

Alabama's **TREASURED Forests**

SUMMER 1996



STATE FORESTER'S MESSAGE

by TIMOTHY C. BOYCE, State Forester



For more than 20 years I've heard people say that the citizens of Alabama are either uninformed or misinformed about forestry and that we must educate them on its environmental and economic benefits. We now have a golden opportunity to educate thousands of individuals in the state through the sale of an "Alabama Forests" license plate.

House Bill 390, sponsored by Rep. Jimmy Warren, and Senate Bill 318, sponsored by Sen. Bobby Denton, authorized the design, production, and sale of the distinctive license plate; provided for the establishment of a Forest Stewardship Education Fund where the proceeds from the sale of the tag will be deposited; and provided for the establishment of the Alabama Forest Stewardship Education Committee to oversee the disposition of the funds.

As with other distinctive and personalized tags, individuals who purchase the "Alabama Forests" tag will pay \$50 in addition to the regular fees required by law for license plates. The additional \$50 represents a charitable contribution and is tax deductible.

Proceeds from the revenues generated from the tag sales will be used to promote "the professional management of trees and related resources and to educate the general public regarding the contribution that trees and related resources make to the economy and environmental quality of this state."

A contest was organized to design the "Alabama Forests" tag earlier this year, and more than 300 creative entries were submitted. Although it was very difficult, a winning design was selected by the Committee, and we worked with the Department of Revenue to obtain final approval to pave the way for actual production of the tag. It is hoped that the tag will be available for purchase within a few months.

A great deal of time and work has gone into making this "Alabama Forests" license plate a reality, and I believe this source of funding for forestry education is the opportunity we have all hoped to see. With the support of the forestry community, much can be done to educate the uninformed and misinformed people of this state.

I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly recognize the following Committee members who volunteer their time and effort to serve on the Forest Stewardship Education Committee: Eddie Carlson, Alabama Association of Consulting Foresters; James Hughes, Alabama TREASURE Forest Landowners Association; Jennifer Stringer, Alabama Urban Forestry Association; Vaughn Stough, Society of American Foresters; Steve Guy, Alabama Farmer's Federation; Harry Murphy, Alabama Forest Owners Association; Bill Sahlie, Board of Registration for Foresters; Emmett Thompson, School of Forestry, Auburn University; and John McMillan, Alabama Forestry Association. The State Forester serves as chairman of the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy C. Boyce". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Timothy C. Boyce
State Forester

Alabama's TREASURED Forests

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COVER: The endangered red-cockaded woodpecker was once a common bird of the piney woods of Alabama. This banded adult is bringing food to its young at a nest cavity in a living pine. The bird's name causes confusion; its tiny red crown feathers are almost never visible. Read more about the red-cockaded woodpecker on pages 26-27 of this issue. Photo by Jeff Lepore.

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The Alabama Forestry Commission supports the Alabama Forestry Planning Committee's TREASURE Forest program. This magazine is intended to further encourage participation in and acceptance of this program by landowners in the state. Any of the agencies listed above may be contacted for further information about the TREASURE Forest program.

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Squirrel Hollow

by KIM GILLILAND, Editor



This pond is the centerpiece of the property, shown here before and after construction.

Managing according to set objectives is one key to a successful TREASURE Forest. For Bo Starke, the main objective is to make his property the best it can possibly be for wildlife. Squirrel Hollow is 325 acres in Bullock County that is fine tuned to the needs of many wildlife species: deer, turkey, quail, ducks, songbirds, and yes, squirrels.

Wildlife Enhancement

Wildlife biologists know that a fundamental element in managing for wildlife is to have or create different types and ages of stands. Providing variety in food and cover can increase wildlife populations and the number of different species an area can sustain. The Starke property is an excellent example of this habitat diversity. Natural pine and hardwood stands, different ages of pine plantations, and open fields are distributed in a way that enhances the number of game and nongame species on the property.

Bullock County Forester Bill Clem sees this diversity as a plus for two important species. "Every kind of habitat for deer and turkey is here, and it's well dispersed throughout the property," he said. He adds

that Starke has worked hard to keep it that way. "I like to see landowners accomplish most of their objectives themselves. Bo does most of the work himself, and you can see the results when you walk around the property," Clem said.

Starke actively manages the property year-round. Although it may take longer to do certain tasks than if he hired someone, he enjoys being able to do most of the work by himself. Just regularly maintaining everything takes several hours each week. There's always something to do—mowing, plowing, road work, or planting. Help is hired for large acreages that need planting, however. After a day's work, Starke enjoys the peacefulness of Squirrel Hollow. "I like to walk around the place for an hour or so after I'm finished," he said. This ritual allows time to appreciate nature and reflect on his accomplishments.

Wheat, vetch, crimson clover and ladino clover are the main wildlife foods planted in 11 openings scattered around the property. This year Starke will try growing chufas for the first time. In addition, autumn olive and bicolor lespedeza have been hand planted along roads and bordering pine plantations.

A major project last winter was hand planting 160 sawtooth oaks in an open field. Starke had tried planting this beneficial wildlife species before, but the deer ate the tops out of the seedlings before they could get established. He hopes his solution of investing in tree protectors will prove fruitful. The tubes, about three feet tall, encircle the seedlings and have netting over their tops. They will disintegrate in a few years and Starke hopes that this protection, along with some fertilization and weeding, will yield healthy, acorn-producing trees.

Pond Construction

After the property was acquired in the mid-1980s, one of the first projects completed was a 19-acre pond. When Starke saw the large pasture with a drainage ditch down the middle, he knew it was the perfect spot for a fishing pond. A few trees lining the ditch were cleared, and the completed pond quickly became the centerpiece of the property. It is stocked with bream, bass, catfish and white amur, a fish used to control grasses. Never missing an opportunity to create a different habitat, Starke built a small island in the middle of the pond for ducks to nest.



Autumn olive has been planted bordering pine plantations.

Currently, some Canada geese call the island home.

Another smaller pond is also stocked, so Starke is able to enjoy his favorite pastime of fishing in abundance. Two more ponds not stocked with fish are beneficial watering areas for wildlife.

Maintaining such a large area of water takes a lot of work, as Starke knows better than anyone. Fertilizing the fishing ponds and keeping the area around them mowed are considerable tasks. To keep the ponds in prime condition, Starke employs the Fisheries Department at Auburn University to survey the ponds, tell him the condition of the fish and what he needs to do to keep them healthy. This is done annually and records are kept from year to year.

Bo, his wife Sheila, and other family members reside in Montgomery, but are frequent visitors to the property. The ponds are naturally a place they enjoy for the surrounding beauty, in addition to fishing and watching the ducks and geese.

Timber Management

Although wildlife management is the main objective, timber is a close second. Over 100 acres, some of it highly erodible, have been planted to pines. Those pine stands are of different ages, which adds to the property's diversity.

A minor setback for the property was damage caused by Hurricane Opal in October 1995, and it will take some time to clean up the debris. The main damage was to a recently thinned area, where broken and downed trees were immedi-

ately salvaged. This unplanned harvest resulted in 22 truckloads of wood being hauled from the property. There are still some trees in isolated areas that were blown down and need to be removed; Starke is accomplishing this task himself as time allows. Since he places substantial emphasis on aesthetics, it is important to him that the most visible areas be cleaned up as soon as possible.

Regular prescribed burning is used for fuel reduction and wildlife enhancement. The burning program will be even more important in the coming year; increased debris on the forest floor as a result of Hurricane Opal is a potential fire hazard.

A small area of pines was infested with the Southern pine beetle in 1995, so

Starke is keeping a close eye on his stands this year. Any beetle activity will be met with swift eradication measures.

At this time Starke doesn't plan to cut any hardwoods because of their benefit to wildlife, as well as their aesthetic quality.

For recommendations on timber management, Starke places his confidence in Eddie Carlson, a registered forester who has been involved with the property since its purchase. Carlson says the intensive management of the property is one of the reasons he chose to nominate it for TREASURE Forest certification. "Bo's done everything he could to enhance the timber and the wildlife," he said.

Starke adds that in addition to Carlson, the state agencies he's worked with have been extremely helpful. "The people at the Forestry Commission and the Department of Conservation have been very supportive of everything I wanted to do."

A Comprehensive Package

Starke realizes that managing for timber and wildlife goes hand in hand. He is aware of the income-producing benefits of trees, but also places a great importance on their value to wildlife. These aspects, along with the recreational features and aesthetic qualities of the property, are brought together into one comprehensive package. Part of that package is a feeling of accomplishment and pride that comes with doing work that you love. Bo Starke is one landowner who understands this feeling very well. 🏡



Protective tubes have been placed around these sawtooth oak seedlings to increase their chance of survival.

Editor's Understory

by KIM GILLILAND, Editor

For almost four years Bo Starke searched for the perfect piece of land to purchase. It needed to be in the country, but within a short driving distance of his residence in Montgomery. Starke had always liked the outdoors and, even more important, liked the idea of being able to go fishing whenever he wanted. A place of his own would fulfill these needs. He



Bo and Sheila Starke

mentioned to several people that he was looking for a place to buy. One of those was consultant forester Eddie Carlson, who told him about a place for sale in Bullock County. The 160 acres consisted of some timber and cattle fields. Starke saw that it had the potential to be developed into economically profitable forestland. Just as significant, it could also provide the recreation he sought.

That first 160 acres was just the beginning of Squirrel Hollow. Another 165 acres adjacent to the first was purchased five years later to complete the farm.

Bo and his wife Sheila live in Montgomery, but agree that the most relaxing place to be is at Squirrel Hollow. Soon after they bought the property, a small house was built to accommodate them on overnight trips. As they soon found out, it wasn't big enough; their two children and five grandchildren enjoyed staying overnight as well. The "bunkhouse" next door to the main house was built soon afterward.

The main house is casual and comfortable, with a large screened-in front porch. Decorative items with squirrels, the property's symbol, are everywhere. The walls of the bunkhouse are lined with family photos and vacation pictures. Both buildings have a beautiful view of the largest pond on the property. The surrounding area is open and park-like, with large trees that provide just the

right amount of shade in the summertime. Sheila's favorite time to visit is in the spring and summer. "It's wonderful to take a walk when the wildflowers are blooming," she said.

