



SILVICULTURE FIELD TIP

Field tested ideas.

Contact the author for further information.



BIRCH QUICK-TACH SCALPERS June 1989

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Durable as a moose best describes these Quick-Tach scalpers. The Hill City Area had an opportunity to try the system on 36 acres this spring. The 3 foot wide scalpers, weighing in at 350 pounds each, were contract built over the winter for \$3180 a pair.

This blade mounted scalper system was developed by Lowell Birch, a forestry technician on the Targhee National Forest. The Missoula Equipment Development Center found the scalpers successful in preparing quality spots that reduce competition for moisture, nutrients and sunlight. The recommended machine size for this system is in the 70 to 150 horsepower range. Forest Service testing found that production rates ranged from 2 1/2 acres per hour in grass cover to 1 1/2 acres per hour in heavy brush and moderate slash. At 600 scalps per acre, costs per acre were \$18-30 based on \$45 per hour for machine and operator. Hill City Area testing and records verify this.

The Quick-Tach scalpers can be mounted singly or in pairs on the dozer blade. They can be attached or removed in five minutes. No dozer modification is required. The operator has a good view of the scalpers, can control depth and length of the spot and do up to 1500 spots per hour.

A caution on sensitive sites; crawler tracks run over scalps and can compact the soil. Based on our Hill City Area experience, the dozer's track system bridged over the majority of scalps, never coming in contact with the bottom of the scalp but flattening the excavated material. If compaction is a real concern, a single scalper can be center mounted on a smaller dozer or skidder blade.



Dozer mounted scalper. Bob Maki points at a freshly made scalp.

Tracks or wheels will then straddle the scalp. Also, single scalping can be considered for underplanting white pine, red oak, etc.

Adaptable to small or large sites, contracting or using Division equipment, single or double scalping, the Birch Quick-Tach Scalpers are very versatile and met with praise in the Hill City Area.

(Over)



Dozer operator Don Howard points out the quick and simple mounting system.