Applicant Tools for Timber Losses 2026-02-01

Timber losses must be:

- a minimum of ten (10) contiguous forest acres under the same ownership; and
- a minimum timber loss of 15 percent throughout the forest stand
- on private forest land and loss must be a direct result of Hurricane Helene.

You will have two options for assistance: the Comprehensive Option or the 3rd-Party Certification Option.

- **Comprehensive Option**: You will demonstrate the diminution of fair market value to timber land as a result of the storm, and you will be eligible for a percentage of that lost value.

- **3rd Party Certification:** If you do not have the documentation for the Comprehensive Option, you can submit the 3rd-Party Certification form to certify that you had a qualifying loss to your timberland. You will receive a per-acre payment to be determined after the enrollment. A Block Grant Stand Worksheet is available to help with documenting stand types and collecting needed data for entry

Questions on Timber: Status

• Funding Request Type
Comprehensive

(1) **IRS 4684 Casualty Loss Form:** If you filed an IRS 4684 Casualty Loss Form you are eligible to make a Comprehensive funding request. Your payment will be determined based on information in the application and documentation uploaded.
And/or
(2) **Detailed Valuation**: You may provide a detailed valuation of your timber resources prior to Hurricane Helene from a private sector forestry professional, which includes a Timber Cruise or Stump Cruise Documentation with volume and monetary loss estimations. Salvage revenues will also be included in this calculation.

3rd-Party Certification Reimbursement - If you do not file a Casualty Loss Form or a detailed valuation, you may still request compensation for your loss. You will need to provide a certification of the damage by a third party. This certification form will be available at https://agr.georgia.gov/.
You can choose only one Timber funding request type per location/tax parcel.

If you choose a detailed evaluation you may hire at your expense a private sector forestry professional or utilize other private sector 3rd party individuals that do not have an ownership interest in the property or the farming operation applying for losses at this location.
A forestry professional is a trained, skilled, educated, and experienced individual in the science, art, and practice of managing forest ecosystems for a variety of objectives, including timber production, wildlife habitat, water quality, recreation, and ecosystem health. They apply principles of biology, ecology, economics, and resource management to ensure forests are used sustainably and remain productive and healthy over time. They develop and implement management plans for public or private forestlands; measure forest inventory, growth, and health; and oversee harvesting operations to ensure they are environmentally sound and economically viable.

Questions on Timber: Damage Necessary for 3rd party.

For each forest type destroyed or damaged within the parcel at this location:
• Forest Type
    - Pine
    - Hardwood
    - Mixed pine/hardwood

• Maturity/age – Provide actual age of stand at time of Hurricane: September 27, 2024. (for comprehensive funding requests only)
    - Pine: 0.5 years – 12 years. Pre-merchantable timber <5 inches diameter at breast height (DBH).
    - Pine: 13 years – 25 years. Pulpwood (5-9 inch DBH) & chip and saw (10-12 inches DBH).
    - Pine: 26 years +. Sawtimber and Poles (Tree DBH 13 inches and greater).
    - Hardwood: 0.5 years – 30 years. Pre-merchantable timber.
    - Hardwood: 31 years – 50 years. Pulpwood (5-9 inches DBH) & palletwood (10-13 inches DBH).
    - Hardwood: 51 years +. Palletwood & Sawtimber (14 inch DBH and greater).
    - Pine/Hardwood: 0.5 years – 20 years Pre-merchantable.
    - Pine/Hardwood: 21 years – 40 years. Pulpwood, chip and saw, and palletwood.
    - Pine/Hardwood: 41 years +. Palletwood and Sawtimber.

- Total Acres of each Forest Type at that maturity/age range
- Damage % to each Forest Type at that maturity/age range
- Value of salvaged timber (If applicable)

•Total Acres in Parcel
• Total Damaged Acres in Parcel
• Fair Market Value as of 09/24/2024 – Pre-Hurricane (for Comprehensive funding requests only)
• Fair Market Value as of 09/29/2024 – Post Hurricane (for Comprehensive funding requests only)

Stand: A relatively uniform group of trees within a forest, occupying a specific area and managed as a single unit due to similar species composition, age, and site conditions.

Parcel: A legally defined unit of land with specific ownership and recorded boundaries, often identified by a tax or cadastral number.