Sheila met Bo while they were attending college at Auburn. After they were married and Bo spent two years in the service, the couple moved back to his hometown of Montgomery.

Bo continues the tradition of operating the family business, which is insurance. The Starke Agency was established in 1929; now that Bo's son has joined the firm, it

should be guaranteed many more years of serving clients.

Bo is active in several conservation organizations, including the Alabama Wildlife Federation. He currently serves on its board of directors, and will be president in 1998. He enjoys being a part of an organization that has long-term goals. "One thing I like about being in the Wildlife Federation is that they act as mediators between other organizations. You feel like you're doing something that will affect your children and their children."

He feels the same way about the TREASURE Forest program, and adds, "I think it's a good program because it promotes diversity." He is not only educating his family about the values of good stewardship, but is also sharing those concepts with others. Over 100 people attended a field day at Squirrel Hollow in 1994, where they learned about beaver control measures in addition to wildlife and timber management.

Starke has been rewarded for his efforts by being named a district winner of the Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award in 1995.

It may have taken a while to find, but Bo Starke thinks Squirrel Hollow was worth the effort. This



The area around the house is open and park-like, shaded by large trees.



TREASURE Forest is more than a hobby, it is a second home; and the time spent there is more than just work, it is a labor of love. ♣

TREES OF ALABAMA



BLACKGUM



by BILLY RYE, Alabama Forestry Commission, Florence

Few trees are as common to Alabama's landscape as blackgum. In fact, it has the distinction of being one of the 10 most common trees in our state. Blackgum attained this status because of its ability to adapt to a wide range of environmental conditions or habitats. While blackgum is typically found on moist sites in association with other bottomland hardwoods, it can occasionally be seen growing on relatively dry upland soils with hickories and upland oaks. It is only on the extreme sites—those that are either excessively dry or prone to frequent flooding—that blackgum does not grow well. This adaptability has allowed blackgum to have an extensive natural range. It can be found growing naturally from Canada to South Florida and from the Atlantic coast to Texas.

A medium sized tree at maturity, blackgum often has a dense, conical or sometimes flat-topped crown when grown in the open. Its nearly horizontal branches serve as a useful characteristic in identifying blackgum, as this is a rare feature in our forests. The foliage has a glossy green appearance above and is often pale and hairy beneath. The leaves are simple (undivided), 2-5 inches in length, and 1-3 inches in width. Blackgum is among the first of Alabama's trees to change colors in late summer, often giving the tree a scarlet appearance while surrounding trees are still green. The fruit is blue-black, about 1/2 inch long, egg-shaped and matures in autumn. It is desired by many species of wildlife but has a distinctively sour taste to humans.

Despite its name and the fact that it is often found growing on the same sites,

this species is not closely related to sweetgum. Blackgum is actually in the dogwood family, while botanists have grouped sweetgum in with the witch hazels. The scientific name for blackgum is *Nyssa sylvatica* Marsh. Humphrey Marshall, an 18th century dendrologist (tree scientist) from Pennsylvania, first named the species in 1785. He chose the genus name *Nyssa*, a mythical Greek water nymph, because he felt that it adequately described the location where he first took samples, a low, wet area. The word *sylvatica* is Latin for "of the woods." Therefore, the Latin name for blackgum literally means "water nymph of the woods."

Depending on what region of the nation you are in, blackgum may be called by a host of other names. For instance, if you are in the Northeastern United States most foresters refer to this tree as tupelo, the name given to it by the Native Americans. Many of the older technical publications refer to this species as either black tupelo, pepperidge, or sourgum (from the taste of the berries).

The wood of blackgum is not well suited for the manufacturing of most forest products. However, if large enough sections of clear wood are found, it can be used for lumber, veneer, and to some extent for railway ties. The lumber primarily goes into products where a high quality finish is not necessary, such as shipping containers and parts for covered furniture. Most often, blackgum is chipped and used to produce paper products. It can be readily pulped and is used for high-grade book and magazine papers.

Despite its inability to be used for most traditional forest products, blackgum has

features that allow it to be used for other purposes. The open grown shape of blackgum and its scarlet fall colors make it a handsome ornamental and shade tree. In addition, this tree is known as a "honey tree." Long recognized for the superior taste of honey that bees produce from its flowers, sections of the trunk of blackgum were also used as bee hives in earlier times. The hollow condition of many blackgums made it ideal for early beekeepers to use as hives when cut in 2-4 foot sections. Blackgum was also known as a "toothbrush" tree to pioneers. Its twigs contain soft fibers, which made a natural toothbrush when twisted.

While no longer used for such products as bee hives and toothbrushes, blackgum's favorable pulping characteristics, uses as an ornamental tree, and ability to adapt to a wide range of sites assures that it will continue to be a prominent feature in the forests of Alabama.

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Longleaf Pine: A Southern Legacy

by RHETT JOHNSON, Director, Solon Dixon Forestry Center, Andalusia

When the first European settlers began to carve out homes and farms along the South Atlantic seaboard and later along the Gulf Coast, the forest they encountered was very different from the one we know today. The accounts of early settlers and naturalists like William Bartram paint a verbal portrait of uplands almost monotonous in their similarity. Thousands upon thousands of acres were occupied by stately longleaf pines towering over an open, grassy understory. The trees were sparsely scattered in many areas, commonly called "savannas." Frequent fires, set by Native Americans or natural causes, kept the understory free of brush and hardwood trees except in the wettest of areas. These fires had little effect on the fire-adapted longleaf, although frequent fires probably kept regeneration sparse, occasionally wiping out entire age classes.

Longleaf can be an infrequent seed producer, with a good seed crop being produced every six to ten years on the average. Many wildlife species adapted to that open habitat apparently abounded. Wild turkeys were reportedly fairly common, deer were numerous, and red-cockaded woodpeckers and gopher tortoises, uncommon to rare today, were abundant. It is estimated that longleaf pine occupied more than 90 million acres from Virginia to Texas in the early 18th century and occurred across physiographic regions, literally from the mountains to the sea.



The Longleaf Alliance will encourage the re-establishment of longleaf where conditions are suitable and it's compatible with a landowner's objectives.

aesthetically appealing of the Southern pines. It has long, glossy needles and large cones with tasty seeds tucked into the bracts. These large seeds are attractive to many wildlife species. Growing naturally in even-aged and uneven aged stands of various sizes, the classic longleaf landscape of open expanses of park-like forest appeals to almost everyone.

The tree is better adapted to fire than other Southern forest trees, even the other Southern pines. In particular, the early "grass stage" seedlings are virtually fire-proof once they have reached a root crown diameter of about 1 inch. There is a brief

period between the initiation of height growth and the development of sufficiently corky insulating bark when hot fires can cause some mortality; then fire can be used safely again in management strategies.

In addition, longleaf is almost unaffected by the most important diseases and pests that attack the other Southern pines. It is seldom damaged by fusiform rust or littleleaf disease and resists attack by pine beetles better than all other Southern pines. The only important disease of longleaf is a fungus, brown spot needle blight, which attacks seedlings in the grass stage. It can often be controlled inexpensively with fire or with nursery and pre-planting fungicide treatments. The tree is the longest lived of the Southern pines and has the demonstrated ability to respond to thinning at virtually any point in its life.

The wood of longleaf is dense, often with close annual rings and a high resin content. It can be pulped to yield high quality fibre, but is best used to produce utility poles and high quality lumber. Its straight trunks, excellent self-pruning characteristics, and high form class (little taper along the bole) are attributes that make sawmillers and pole manufacturers show up with checkbooks in hand when longleaf timber is marketed. The burgeoning landscaping and yard and lawn care industries place a premium on longleaf pine straw. Some landowners achieve returns from its sale that rival the value of wood products grown in their longleaf forests.

Characteristics of Longleaf

The tree itself, with its straight bole and symmetrical crown, is perhaps the most

Decline in Acreage

Today, only about 3 million acres of longleaf remain; about 3 percent of what

once existed. How did that happen? How could we have squandered such a rich resource? Forest management is a relatively young profession in America. We have practiced forestry here in the Southeast for only about 70 years. Before that time, we relied on the natural resilience of our forest resource to reproduce itself. Much of the Southeast, especially the uplands that longleaf occupied, was deliberately cleared to make room for homes, farms, pastures, and orchards, then for villages, towns, and eventually, cities. The forest, which was cutover and left, did regenerate itself, but seldom in longleaf. Abandoned farmland also reseeded and eventually became forest, but again, seldom a longleaf forest.

Several factors operated to keep longleaf from reoccupying its former range. The role of free ranging stock in this species shift cannot be overlooked. Hogs love the roots of young longleaf seedlings and root them up greedily. At least one researcher has speculated that peaks of feral hog herds coincide with and are causes for missing age classes in many longleaf forests. It is certain that high hog populations can decimate entire stands of longleaf seedlings. In addition, annual spring fires were a standard practice across much of the South to encourage "green-up" of the forest floor and improve grazing for cattle. These annual fires undoubtedly killed vulnerable seedlings regularly, preventing successful natural regeneration of longleaf.

When we began to systematically harvest the forests of the South from the turn of the century through the 1940s, we knew little about replanting, relying instead on nature to replenish itself. Longleaf is not only tolerant of fire throughout most of its life, it often *requires* fire to prepare seedbeds for germination, to eliminate competition for scarce moisture and nutrients, and to free it of the debilitating brown spot fungus. When Smokey Bear made us aware of the ravages of fire across the landscape, he missed the fact that fire is not bad for all forests. The resulting exclusion of fire across much of the South prevented the natural regeneration and re-establishment of longleaf as effectively as the annual fires and feral hogs of an earlier era. Therefore, cutover forests, old fields, and abandoned pastures were reseeded with loblolly and shortleaf pine.

