs. When calibrating harvester head measurements, it turns out that a significant amount of error can be introduced simply by how the operator takes manual measurements of the logs/stems. Martin Strandgard documented measurements in radiata pine stands and discusses what this means in terms of the extra number of stems that must be measured to properly calibrate a harvester head. And since Australian forest managers are becoming increasingly interested in thinning native forest stands on steeper slopes and at younger ages, Acuna and Kellogg are looking at the effects of these conditions on harvesting cost and required equipment mix.

In the hardwood timber of the eastern United States, quality is more important than quantity. Wang, Liu, and LeDoux developed and tested a hardwood log bucking program that increased value over 30 percent compared to manual bucking decisions. In the same mountainous state, Wang, Goff, and Strager evaluated some of the variables associated with compliance with forestry best management practices.

As mechanical reduction of forest fuels becomes more commonplace, these activities beg the question of what the effects will be on the soils underneath these stands. Bolding, Kellogg, and Davis evaluated soils on some private commercial timberland sites in Oregon that had already experienced multiple entries; they found little effect on the soils.

As water quality, forest health, and safety concerns (wildfire) become increasingly important to land managers, forest engineers and operations specialists can help by providing specialized information and tools that can be part of the solution.

Cornelis F. "Niels" de Hoop  
Technical Editor

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