



Crosscut Saw and Traditional Tool Resources

The links below are materials for crosscut saw and traditional tool training under United States Forest Service (USFS) standards. Other links have practical information on crosscut saw equipment and techniques. Power tools are prohibited in federally designated wilderness as described in the 1964 Wilderness Act. Traditional hand-powered tools and techniques are essential for maintaining public access and protecting the wilderness resource.

Persons and organizations using saws for trail maintenance on public lands administered by the USFS must follow the [National Crosscut and Chainsaw Policy](#). The USFS has established sawyer training curriculum and materials to ensure that certified sawyers understand hazardous associated with clearing downed trees from trails and have demonstrated skills to safely lead crews doing this work.



Photo 1. Small crew dispatched by Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards to Ramsey's Draft Wilderness of Virginia to clear large hemlock downs off trail corridor.



Resource List:

[2016 USFS National Saw Policy](#) – Webpage with links to important USFS saw policy documents.

[Sawyer Certification Levels, Five Part Cutting Plan, Complexity](#) – USFS webpage with links to these topics.

[Trail Management Tools](#) – USFS webpage with reference links to trail design criteria, maintenance criteria and saw policy documents.

[The Thinking Sawyer](#) – Module 1 of Updated 2021 USFS Training for crosscut saws and traditional tools.

[Crosscut Sawyer Training Curriculum](#) - Current (2006) USFS training manuals for crosscut saws and traditional tools, an update is in development and expected in 2021-2022.

[Crosscut Saw Evaluation Form](#) – FS-2300-0052a (v02-2018), form used during sawyer certification training.

[Traditional Tool Training Sessions](#) – Includes Crosscut Saws from the 2021 National Wilderness Skills Institute.

[Saws That Sing: A Guide to Using Crosscut Saws](#) – USFS 2004 (revised 2012).

[Crosscut Saw Manual](#) – USFS 1977 (revised 2003), Warren Miller’s book on how to restore vintage saws,

[One Moving Part – The Forest Service Ax Manual](#) – USFS 2019.

[An Ax to Grind: A Practical Ax Manual](#) – USFS 1999.

[The Crosscut Sawyer](#) - University of Montana On-Line Training, free registration.

[Handtools for Trail Work](#) – USFS 2005.

[Wedges](#) – Dispatch from Saw Shack on the Importance of wedges for crosscut sawyers.

[Underbucking Tool](#) – Dispatch from Saw Shack on use and fabrication of a practical underbucking tool for crosscut sawyers.