Finally, when we began to deliberately regenerate the ravaged Southern forests, quality longleaf seedlings were scarce or not available at all. Longleaf was more difficult to plant than loblolly or slash and the survivors often languished in the grass stage for years before initiating height growth. Forest industry, particularly the pulp and paper industry, realized that return on investment with the short rotations they favored could be much better optimized with earlier starting, faster growing species.

Longleaf Alliance

Today, productive loblolly and slash pine forests dominate the landscape where longleaf once resided. Still, longleaf appeals to many of us, and it is becoming more and more evident that we may have written it off prematurely. We have begun to appreciate the uniqueness of the longleaf forest system — its rich plant and animal communities and its aesthetic appeal. The economics of longleaf management is attractive as well. High proportions of high value products are common in mature longleaf stands and advances in seedling quality, containerized seedlings, planting techniques, competition control, and stand management techniques make survival and growth comparable to other Southern pines. In addition, natural regeneration techniques have been developed and tested and are in use across the species' range. Desire to retain the longleaf we have left is growing and there is increased interest in restoring it to much of its previous range.

To that end, there is a new organization on the horizon. The Longleaf Alliance is a partnership of landowners, forest managers, consulting foresters, forest industries, researchers, environmental groups, universities, and state and federal natural resource agencies whose purpose is to encourage the re-establishment of longleaf where it is appropriate to the owner's objectives and where the conditions are suited to the species. The Alliance is based at the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center near Andalusia, Alabama and includes partners and cooperators from Texas to Virginia.

Currently, the Alliance is in the formative stages and is marginally staffed. It functions as a clearinghouse for information on longleaf regeneration, management, utilization, and ecosystem values for Alliance members and others who are interested in the species. In addition, the

Alliance serves as an information hub for a network of researchers across the region who are currently studying, have studied, or who want to study longleaf forest systems.

Finally, the Alliance staff itself carries out limited applied research on or near the Dixon Center. A Research Coordinator for the Longleaf Alliance, Mark Hains, has been hired and is in place at the Dixon Center. Six longleaf studies were installed this year to complement several others already in place. An Outreach Coordinator will be added to the Alliance staff as soon as possible. This critical position will oversee the dissemination of information and research results through newsletters, publications, regional meetings, and research symposia. Rhett Johnson, Director of the Dixon Center, and Dean Gjerstad of the School of Forestry at Auburn University are acting as co-directors of the Alliance at present. The Southern Group of State Foresters has endorsed the Alliance and virtually all progress to date has been made possible by assistance and support from the Alabama Forestry Commission.

In a capsule, the Alliance is an umbrella organization with one interest, the retention and restoration of longleaf pine across its former range, recognizing that it is not a miracle tree, nor is it the species of choice for every situation or every landowner. Where longleaf is appropriate, the Alliance encourages its establishment and management. The Alliance does not focus on preservation of longleaf ecosystems, although advocates of preservation are welcome in the Alliance, have much to offer other members and, hopefully, much to receive in return.

The Longleaf Alliance is based on the premise that museums preserve things that once were, but are unlikely to be again. Our philosophy is that the best way to save something is to give it value, and that the best way to give something value is to use it. Help us keep this piece of Southern heritage a vital component in the forests of the region. Inquiries about the Longleaf Alliance or management of the species should be addressed to The Longleaf Alliance, Route 7, Box 131, Andalusia, AL 36420 (334-222-7779) or to The Longleaf Alliance, Attention: Dr. Dean Gjerstad, School of Forestry, M. White Smith Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849 (334-844-1020). ☞

USDA-Farm Service Agency

by JEFF HELMS, Information Specialist, Farm Service Agency

As a forest landowner or farmer, you may have received assistance from the Farm Service Agency, formerly the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service. The implementation of a new Farm Bill promises more changes for an agency with a long history of service.

A New Challenge— The 1996 Farm Bill

The enactment of the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (FAIR) brought about the most significant changes in domestic farm policy in more than 60 years.

The most far-reaching change was the replacement of farm programs based on production control with market-driven programs that allow for greater planting flexibility. FAIR, or the 1996 Farm Bill, eliminates traditional price supports for wheat, feed grains, cotton, and rice administered through the Acreage Reduction Program. In past years, farmers enrolled crop acreage bases in these programs and received deficiency payments when market prices fell below government-established target prices. In turn, producers were required to subscribe to certain conservation guidelines and could be mandated to "set aside" a portion of their base acreage. Set aside was determined based on estimated supply and demand for the crop year and was used as a tool to stabilize price.

Under the 1996 Farm Bill, crop acreage bases are converted to contract acres. Producers can enroll their contract acres in seven-year Production Flexibility Contracts (PFC) between May 20 and July 12 of this year. Farmers who miss this deadline, except those with expiring Conservation Reserve Program contracts, will

not be allowed to sign up at a later date. Agricultural producers with PFCs will be paid fixed, declining payments during the seven-year contract period. Unlike past programs, the PFC program is not tied to production. Producers may plant any crop on their contract acres with the exception of fruits and vegetables.

In addition to changing the way Alabama's farmers do business, the 1996 Farm

evolved from a part of every family's life to a business regulated by supply and demand. Slowly, scientific and technological breakthroughs improved crop yields and shifted the fulcrum in this delicate balance causing supply to far exceed demand.

The Depression magnified the effects of overproduction as families cut food purchases to a minimum. Prices were

low. Farmers responded by planting more crops. Prices plummeted even lower. As the 1930s began, the outlook for agriculture was bleak. Between 1930 and 1933 one in four American farms was sold to pay debt or taxes.

Government intervention was inevitable. On May 12, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Agricultural Adjustment Act. The law established state and local committees of farmers, known as Triple A committees, to act as agents to their neighbors in administering farm programs and distributing benefit payments.

In the beginning, the programs of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (Triple A) were designed to cut production. Initially, voluntary sign-ups for production control were held, but came too late to halt spring planting and farrowing. Fearing the economy could not withstand another year of overproduction and low farm incomes, the Roosevelt administration initiated the infamous 1933 plow-up and livestock slaughter programs.

In 1934, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) was created as the fiscal arm of the Triple A. For the first time price support loans—similar to those extended to farmers on corn and cotton today—were available. Triple A and CCC were a team. Their goal? Defeat overproduction and stabilize farm incomes. On January 6, 1936, however, a



Charlotte Stewart (right), Montgomery County program assistant, looks over some aerial photographs with John "Bubba" Trotman.

Bill redefines a relationship between agricultural producers and the U.S. Department of Agriculture which spans 63 years.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is charged with the duty of administering programs created by the 1996 Farm Bill. FAIR, however, is seen as both a challenge and opportunity for employees of an agency which has evolved to meet the changing needs of America's agricultural community.

History

FSA and its farmer-elected committee system, like many types of government assistance, is a product of the Great Depression. The American farm crisis, however, began long before the Depression. Through the years, farming had

Supreme Court ruling locked the doors of Triple A offices when doubt was cast on the constitutionality of production controls. Fifty-four days later, the President signed the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936, wedding production control to conservation. Triple A was transformed into the Agricultural Conservation Association. The new goals of the agency were to re-establish and maintain farm income at fair levels and protect consumers by assuring adequate supplies of food and fiber. New programs were voluntary. Payments were earned for planting "soil conserving" grass and legumes instead of "soil depleting" crops.

In 1938, the Agricultural Adjustment Act was revamped to include the best parts of previous legislation and the Triple A name was restored to the farmer committee system. Crop allotments and commodity loans were established; payment limitations were set; congressional control of farm programs was granted; and non-recourse loans, systematic storage, price support, and parity payments were made available to farmers through grower referendums.

During World War II, increased demand for agricultural products led the agency to lift production controls and encourage the planting of strategic commodities like flax, sugar, hemp, wool and mohair.

In 1946, Triple A got another new name—the Production and Marketing Administration. By 1949, continuing technological advancements caused yields to soar, and surpluses seemed inevitable. Just as production controls were being drafted in Congress, however, the Korean War erupted in Asia and demand for agricultural products skyrocketed.

In the early 1950s, the agency again got a new name. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) was created and an office manager was hired to run the day-to-day business of administering farm programs. Previously, farmer-elected committees had served on a full-time basis. With the introduction of an office manager, the committees' duties were limited to leasing office space, hiring and firing the office manager, and policy determinations needed in administering farm programs.

FSA Today

The final name change for the agency came in 1994 when the USDA Reorgani-

zation Act created the Farm Service Agency. Today, FSA administers farm commodity, farm credit, and conservation programs for farmers through a network of state and county offices. FSA programs are primarily directed at agricultural producers or, in the case of loans, at those with farming experience.

The majority of FSA employees work with producing farmers who maintain a crop history by making an annual report of planted acres to FSA county offices. Typically, these offices record planting reports on about 360 million acres, seven out of every eight acres of cropland in the nation.

FSA uses aerial photography to ensure that producers accurately report planted acreages. The Aerial Photography Field Office in Salt Lake City, Utah, periodically provides a comprehensive set of aerial photographs to each FSA office nationwide. In addition, county FSA offices photograph selected areas of their county each spring and fall. Acreages can be determined by taking measurements on the photographs. Copies of aerial photographs are available to landowners through their local FSA office for a nominal fee.

FSA uses a unique method of local administration that dates back to the days of Triple A. Farmers who are eligible to participate in federal farm programs elect a three- to five-person county committee. This committee reviews county office operations and makes decisions on how the programs apply locally, giving farmers a say in how the federal programs are applied to their county.

Agricultural programs are designed to improve the economic stability of agriculture and to help farmers adjust production to meet demand. The goal is to avoid severe price swings for farmers and consumers. While the passage of the 1996 Farm Bill changed traditional price support programs and lessened the need for crop reporting, many FSA programs remain intact.

FSA makes Commodity Credit Corporation loans to eligible farmers, using the stored crop as collateral. Loans to producers are usually "nonrecourse." That is, when market prices are higher than the loan rate, a farmer may simply pay off the loan and market the commodity. However, if market prices are below the loan levels, a producer can forfeit or deliver the commodity to the government to discharge the loan obligation in full.