Fair Market Value of timber pre-storm is the timber cruise data in the undisturbed stand based on 3rd quarter Timber-Mart South timber prices.
Fair Market Value of timber post storm is the value of the remaining standing timber in the stand based on 3rd quarter Timber-Mart South timber prices.
Salvaged timber value is the amount the landowner/entity is paid for merchantable timber that has been harvested and sold accounting for reduced quality, accessibility, and additional harvesting costs.

Required Documents for Timber
• IRS 4684 Casualty Loss Form that was filed with the IRS and/or timber cruise/stump cruise Documentation with volume and loss estimations. Salvage revenues will also be included in this calculation. (for Comprehensive funding requests) Timber harvest notification number required for salvage operations.
• Third-Party Certification of Damage form (for 3rd-Party Certification funding requests) GA-HBG-01 Third-Party Certification of Timber Damage. GA-HBG-04 timber worksheet or similar documentation. Both forms are available at https://agr.georgia.gov/.
• 2024 Property Tax Assessment (same form uploaded in Locations section above)
- Clear photographs or aerial imagery of the damaged timber
• You can also provide other documents that you think would help GDA assess your application. Summary of load tickets from salvage operations, PT283T Forms, etc...

How to perform the Comprehensive Option:

Hurricane Helene Block Grant Timber/Stump Cruising Guidance

Timber Cruising – trees are still present, either standing or fallen

1. Cruise Method – fixed radius…with trees on the ground, variable radius/point sample is not viable.
2. Determine Cruise Intensity
    a. Is stand natural or planted…stand variability will dictate the number of plots needed.
    b. The level of damage will also dictate the number of plots that can be taken.
3. Collect Data
    a. Measure DBH and tree heights. Grade trees by product class according to industry standards.
    b. Record data using collection methods dictated by cruising system.
4. Volume Estimation
    a. Use published volume tables to estimate tree volume by diameter class and product class.
    b. Various timber cruising software is available to collect and process cruise data.
5. Value Estimation – apply market prices to estimated volumes.

Stump Cruising – salvage has occurred, trees have been removed and hauled to market

1. Determine Cruise Intensity
    a. 100% stump tally is ideal.
    b. If the affected area is too large for a 100% tally, determine plot size and grid that would provide adequate sampling.
2. Determine Cruising Method or Software System to Use
    a. Develop your own volume estimation method…for example, measuring standing trees on site or nearby that represent the harvested trees to build a volume table, allowing measured stumps to be assigned a volume.
    b. Cruising software is available (i.e. TCruise) that offers stump cruising templates and data processing.
3. Collect Data
    a. Measure stump diameters and comparison tree data (stump diameter, DBH, and tree height) using industry standards.
    b. Record data collection using collection methods dictated by cruising method or software system.
4. Volume Estimation
    a. Use published volume tables to estimate tree volume by diameter class and product class.
    b. Various timber cruising software is available to collect and process cruise data.
5. Value Estimation - apply market prices to estimated volumes.

How to perform a 3rd party inspection:

STEP 1: DEFINE WHAT COUNTS AS A DAMAGED TREE

Use these criteria to determine which trees are considered damaged based on visible signs:

Damage Type	Visual Indicators (Ocular)
Uprooted	Entire tree or root mass lifted; roots/soil exposed
Snapped/Broken Stem	Tree trunk visibly snapped, splintered, or bent beyond recovery
Severe Leaning	Tree leaning >45 degrees
Crown Loss	Half or more of crown visibly broken, browning, or defoliated
Bole Damage	Deep visible bark wounds or resin flow on a significant portion
Dead Tree	No foliage or entirely brown/red crown post-event

Do not count trees with:

- Minor limb loss
- Slight defoliation
- Slight leaning, with no ground disturbance

STEP 2: GET A GENERAL OVERVIEW

Walk or drive along access roads, stand edges, or trails.
Observe entire stands from multiple vantage points (e.g., from the ground, hilltops, stand edges, openings). Use landmarks to divide stands visually (e.g., by species group, age class). Focus on a representative area or segment of the stand.
Note/evaluate how widespread the damage looks. Evaluate all visible tree damage within a reasonable field of view (both near and far). Is it scattered (a few trees), patchy (clumps), or widespread (most of the stand)? What kinds of damage do you see? Uprooted trees, snapped trunks, leaning trees, broken tops, or stripped limbs.
Estimate the proportion of trees that show major visible damage.
Mark damaged areas on a map or aerial image (Google Maps printout works fine).
This gives your first impression of whether damage is light, moderate, or severe.

