There are several types of paint marks seen on trees in Arkansas. Two of the most commonly used markers by private landowners are “posted” paint and boundary line paint. Understanding the difference between these two timber paint marks can help woodland owners identify them.

Boundary Lines

Boundary line painting is often used to indicate property boundaries. Typically, boundary line paint is painted in relation to the actual property boundary; therefore, the painted section of a tree could be on any face of the tree. The paint mark is customarily placed closest to the actual boundary line. Landowners may choose their own easily visible color for painting boundary lines, except for purple. Typical colors for boundary lines include blue, red, orange, and yellow. Landowners acquiring a new survey of their land may inquire with their surveyor about painting their boundary lines as part of the survey. It is suggested that paint is re-applied to trees every 5-7 years for established boundary lines.

Posted Lines

In 1989, Arkansas was the first state to enact legislation allowing landowners to mark trees with paint to indicate no trespassing, commonly referred to as “posted or posting.” According to Arkansas statute A.C.A §18-11-403(a)(2), “it shall be unlawful for any person to enter upon any real property posted under the provisions of this subchapter without the written consent of the owner or lessee of the real property.” By applying posting paint or signage to your forestland, you tell others that it is unlawful for them to enter your property without written consent from the owner or lessee.

There are two ways to post forestland in Arkansas. A woodland owner can use either signs or a specified color of paint applied according to law to demonstrate their land is posted. All signage should face the outside boundaries of the property. Likewise, all paint marks must face the exterior of the property. Please refer to A.C.A. §18-11-403 through §18-11-406 for complete definitions and law before posting your property. This factsheet provides summary information and does not contain all relevant statutes.

Using signs: Signs should state either the words “POSTED” or “NO TRESPASSING” in letters at least 4” tall. Signs should be readily visible and placed no more than 100’ apart AND at all roads/entry points.
Using Paint: As an alternative to signs, landowners or lessees may use paint on trees to indicate posted property. Painted patches at least 8” in length, between 3’-5’ above ground level and spaced no more than 100’ apart AND at all roads/entry points can be used to indicate a posted property. All paint marks must be made on the exterior face of the tree (facing outward from the property). The ONLY acceptable color of paint to be used is a specific purple formulated to standards set forth by statute. Paint formulations for exact color can be found at www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/forestry/landowner-assistance/posting-of-real-property/

According to the statute, it is unlawful to apply the prescribed posted paint color on any tree or post for any purpose other than posting real property.