Thus, commodity loans promote orderly marketing by providing farmers with income while they hold their crops for later sale. In 1995, FSA made about \$12.9 million in commodity loans to Alabama farmers.

FSA also has direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loan programs to help farmers who are temporarily unable to obtain private, commercial credit. In many cases, these are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for commercial credit. In other instances, they are farmers who have suffered financial setbacks from natural disasters, or who have limited resources with which to establish and maintain profitable farming operations. In Fiscal Year 1995, 348 farm loans were made to Alabama producers totalling about \$19.3 million.

In the aftermath of a natural disaster, FSA can also provide a variety of emergency assistance programs to farmers. For example, FSA will pay about \$5.1 million in cost shares to Alabama farmers through the Emergency Conservation Program to help rehabilitate land damaged by Hurricane Opal.

FSA's conservation programs help preserve and improve the wealth and promise of America's farmlands. USDA's most ambitious conservation effort, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), targets the most fragile farmland by encouraging farmers to stop growing crops on land designated by soil conservationists as "highly erodible" and to plant a permanent vegetative cover instead. In return, the farmer receives an annual rental payment for the term of the multi-year contract. As of May 1994, about 555,459 acres of Alabama cropland on 9,541 farms had been enrolled in the CRP. Annual rental payments on these acres totalled \$23.6 million. In addition, FSA paid cost shares totalling \$19.5 million to establish cover on these lands.

Yet another change brought about by the 1996 Farm Bill is a new conservation program called the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This program, which will provide cost-share assistance to farmers, will be administered by FSA and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

For more information about FSA programs and assistance, call or visit one of the 55 county FSA offices in Alabama. ☎

Frequently Asked Questions About Forestry

by COLEEN VANSANT, Public Information Specialist, N.E. Region, Alabama Forestry Commission, Cullman

Q “I have a few acres of land that I’m interested in planting to trees. I understand the Alabama Forestry Commission sells trees. How do I order them and when is the best time to place an order?”

A. The Alabama Forestry Commission does grow quality pine and hardwood seedlings. Ordering information for this year is on the back cover of this issue. You may also place an order by contacting your local Alabama Forestry Commission office. These numbers are listed on the opposite page. All seedling orders are filled on a first come, first served basis. Don’t wait until late fall to order seedlings; we may be sold out.

Q “What is the difference between Alabama Forestry Commission and the U.S. Forest Service?”

A. The Alabama Forestry Commission is a state agency charged with the promotion, protection and development of Alabama’s forestland. Some of the Commission’s most important jobs are wildfire protection and forest management services to private non-industrial landowners. The U.S. Forest Service is a federal agency which has control over federal land like the Conecuh, Bankhead, Talladega, and Tuskegee National Forests.

Q “Why do I have to get a burn permit and how do I get one?”

A. A burn permit is a telephone authorization which allows you to legally do some types of outdoor burning. The law is designed to ensure that outdoor burning is conducted safely and to prevent the spread of wildfire. If you are unsure whether or not you need a permit, a good rule to use is if you are burning more than

one-quarter of an acre or within 25 feet of a natural combustible material, call for a permit. Permits are free of charge and can be obtained by calling the Alabama Forestry Commission 1-800 number in the front cover of your local telephone directory. You will need to provide the AFC representative with basic information including the landowner and responsible party’s name, telephone number, type of burn, number of acres, the section, township and range of the area to be burned, and the time and date the burning is to occur.

Q “So, if I call and get a burn permit I can’t be held legally liable if my fire gets away?”

A. No. You are still legally responsible for your fire even if you get a burn permit.

Q “I have some timber that I would like to sell. What should I do in order to sell it?”

A. There are several ways this can be done. To ensure that you receive the best service and a quality job, contact a professional. Your local Alabama Forestry Commission office can supply you with the names of registered foresters in your area who can be of assistance. It is important that you are treated fairly and that the integrity of your land is respected during the harvest operation. A professional forester can direct and advise you concerning the best methods.

Q “Everyone tells me I should contact a registered forester. What is a registered forester?”

A. A registered forester is a professional trained in the art and science of

managing forests. He or she has a bachelor’s or higher degree in an accredited forestry curriculum at a college or university. Before one of these trained professionals can practice forestry in this state they must be licensed by the Alabama State Board of Registration for Foresters. To become licensed, they must pass a written or oral exam administered by the Board. A listing of registered foresters in Alabama can be obtained by contacting the state board at 334-240-9368.

Q “I’ve heard about the Southern pine beetle. How do I know if I have beetles in my timber?”

A. Unfortunately, most people do not know they have beetle infestations in their pine timber until the damage has already been done. Yellow to bright orange and dead needles on the trees is the most obvious sign; small, white popcorn-shaped pitch tubes attached to the bark is another sign. During the summer months the Forestry Commission conducts aerial flights in each county to detect infestations. If beetles are observed on your property, you will be contacted by letter about the locations of the spot or spots and recommendations given on action you should take. If you think you might have a Southern pine beetle infestation, contact your local Forestry Commission office.

Q “Everywhere I turn I keep hearing about how our state’s forestland is owned by large industrial landowners. Is this true?”

A. According to a 1990 survey, this is not true. The Alabama Forest Landowner Survey, conducted by the Forestry Commission, revealed that 71 percent of Alabama’s 22 million acres of forestland is owned by private non-industrial landowners. Nearly

50 percent of these landowners own less than 500 acres of land. Forest industry owns approximately 18 percent, other corporations own 6 percent, and government owns 5 percent.

Q “Just how important is forestry anyway?”

A. Forestry is Alabama’s number one manufacturing industry. Nine billion dollars worth of forest products are produced in Alabama each year. Around 66,800 people are directly employed in the forests products industry with 62,000 of these workers working in manufacturing jobs alone. The many forest products industries in Alabama pay an annual payroll of over \$1.7 billion annually. Alabama has the second largest commercial forest in the nation, following only Georgia. (Sources: Ala. Dept. of Industrial Relations Statistical Bulletin, July 1993; ADO Annual Report, 1993; Ag Statistics Bulletin, 1993 Preliminary; AFC Cash Receipt Report, 1993; 1990 Census of Manufacturers, U.S. Department of Commerce; Forest Resources of the U.S., 1992, USDA-Forest Service.)

Q “I want to get a lifetime hunting and fishing license for myself and my two grandsons. Who do I contact with the Alabama Forestry Commission to buy one?”

A. The Alabama Forestry Commission does not have responsibility in the state for hunting and fishing. This falls under the Alabama Department of Conservation. To have any questions answered about hunting and fishing in Alabama, or for information about obtaining licenses, contact the Alabama Department of Conservation or your local game warden.

Q “My wife and I have retired and recently bought a new RV. We want to visit the state parks with our grandchildren. How can we get a senior citizens discount card?”

A. Once again this does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Alabama Forestry Commission. The Alabama

Department of Conservation, State Parks Division is responsible for the state’s beautiful parks. By calling toll free 1-800-ALA-PARK you can get information about all of Alabama’s parks.


Q “My husband went out on the front porch last night and noticed a skunk hiding underneath it. The skunk was still under there this morning. Can the Alabama Forestry Commission help us with this problem?”

A. Alabama Forestry Commission associates are not trained in animal control; therefore we won’t be able to assist you with your skunk problem. You can get help from your local Department of Conservation officer (game warden) or your city or county animal control officer. Both of these numbers can be found in your local telephone directory.

Q “What is Alabama’s state tree?”

A. Alabama’s state tree is the Southern pine. The term “Southern pine” is commonly used to designate four of the eight species of pine trees that grow naturally in Alabama. These are the longleaf, loblolly, slash, and shortleaf pines.

Q “What does TREASURE stand for?”

A. TREASURE is an acronym for Timber, Recreation, Environment, Aesthetics, for a Sustained, Usable, REsource. The TREASURE Forest program in Alabama recognizes landowners who are managing for multiple uses. If you are interested in becoming a TREASURE Forest landowner, contact your local office of the Alabama Forestry Commission. 

Alabama Forestry Commission County Office Telephone Numbers

Autauga County	334-361-0576	Houston County	334-677-5454
Baldwin County	334-964-6391	Jackson County	205-574-3217
Barbour County	334-775-3496	Jefferson County	205-631-6982
Bibb County	205-926-4917	Lamar County	205-695-7530
Blount County	205-274-2231	Lauderdale County	205-764-4382
Bullock County	334-738-3040	Lawrence County	205-974-8168
Butler County	334-376-9114	Lee County	334-742-0320
Calhoun County	205-435-6245	Limestone County	205-232-7940
Chambers County	334-864-9368	Lowndes County	334-548-2402
Cherokee County	205-927-3163	Macon County	334-727-3783
Chilton County	205-755-3042	Madison County	205-532-1565
Choctaw County	205-459-2928	Marengo County	334-295-5811
Clarke County	334-275-3283	Marion County	205-921-3843
Clay County	205-396-2441	Marshall County	205-582-4212
Cleburne County	205-463-2876	Mobile County	334-639-9629
Coffee County	334-894-6734	Monroe County	334-743-2350
Colbert County	205-383-4376	Montgomery County	334-242-5585
Conecuh County	334-578-3226	Morgan County	205-773-2114
Coosa County	205-377-4638	Perry County	334-683-8537
Covington County	334-222-4041	Pickens County	205-367-8232
Crenshaw County	334-335-5712	Pike County	334-566-3436
Cullman County	205-734-0573	Randolph County	205-357-2178
Dale County	334-774-8112	Russell County	334-855-3302
Dallas County	334-875-7131	Shelby County	205-669-4133
DeKalb County	205-845-1331	St. Clair County	205-629-6421
Elmore County	334-567-5486	Sumter County	205-652-6500
Escambia County	334-867-7798	Talladega County	205-362-4848
Etowah County	205-538-2535	Tallapoosa County	205-825-4244
Fayette County	205-932-6223	Tuscaloosa County	205-333-1490
Franklin County	205-332-2460	Walker County	205-384-6344
Geneva County	334-684-2876	Washington County	334-847-2972
Greene County	205-372-3980	Wilcox County	334-682-4421
Hale County	205-371-2202	Winston County	205-489-5014
Henry County	334-585-2403		

