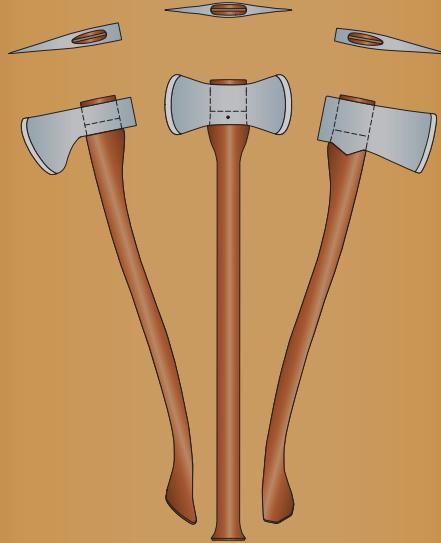


One Moving Part



The Forest Service Ax Manual



Bob Beckley
Project Leader

**U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
National Technology and Development Program**

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"Lincoln the Railsplitter" by Norman Rockwell.
—Collection of The Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH

*"Give me 6 hours to chop down
a tree and I'll spend the first 4
sharpening the ax."*

—Abraham Lincoln

Foreword—A Shared Inheritance

In today's society, new technology and mechanization have replaced, with unintended consequences, the need for much of the lore and skills maintained by American pioneers. What used to be required knowledge by most is now known by few. Commensurate with these losses is a similar lack of awareness that traditional tools are required to manage some of our most cherished backcountry and lands in the National Wilderness System. Recognition of these issues brought about the development of this book, and others, to preserve what is hopefully an enduring legacy and appreciation of historic, traditional tools, the traditional skills to use them, and the pride that comes from mastering them.

—Robert Wetherell, Supervisory Program Leader,
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service,
National Technology and Development Program

National Technology and Development Program Traditional Tools and Skills Publications

- An Ax to Grind: A Practical Ax Manual
- The Crosscut Saw Filer
- Crosscut Saw Manual
- Crosscut Saw Tooth-Setting Tool
- Crosscut Saw Underbucking Tool
- The Crosscut Sawyer
- Dovetails and Broadaxes: Hands-on Log Cabin Preservation
- Handtools for Trail Work
- New Tools for Old Saws
- Saws That Sing: A Guide to Using Crosscut Saws



Abraham Lincoln's ax.
—Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM)

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This manual is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Don Jastad; axman, crosscut sawyer, mentor, and friend.

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Don Jastad earned the title "Bull of the Woods" at the International Lumberjack Championships, Century 21 Exposition, Seattle World's Fair, 1962 (near right). Jastad participated in the Forest Service Traditional Skills demonstration at the Florida Folklife Festival, 2005 (far right).
—Courtesy of Dr. Don Jastad



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Ax Condition

Many of the axes shown in this manual appear in unrestored condition, similar to what you might find in a garage, shop, or barn, or what you might purchase at a garage or antique sale.