Damage Class/Approximate % of Trees Damaged in the Stand	Visual Indicators
🟡 Moderate (15–50%)	Damage visible on some trees; majority of stand appears intact. Clusters of broken or leaning trees.
🟠 Severe (51–80%)	Damage widespread; over half the trees broken, uprooted, tops broken out or limbs stripped/heavily defoliated. Some intact pockets remain.
🔴 Catastrophic (>80%)	Most trees in view are snapped, uprooted, limbs stripped, tops broken out, and/or bent over more than 45 degrees. Few or no undamaged trees visible.

Repeat this estimation for multiple points or angles of each stand to ensure accuracy.

STEP 3: OBSERVE, ESTIMATE, & DOCUMENT PERCENT DAMAGE

Define the Assessment Area
Mark or flag stand boundaries and known property lines on the ground to facilitate accurate damage assessment within each stand. Aerial imagery (drone, satellite, or aircraft) can also be used to delineate stands, and georeferencing tools—such as a smartphone (Apple Maps, Google Maps) or GPS device—

can help identify your precise location on the property, ensuring assessments are conducted within the correct stand boundaries. Tax assessor maps and Google Earth maps could also be used to help identify stands and assessment areas.

Create a short report or data sheet to:
Classify stands by species, age/product class, acreage, and management type (pine plantation, mixed hardwood, etc.). Other useful information: date, observer's initials, and any notes that may assist with estimations.
Pick "Sample Spots" based on size of tract.

- 1-25 acres: minimum of 5 plots
- 26-100 acres: 1 plot per 5 acres
- 101 acres +: minimum of 20 plots

Be systematic with your sample spots:
Choose spots that are typical of your stand in that area. Is the stand uniform or non-uniform? Non-uniform stands may require more plots to be taken than uniform stands.
Each spot should be representative of the overall area of forest in that section of timber.
Estimate location and mark sample spots/areas on a map or aerial image (Google Maps printout works fine).
In each spot, look around and count about 20 trees (a rough sample). Can be more or less based on what would be representative of the spot. Can use a defined radius to help unbias plots as well (20 feet-50 feet based on number of trees in area).
Then count:
How many look undamaged?
How many are Leaning trees (root damage – there will be ground disturbance), stem breakage/snapped tops, or uprooted/windthrown?
What is the diameter at breast height (DBH) for each tree counted?
DBH's can be obtained by using a tape measure and placing against the bole of the tree at 4.5 feet to estimate the diameter.

Example:

Damage % = (Number of damaged trees ÷ Total trees) × 100
If 5 out of 20 trees are down or broken → about 25% damage in that area.
5 damaged trees / 20 total trees = .25 damaged trees X 100% = 25% damaged.
Average your results from all spots to get a stand-level estimate.
5 acre stand, took 5 plots (25%, 5%, 45%, 30%, and 10%)
25% + 5% + 45% + 30% + 10% = 115% / 5 plots = 23% average damage for stand.

Calculate average diameter by adding all tally tree diameters together, then divide by the number of tally trees.
Example: 5" + 3" + 6.5" + 2" + 3.5" + 4" + 4.7" = 28.7" divided by 7 = 4.1" Average DBH.

Utilize the average product class over the course of the stand.

- Pine: .5 years – 12 years. Pre-merchantable timber <5 inches diameter at breast height (DBH).
- Pine: 13 years – 25 years. Pulpwood (5-9 inch DBH) & chip and saw (10-12 inches DBH).
- Pine: 26 years +. Sawtimber and Poles (Tree DBH 13 inches and greater).
- Hardwood: .5 years – 30 years. Pre-merchantable timber.Hardwood: 31 years – 50 years. Pulpwood (5-9 inches DBH) & palletwood (10-13 inches DBH).
- Hardwood: 51 years +. Palletwood & Sawtimber (14 inch DBH and greater).
- Pine/Hardwood: .5 years – 20 years Pre-merchantable.
- Pine/Hardwood: 21 years – 40 years. Pulpwood, chip and saw, and palletwood.
- Pine/Hardwood: 41 years +. Palletwood and Sawtimber.

<u>STEP 4: TAKE PHOTOS</u>

1. Wide-angle views of stand condition

2. Close-ups of representative damage types (broken stems, uproots, damaged crowns, broken boles)
3. Include identifiable landmarks or tree species