The Southern Forests:

An Environmental and Economic Success Story

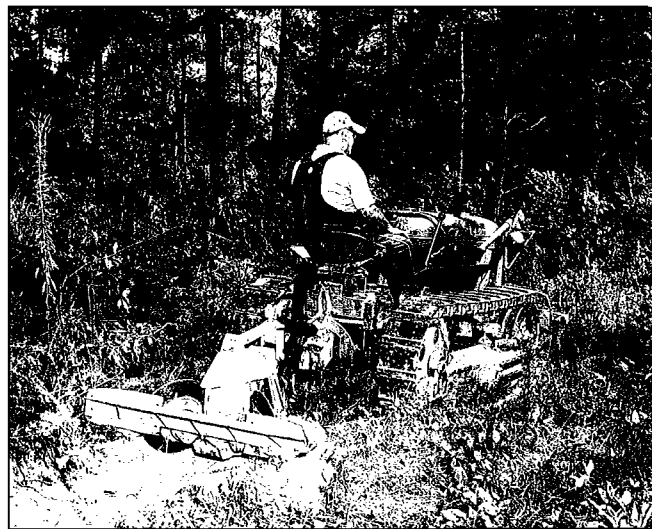
by DON BURDETTE, Alabama Forestry Commission

As North America was settled, the forests and trees were seen as inexhaustible resources and impediments to progress. By the late 1920s most of the “first forests” of the South had been either cleared, depleted or degraded (see Parts 2 and 3). Even while the carnage was in full swing, a few farsighted individuals had raised questions about the future of America’s natural resources and heritage. Slowly, the general public, scientists, businessmen and politicians began to accept the fact that the nation’s natural resources weren’t inexhaustible; they were in desperate need of protection, conservation and renewal. The second, third and fourth generation forests that we see today are the result of natural regeneration, concerted conservation efforts, and demographic shifts that have taken place during this century.

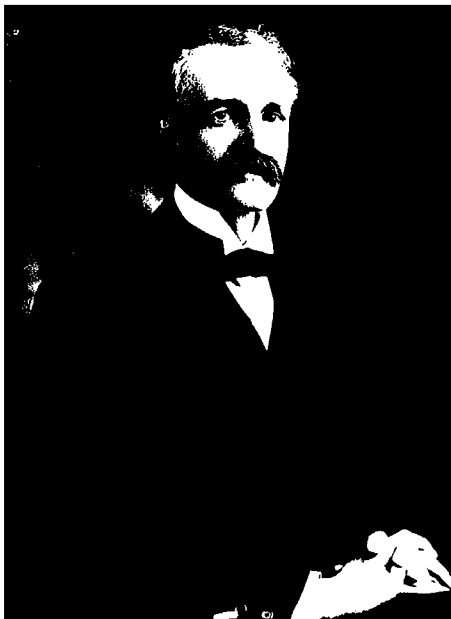
Formation of the Second Forest

Gifford Pinchot is most often credited with setting American forest conservation into motion. He was America’s first native-born citizen trained in forest science—by necessity, in Europe. At George Vanderbilt’s Biltmore Forest in North Carolina, Pinchot was also the first to demonstrate that forestry is a renewable practice. He was also instrumental in establishing the first American school for foresters at Vanderbilt’s Biltmore Estate. These experiences helped propel him into President Theodore Roosevelt’s Cabinet as the first head of the USDA-Forest Service in 1905. Roosevelt and Pinchot enthusiastically promoted a scientific approach to managing, using and renewing forests and other natural resources. They advocated that any current use of resources should protect the productivity of the land and its ability to serve future generations.

Fire protection was the most important factor in allowing nature to renew the South’s forests through natural regeneration and succession. The practice of annual burning was a deep-seated Southern tradition that was slow and difficult to change. In the first decade of the century several modestly funded state fire control agencies, including the Alabama Forestry Commission, were established. In the 1920s, significant federal matching funds helped to establish



One of the first tractor and plow units of the Alabama Department of Conservation, Division of Forestry.



Gifford Pinchot, 1865-1946

federal, state and private cooperative fire control systems in the states. It took several years to develop the capability to detect, suppress and prevent wildfires effectively. State range laws that eliminated free roaming livestock also helped protect young forest reproduction from grazing.

Changes taking place in agriculture also had a positive effect on forestlands. As farmers began trading draft animals for motorized equipment, they no longer needed as much pasture or cropland to feed their animals. These acres were used either to raise more food for people or were allowed to revert back to forestland. Large scale clearing of forestlands for new farmlands was no longer necessary. Mechanization, soil conservation techniques, fertilization, liming, pesticides and genetic improvements in hybrid crops improved productivity so much that farm produce supply exceeded

demand. The resulting lower prices forced many farmers of marginally productive lands out of business, particularly during the Great Depression years of the late 1920s and early

1930s. The Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP) was started during this period to help farmers convert marginal farmlands back into forestlands. These events marked the first migration of a rural, agrarian society toward an urban, industrial and service-oriented economy.

At the same time, the USDA-Forest Service was given the authority to purchase lands for national timber reserves, watershed protection and flood control. Most of the land that the government acquired had been considered worthless by their previous users: worn out, eroded farmland as well as cutover and burned forestland. The Forest Service immediately set out to reclaim these lands and convert them back into healthy, productive forests. In addition to protecting the forests from wildfire to encourage natural regeneration, the Civilian Conservation Corps put thousands of people to work planting trees, improving wildlife habitat and creating developed recreation sites. The National Forests served as forestry research and demonstration sites throughout the South.

Until this time forest industry and private landowners had not been interested in forest renewal and management because of the threat of wildfires, grazing and poor markets. Cooperative fire control, the success enjoyed on the National Forests, and increasing value for Southern wood encouraged progressive thinkers to invest in reforestation and sound management on their own lands. The result was that forest growth gradually began to exceed forest removals on private lands in the South.

The second forests that developed from these pioneering conservation efforts were composed primarily of pine and other early succession species. The range and dominance of loblolly pine in particular were expanded by natural seeding and tree planting. While there are almost no virgin (or first) forests left in the South today, most of what we see and call old growth is actually a remnant of this second forest. Such forest holdings on federal, state and private preserves are being allowed to gradually change to the oak-hickory forest type until natural death or disturbance restarts the process of succession all over again.

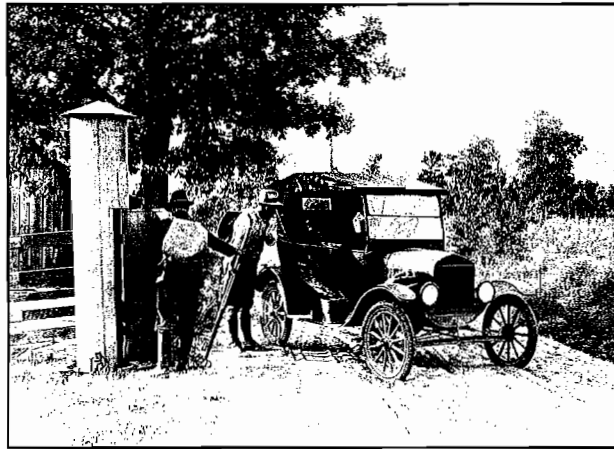
Transition into the Third Forest

World War II brought several developments that helped to reshape the Southern forests. The war effort itself had depleted the timber on many industry and private lands. In addition, National Forest timber reserves were opened up for the first

time and hit hard to support the war effort and local economies. The reduction of available workers forced mechanization of fire control, tree planting and timber harvesting. A shortage of firefighters evoked a major fire prevention campaign at the close of the war that produced Smokey Bear as its very effective mascot. Agricultural production had recovered during the war to provide for the needs of Allied soldiers and citizens. However, a glut of produce after the war caused another mass exodus from farms to the cities, leaving abandoned farms to be reforested by natural succession. Soldiers returning from the war created a great demand for forest products for new housing and business starts. In the late 1950s the short supply and high demand for wood pushed the value of timber up as high as it had ever been.

The practice of taxing land and timber annually before World War II had the effect of persuading people to keep their timber stocking low to reduce their tax burden. In 1944, a federal tax revision treated timber harvest income as a capital gain rather than straight income. By the 1960s many states also changed their laws to tax timber only when it was harvested. These changes eliminated the disincentives to manage timber as a long-term investment.

Increasing demand for wood products, rising values for timber and favorable tax treatment spurred economic growth and development within the Southern forest products industry. Increased fire protection prompted a dramatic increase in reforestation and forest management on industry lands. The forest products industry started the Tree Farm program in 1942 to help private, nonindustrial landowners realize the growth potential of their forestlands. Soon after,



Forest Rangers gather tools from a fire cache to fight a wildfire on the Alabama National Forest (now the Bankhead) in 1927.



A civilian Conservation Corps enrollee helps to restore the Conecuh National Forest by planting trees in 1939.

(Continued on page 23)

LANDOWNERS

LEGISLATIVE • ALERT

NATIONAL

by TERRI BATES, Washington Office, National Association of State Foresters



With the exception of major farm legislation, optimistic expectations of Congress passing comprehensive Endangered Species, Clean Water, or even private property rights legislation have dimmed over the past few months. Spending, revenue and budget bills are about the only substantive legislation that the second session of the 104th Congress is considered likely to pass in this major election year.

1996 Farm Bill

Congress passed and the president signed the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform (FAIR) Act of 1996 in March. This Farm Bill will be in effect through the year 2002. Significant changes were made to farm and conservation policy that will lead to the elimination of most commodity subsidies over the next seven years. At the same time, major new conservation programs were established, some with mandatory funding from the Commodity Credit Corporation.

The forestry programs created by the 1990 Farm Bill forestry title, including the Stewardship and Stewardship Incentives Program, were not affected by the 1996 Farm Bill. In contrast to other conservation programs established in the Farm Bill, the 1990 Forestry Title provisions amended existing permanent law and did not need to be revisited.

The Forestry Incentives Program (FIP) was scheduled to sunset at the end of 1995. FIP has proven effective at ensuring reforestation and timber stand improvement on millions of acres of non-industrial private forestland throughout the country for 20 years. It was reauthorized in the 1996 Farm Bill with no changes in program provisions.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was also extended through 2002, although its current cap of 36.4 million acres enrolled was unchanged. Greater flexibility was provided to most farmers wanting "early out" for acreage currently enrolled in the program, although restrictions were placed on enrolled acres with higher erodibility indices. The USDA will be allowed to enroll new environmentally sensitive acres based on the number of acres released under "early outs."

A major new conservation program was established in the bill by consolidating the long-standing Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP) and several other, smaller conservation programs. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is intended to target assistance to farmers, including ranchers, to obtain the greatest possible conservation benefit per dollar expended. It is also intended to provide a conservation option that simplifies the myriad of programs available to landowners.

Both the CRP and the new EQIP were given a new funding mechanism, which is intended to ensure steady budgets for each of the next seven years. EQIP will be funded at \$200 million a year through 2002 from the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). CRP will also be funded through the CCC at \$35 million annually. CCC funding is much more stable than annual appropriations.

The 1996 Farm Bill also established a new cost-share incentives program called the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. Up to \$50 million in funding was authorized for the program over the next seven years, to be taken out of CRP funds. The program, championed by Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS), is modeled along the same lines as the Stewardship Incentives Program and will provide landowners

with additional options to better manage their lands for wildlife objectives.

The Farm Bill also made changes to the Swampbuster program with potential implications for forestry. In an attempt to give the USDA greater control over the delineation of forested wetlands, language was included which gives the Natural Resources Conservation Service delineation authority on agricultural lands, including "tree farms." Report language defines "tree farms" as "farms devoted to the raising of trees designed to be sold whole, such as nurseries, Christmas tree farms, and other small tree farms, and does not include large tree farms that are commercially planted, cultivated, and actively managed for the production of wood and fiber." It is not clear what the impact of this new section will be on the practice of commercial forestry.

Appropriations

Forest Service appropriations for Fiscal Year 1996 were tied up in the long-running budget dispute between Congress and President Clinton until a final compromise was reached in late April. This delay affected grants to the states for fire and pest control, as well as assistance like the Forest Stewardship Program. The final resolution of the debate over 1996 funds locked in steep reductions for SIP; Congress reduced SIP from \$18 million in 1995 to just \$4.5 million for FY 1996.

As the Fiscal 1997 budget cycle begins, the administration's proposed funding level for private forestry programs is strong, if not overly optimistic. The Stewardship and Cooperative Fire programs are funded at or above the 1995 level in the president's budget; requests for forestry incentives and cooperative research and extension programs were basically level. Congress,

however, is not expected to depart greatly from its continuing focus on reducing the federal budget, even if they may choose to avoid high-profile fights over spending in the face of upcoming elections.

Trade

Ongoing negotiations over alleged subsidies from Canadian provinces to soft-wood timber exporters in that country have finally led to a U.S./Canadian agreement in

which Canada will limit its lumber exports to the United States over the next five years. Canadian imports had grown to 36

(Continued on page 18)

ALABAMA

by FRANK SEGO, Legislative Liaison, Alabama Forestry Commission



If you've never been to the Alabama State House in Montgomery on the final night of a legislative session: DON'T!

The atmosphere is worse than the frenzy caused by the epidemic of "Mad Cow" disease that swept the cattle population of Great Britain recently. It's "Udder Chaos"! Clearly, there is very little "milk of human kindness" to be found among those whose special projects fail in those dying moments of any session.

The closing night of the 1996 regular session in May was no exception. Unfinished bills were flying right and left through the corridors trying to make their way to final passage before the bewitching hour of midnight.

The lack of synchronization between the House and Senate has never been more evident than it was prior to midnight on May 20. The House, realizing the necessity of getting several vital measures passed and sent to the Senate, tripped a mechanism to stop the clock at 11:45 p.m.

Thinking the Senate might follow suit, the acting Speaker of the House, Rep. Seth Hammett of Andalusia, called up several bills that were passed quickly and forwarded to the upper chamber. But Lt. Governor Don Siegelman refused to acquiesce and brought the Senate gavel down at the actual stroke of midnight, nullifying any hope of getting the bills considered. "Sine die" is the death knell for further action in any session. The House then had no course but to declare its own "sine die" shortly after midnight.

Decisions! Decisions!

Governor James had until midnight May 30 (10 days after the end of the session) to either sign or allow the budget to receive a "pocket veto." It was almost certain he would let the bill die without his signature, from which the Legislature would have no recourse except to bring it

back in a special session.

On the eve of the 10th day following the session, a number of House and Senate leaders engaged the governor in a conference call, pleading with him to sign the budget. They advised him to weigh his administration's advantages in the budget as compared to the cost of a special session (about \$500,000) and the fact that he might get a special session budget that was far less acceptable than the one previously passed.

The governor's objections had centered around a \$4 million item for legislators to split for pet projects in their own districts. He felt this would leave some essential programs without enough money for the 1996-97 fiscal year.

At the last moment, he announced that he would sign the budget as long as legislators promised not to spend any of the \$4 million until March 1, 1997.

In his pre-session recommendation to the Legislature for the 1996-97 budget, Gov. James held the general fund figure at \$11,684,479, the same amount the Forestry Commission received in the 1995-96 budget. The House went with that. However, the Senate came forward with an additional \$1 million, bringing the budget up to \$12,684,479. The final AFC budget was exactly as the governor had recommended.

An authorization bill to allow the AFC to spend \$1.5 million from severance taxes and timber sales died in a conference committee. It must be pointed out that the \$1.5 million was to be used in this fiscal period—not next year. The AFC may have an opportunity to get this authorization if a fall special session is called.

AFC Stresses Needs

Forestry Commission officials have consistently made a strong case for returning the general fund to its original 1994-95 appropriation. The 1995-96 appropriation suffered a decrease of \$1,289,475, meaning a reduction of \$934,590 in for the AFC

and a \$354,885 reduction in rural community fire protection grants.

The reduction in manpower has forced county firefighters to place undermanned crews on firefighting duty. A second man is needed on each fire crew. Not only has the manpower been reduced from 519 in 1991 to 397 in 1996, but 33 percent of the AFC suppression fleet is in excess of 17 years of age. Repairs and new equipment are long overdue.

Additional personnel are also needed to assist landowners with southern pine beetle problems and to offer advice on tree planting and harvesting.

The Forestry Commission recently reorganized to put its resources to work at the local level. This was done to respond more rapidly and effectively to our citizens' needs and requests.

One only needs to run a comparison of forestry budgets in other southeastern states to realize the urgency of an increase in Alabama's general fund. Consider these figures:

Forestry Budget by Acre

Florida	\$1.84
Mississippi	\$1.67
Georgia	\$1.28
Alabama	.98

That says it all!

A Bouquet for Kay

Legislative secretaries and clerks are a vital part of the success of any legislative session. The 1996 regular session was no different. On the final night of the session a resolution to fund the Legislative Forestry Study Committee had slipped into a shuffle of bills and resolutions. Just before midnight Kay Dierlam, the vivacious and always conscientious secretary for Senator Hap Myers, retrieved the resolution and got it to Myers on the Senate floor within an eyelash of adjournment—and it passed. Thanks, Kay! ☞

Alabama's New Prescribed Burning Act

During Alabama's 1995 Legislative Session, the **Alabama Prescribed Burn Act** was passed with the objective of protecting and encouraging prescribed burning in Alabama. The act was proposed by the Alabama Forestry Association and sponsored by Representative Allen Layson, a registered forester, of Reform, and Representative James Hamilton of Rogersville. This bill was supported by the forestry community as well as several environmental organizations.

The primary purpose of the new law is to reduce liability associated with prescribed burning—if the burner meets the requirements outlined in the new law. In order to receive the protection of reduced liability, the burner must be certified in Alabama as a Prescribed Burn Manager.

To become certified, burners must attend appropriate training and pass an examination in addition to completing some home study material. The length of the training session required will depend on the individual's level of experience. Those individuals who have at least two year's experience and have supervised at least five burns must attend a one and one-half day training session. Burners with less experience will be required to attend a four-day training session.

Training will be provided by the Auburn University School of Forestry Continuing Education Program. For training information, contact Chris Isaacson at 334-844-1042, or write to Auburn University, School of Forestry, 117 M. White Smith Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849-5418.

The states of Georgia, Mississippi, and Florida have similar certification laws and training requirements. Burners certified in one of those states can be certified in Alabama without attending any additional training.

The Alabama Forestry Commission is designated in the prescribed burning act as the agency which issues the prescribed burn manager's certification and as the agency responsible for developing and administering the Alabama Prescribed Burn Act.

For more information about the new law, write to the Alabama Forestry Commission, Attention: Prescribed Burn Certification, P.O. Box 302550, Montgomery, AL 36130-2550; or call David Frederick at 334-240-9335. ♣

National Legislative Alert

Continued from page 17

percent of the U.S. market for softwood timber; under the agreement, this percentage will drop to 32.8 percent. It will allow additional Canadian lumber to enter the U.S. with a \$50 per 1,000 board feet tariff (Canadian dollars). The agreement, which became effective on April 1, comes in exchange for a U.S. commitment to refrain from legal action under international trade agreements. U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Cantor stressed that the U.S. would retaliate strongly if the Canadians renege on the agreement.

Anti-logging Sentiment

As logging under salvage sales from National Forest roadless areas and green timber sales moves ahead on old forests in the Pacific Northwest, environmental groups are taking tougher stances against all harvesting on public forests and are

becoming increasingly critical of timber harvesting in general. Members of the Sierra Club, one of the nation's oldest environmental groups, voted recently by over 60 percent to oppose all commercial logging on public lands. The group claims 587,000 members, although less than 50,000 voted.

Sierra Club action comes as local groups are increasingly opposing logging around the country. The Maine Green Party has put an initiative on the November ballot that would ban all forms of even-aged management on both public and private timberlands. Over 98 percent of Maine's land base is privately owned, and it is heavily forested. Reportedly, recent polls indicate the initiative is enjoying broad public support in Maine. Similar initiatives are reportedly underway in Oregon and Washington. Environmental groups also appear to be becoming more active in opposing commercial logging of national forests in the Southeast. ♣

CLARIFICATION

The Spring issue of *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* contained an article called "Managing your CRP Trees, Opportunity Knocks." It's possible that a portion of the article which dealt with pine straw harvesting could be misunderstood by CRP owners. The intent of the article was to outline management opportunities **after CRP contracts expire**. The first CRP contracts expired September 30, 1995, and contracts will continue to expire over the next several years. All CRP owners should be aware that the harvest of pine straw, timber, or any other product from CRP lands *cannot* be conducted while CRP contracts are in effect. Harvest can only be conducted after CRP contracts have expired or have been properly terminated with the USDA-Farm Service Agency.

For the Love of a Forest

by COLEEN VANSANT, Public Information Specialist, Alabama Forestry Commission, N.E. Region, Cullman

You'd have to search the state over to find a landowner who loved his land more than John Ponder. You only have to be around him a little while, walking over his property, riding around in a truck, or sitting on the front porch of his rustic cabin, to tell this man is in love—in love with every tree, plant, animal, and drop of water on his approximately 215-acre TREASURE Forest in northeast Talladega County.

Once you see his place, you can't blame him for his weakness. Nestled in a beautiful mountain cove just east of Munford, the site is compelling. It demands your attention and your respect. For a short moment your mind has to adjust to the fact that you haven't stepped back 100 years in time—it just seems like you have.

The first thing that captures your attention is a rustic log cabin nestled in hardwoods overlooking the sandy bottom of Salt Creek. Ponder built the two-room lofted cabin himself (even down to the handmade wooden shingles on the roof) in 1987. Since then, the simple house with its wide, railed front porch has become the favorite place for visitors to sit and talk, or just plain sit and think while you are captivated by the charms of the nearby stream and hardwood forests. Although Ponder and his family don't live on the property, they live close enough that a trip to the farm is an almost daily event.

There's also a fully working smokehouse, split rail fence, and various other farm implements and outbuildings that create the nostalgic atmosphere of a time long ago.

The special thing about John Ponder is that he wants everyone who visits his TREASURE to experience the same feeling he does. So many activities that take place there are not as much for his benefit as for those of his friends and family.

The Talladega County Planning Committee has hosted tours on his place because of its wonderful atmosphere and diversity. Church and family events are common, and even a local senior citizen stops by to let his shiny black cocker spaniel play in the dry leaves along the cool creek bank.



John Ponder (right) and Talladega County Forester Arthur Hitt walk over one of several wildlife food plots on Ponder's property.

Every October there is the annual Squirrel Fest, followed in winter by the Deer Fest, and finally, the Turkey Fest in the spring.

The work he has done to encourage the wildlife population has paid off. Around 12 years ago 90 acres of ridgetop timber

was cut and has been allowed to come back naturally. Around 10 acres have been replanted in loblolly pine. Five wildlife food plots dot the hollows and hills of the property where 15 homemade tree stands await the next hunter. This work has promoted Ponder's primary management objective for his TREASURE Forest, wildlife.

On the timber side, most people would disagree with Ponder's management philosophy. The 90 acres previously harvested has returned in woody weed species like sumac and Virginia pine. In the hollows and bottom gigantic trees of oak, poplar, beech, maple, and black walnut obscure the vision from anything surrounding it. Where most people would look at the giants and see logs ready for the sawmill, Ponder looks at the same trees and vows, "Unless I'm one step from destruction it'll never be cut."

Ponder will tell you right off that he's not in the money making business. "This place is real special to us," he said. The dollar signs don't mean that much to the Georgia Pacific timber buyer. His main purpose is to keep and nurture his mountain-flanked paradise into providing him with the most valuable benefit of all—pure enjoyment. ♣

MEMORIAL

Cherokee County TREASURE Forest landowner John Mathews died February 15, 1996, at the age of 69. He was a resident of Decatur, Alabama.

Mr. Mathews and his wife, Dean, were featured in the fall 1989 issue of *Alabama's TREASURED Forests*. Their TREASURE Forest, Cherokee Pines, was a District Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award winner in 1987.

Mr. Mathews was assistant manager of Alabama Farmers Cooperative, Inc. for 11

years, and was general manager for 22 years before his retirement in 1990. He was a graduate of Auburn University, where a scholarship fund has been set up in his name for students in the College of Agriculture.

Mr. Mathews was a founding member of the TREASURE Forest Association of North Alabama, and was active in his church and community. Mrs. Mathews will continue to manage the Cherokee County property as a TREASURE Forest.

Food Plots Can Enhance Wildlife Management

by DR. BILL MCKEE, Alabama River Woodlands

Food plots have been used in wildlife habitat management for many years. Planting as little as 1 percent of an area can increase deer harvest, hunter success, hunter satisfaction, deer quality and deer observability.

However, food plots should never be viewed as a substitute for sound habitat management or population control. Without proper habitat and herd management, food plots will most likely be a waste of time and money.

The emphasis on warm-season or cool-season plantings will depend on objectives, as well as local habitat conditions. Generally, late winter and late summer are periods of stress or potential nutritional deficiencies for deer. Summer is an important antler growth period and is when most fawns are born. Therefore, bucks and does are under special nutritional demands.

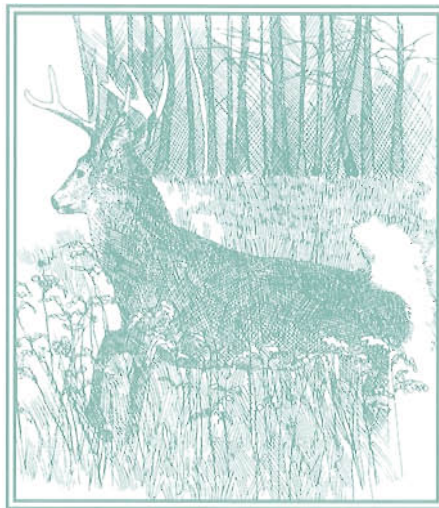
As food supplements, however, warm-season plantings for deer are less important than cool-season plantings. Therefore, this article will only focus on cool-season choices.

Cool-season Plantings

Cool-season plantings should be made from September through October, depending on soil moisture and other local conditions. Winter grasses including ryegrass, rye, wheat, and oats produce forage that attracts deer and provides needed nutrition through winter months.

Oats usually are the most preferred grass in early fall, but may be winter-killed more easily than other grasses. Wheat and ryegrass produce about the same quantity of forage. In situations

where light grazing occurs due to low deer density, ryegrass has a slight advantage over wheat because it maintains higher palatability through spring. Rye falls somewhere in between wheat and ryegrass.



Generally, ryegrass will be used more than any other winter grasses and will also reseed. With a light disking in the fall it can provide several years of production from a single seeding. It is also more shade tolerant than wheat, oats, or rye, so it is the best choice for small plots in forested acres.

A variety of legumes, especially clovers, are good cool-season plantings. They provide high protein forage that deer use from November through August. Use is particularly high in March, April and May when diet is important for antler growth. Clovers that are proven for deer forages include crimson, ladino, subterranean and arrowleaf. Clover will reseed and can be maintained for several years from a single planting.

All clovers produce high quantities of forage, but one may be better suited to a particular site than another. Ladino does well in moist, fertile soils. Subterranean does best in well-drained sandy loam, or light clay soils. Arrowleaf does well in well-drained, heavy soils, and crimson grows well in a variety of soils.

Clovers and winter grasses can be planted in combination to increase overall production of an individual food planting. In particular, crimson and ladino do well in mixed-grass plantings. Crimson provides high-quality forage through April, while the highest value of ladino appears to be in the late spring and summer. Clover and winter grass mixtures also provide benefits to other wildlife such as turkeys and rabbits.

Planning New Plots

As with any wildlife management effort, developing food plots requires proper planning. Maximum benefits will be obtained only if proper consideration is given to factors such as site selection, soil analysis, forage species, shape and size of plots, and seedbed preparation.

Whenever possible, existing openings should be used as sites for food plots. Most ownerships include some fallow fields, pipeline or transmission line rights-of-way, old logging roads, log decks, firelanes, or interior roads suitable for planting. Areas accessible to the public or along public roads should not be planted.

If suitable planting sites are unavailable, plan them prior to timber sales. Site selec-

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ALABAMA'S FORESTS: A Health Update

by JIM HYLAND, Alabama Forestry Commission

Healthy forests are vital to our state. They provide clean water, wildlife habitat, wood for building materials and paper products, solitude for our souls, and a wide range of recreational opportunities. Our state's need to protect and expand these and other important forest benefits is the foundation for the Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program.

The Resource

Alabama has 21.9 million acres of forestland, which is the largest ever recorded in USDA-Forest Service inventories. More than 94 percent of the timberland acreage is in private ownership. The most common tree species in Alabama (based on growing stock volume in 1990) is loblolly pine, followed by sweetgum and shortleaf pine. A total of 109 tree species was recorded in 1990, when the most recent inventory of Alabama forests was conducted. These forests are important to the citizens of Alabama because they provide clean air and water, wildlife habitats, and are sources of recreation, timber and fuel.

These forests provide us with a wealth of economic, social and environmental benefits. Healthy forests are forests capable of sustaining these benefits into the future. Yet, a healthy forest is not a static forest or one without dead and dying trees. Rather, forests are constantly changing as a result of natural forces, such as insects, disease, weather, fire, and human activities that affect them directly or indirectly. When these changes occur at a rate or in a direction that threatens the values we place on the forests, forest health concerns arise.

Forest Health Issues

Even in healthy forests there are pests that occasionally cause considerable mortality. In 1995 the Southern pine beetle epidemic was one of the worst on record. The state entered the calendar year with 20 epidemic counties containing 1,041 infestations and ended in September 1995 with 49 epidemic counties containing 4,475 spots. The average was 63 trees per spot. The 10 worst counties were Elmore, Autauga, Lowndes, Clarke, Choctaw, Limestone, Marshall, Etowah, Morgan and Pickens. Since January 1995, the state has had 12,030 infestations and has controlled 6,227 of those. The Southern pine beetle continues to be the most serious forest insect pest in Alabama's forests.

Among diseases, fusiform rust is the most damaging and prevalent. Estimates from the most recent forest survey indicate that 1.7 million acres have 10 percent or more of the trees infected—29 percent of susceptible host acres. Two serious diseases being monitored in Alabama are dogwood anthracnose and butternut canker. Dogwood anthracnose has been confirmed in 10 counties, and butternut canker has been confirmed in two counties, as of 1994.

Oak decline, a syndrome consisting of interacting factors such as age, drought, site conditions and secondary stressors such as Armillaria root disease and two-lined chestnut borer, is also a concern in Alabama's forests. An estimated 265,000 acres of upland hardwood forest are affected, about 7 percent of the vulnerable host types. This condition may worsen as forests age and regeneration is delayed.

Forest Health Monitoring Results

Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) is designed to annually collect, analyze, interpret and report on the conditions of all forests in the United States. Alabama has participated in FHM since 1991. A total of 208 detection monitoring plots, of which 140 are forested, were installed in 1991 and have been remeasured annually by crews from the Alabama Forestry Commission. The major groups of measurements (or indicators) are mensuration, which describes growth, mortality, stand structure and regeneration; tree crown conditions; and damage assessment of each tree.

There are three major measurements in the crown conditions: foliage transparency, crown density, and crown dieback. Foliage transparency is a measure of the amount of defoliation activity; crown density is a measure of the amount of space that a tree crown occupies; and crown dieback estimates the proportion of dead twigs or branches in a tree. Foliage transparency data for 1994 indicates that greater than 99 percent of the trees on the detection plots had "normal" foliage transparency; i.e., there were no major defoliators in Alabama in 1994. This value is similar to results from 1991 through 1993.

Crown density numbers for 1994 showed that 98.7 percent of the sample trees were in the "average" or "good" crown density classes (a slight improvement compared to 1993's 97.3 percent). The proportion of the sample trees in the "none" and "light" dieback classes in 1994 were 99.4 percent, compared to 99.2 percent for 1993. These results show that there has been a minor improvement

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Food Plots

Continued from page 20

tion should consider soil fertility, soil moisture, topography, adjacent timber type, accessibility, and flooding potential. Care should be taken to locate plots adjacent to streamside management zones, established plantations or natural timber stands instead of the middle of a clearcut.

The importance of taking soil samples three months prior to planting cannot be stressed enough. Soil fertility and pH dramatically influence the quantity and quality of forage produced. Soil samples should be taken to determine the lime and fertilizer needs, and plots should be treated accordingly. Soil sample kits and soil analysis are available from the Cooperative Extension Service.

Since deer generally feed at the edges of plots, several small plots may be more effective than one large plot. Generally, plots should be 1/2 to 3 acres. A good rule of thumb is to plant 1 to 3 percent of the total area in food plots. Best results can be achieved by evenly distributing plots over the property, taking care to place one plot in each 160-acre block. For example, a 640-acre area should have four well-spaced plots.

Large plots are generally more beneficial if they are long and narrow instead of square. These plots provide more edge and include more deer home ranges. If the area adjacent to the plot is timber (natural stands or pine plantations), don't forget to make the plots wide enough to minimize competition from trees for sunlight and moisture.

Planting

Planting food plots can be accomplished with a farm tractor large enough to pull 5-foot-wide implements. Required implements include a disk, broadcast seeder/fertilizer distributor, and a bush-hog. A large gang disk may be required for first-time plot establishment.

Lime and fertilizer should be applied according to soil test recommendations prior to disking so they can be worked into the soil. In some instances, plots may need bush-hogging prior to lime and/or fertilizer application.

After the plot has been limed, fertilized and disked prior to seeding, level it by dragging a piece of railroad rail over the plot. If you will be planting clover, leveling the plot will improve chances of a well-established stand. After leveling, broadcast or drill the seed at the recommended seeding rate. Lightly cover the seed with a harrow, or by dragging a heavy log chain, a piece of chain link fence or other device over the plot. If you're planting a combination plot of cool-season grass and clover, which is highly recommended, plant the clover last, after you have lightly covered the grass seed.

Be sure to inoculate the clover seed if it has not been pre-inoculated. A broadcast seeder that fits on the back of a four-wheeler is the most effective way to plant clover. Safety glasses should be worn while planting clover.

After the required amount of seed has been broadcast over the plot, simply move along to the next plot. Some peo-

ple cover the clover seed, but in most instances it is not necessary. To be successful with combination grass-clover plots, you must match the soil type with the correct clover variety, as noted earlier, and the plots need to be uniform and level. Clover germination on rough plots with big clods of soil usually results in all cool-season grass and very little clover.

Soil type plays a major role in which grass and/or clover combination you choose. Research has shown that combination plantings of grasses and clover are better than grass-only plantings.

As a single planting, ryegrass and crimson clover should be seeded at a rate of 30-40 pounds per acre, and 15-20 pounds per acre, respectively. For combination ryegrass-crimson clover plantings, these rates should be reduced to 25 pounds per acre of ryegrass and 10 pounds per acre of crimson clover.

Heavier ryegrass seeding rates have resulted in all ryegrass and very little clover. Wheat or rye can be substituted for ryegrass, and arrowleaf, ladino, or subterranean clover can be substituted for crimson clover. Wheat-ladino or wheat-crimson combinations are utilized heavily by deer. To be most effective, more than one type of clover should be established. Each clover is used at a different time of year, and therefore, complements each other.

Well planned and maintained food plots will enhance the wildlife habitat on your property. Consult your local county agent for more information and publications relating to plantings for wildlife. ♣

Alabama's Forests

Continued from page 21

in these classes since the beginning of the program.

The shift of the proportion of trees from the "good" to the "average" crown density class and from the "none" to "light" crown dieback class in 1992 is partially due to the occurrence of a statewide drought during the growing season in 1992. When precipitation patterns returned to normal in 1993, those

trees that survived the drought showed improvements in crown conditions.

Conclusions

In general, the forests of Alabama are in good shape. However, there are some localized areas and particular species with forest health concerns (flowering dogwood). Southern pine beetle continues to have an impact on the pine resource in Alabama, although not as severe as in the late 1980s. Only the continual monitoring of the forests of Alaba-

ma will provide the early warning for potential management actions.

Signs of a healthy forest are increased timber productivity, more forested acres than ever, more wildlife, more acres under management plans, better stewardship, more TREASURE Forests, increased membership in landowner associations, quicker response to pests such as the Southern pine beetle, etc. As the "forest doctor" would say, "The forest's health is excellent but should be reviewed in an annual checkup." ♣

industry began improving its efficiency of wood utilization during harvesting and processing to reduce wasted wood and take pressure off the forest to provide the products America needed. Engineering standards and building designs also reduced the volume of wood needed.

Significant progress in wildlife conservation also began taking place after World War II. Commercial hunting had already been outlawed nationally in the early 1900s. In the 1950s and 1960s organized sportsmen began to support the enforcement of game laws, taxes to support state game management and the acquisition of habitat reserves and management areas. Aldo Leopold led the development of the art and science of wildlife management. White-tailed deer, wild turkey and populations of other game and nongame animals were either reintroduced or revived on their own as their forest habitat was restored.

The environmental movement gained momentum in the early 1960s and had a definite role in the redevelopment of Southern forests. Its primary focus was on the effects that people and civilization had on natural elements of the environment: plants, animals, air, soil, water and landscapes. To some, environmentalism has represented a desire to relinquish control of nature for the preservation of wilderness. To others, it has represented an awareness and accommodation for values and amenities of the forests beyond wood fiber production—natural beauty, recreation and ecosystem stability.

Pressures from a society increasingly sympathetic to environmental protection resulted in the adoption of a broad range of tangible and intangible management objectives. This is particularly true on federal lands, but also to varying degrees within industrial and nonindustrial land ownerships.

Through the years the National Forests' role has changed from forest rehabilitation to sustained yield, multiple-use management to ecosystem management. Wilderness inclusions within Southern National Forests since 1978 are not primeval because they were razed before the conservation movement began. Nevertheless, they were set aside to preserve special places and are being allowed to revert back to climax forest as nature itself directs.

Cooperative forestry assistance has been provided to private, nonindustrial landowners since 1951 to help them perpetuate and enhance timber, wildlife, soil, water, air, recreation, urban forests and threatened and endangered species. Increased educational, technical and financial assistance was provided to landowners who practiced sustainable multiple-use resource management. This assistance resulted in the TREASURE Forest program in Alabama and eventually the national Forest Stewardship program.

The third forests became a mosaic of forest types, ages and management objectives. While natural pine regeneration or tree planting was still a common management practice in the development of this forest, reforestation began to include more hardwood in the stand composition. Environmental awareness and development of new markets for upland hardwoods

increased their value to many landowners and made mixed pine-hardwood and upland hardwood stands more palatable and desirable.

What about the Fourth Forests?

Strains on the federal farm price support system in the 1980s prompted the formation of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). It's been used to retire marginally and highly erodible farmland into forestland and/or wildlife habitat. These pine and hardwood stands marked the beginning of America's fourth forests that will pass over with us into the 21st century.

What is the future for our forests? It's a safe bet that they will continue to be essential to every American as a source of raw materials for products that we need and desire. Many thousands of people will still rely on our forests as a source of employment and income. Simultaneously, the quality of the natural forest environment for human and ecological well-being will also remain a primary objective. As good stewards we have plenty of economic and environmental incentives to not only sustain our forests' existence but to continue striving for maximum productivity and vitality.

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Stewards of Family Farms, Ranches and Forests, 1996.

The South's Fourth Forest. USDA Forest Service, 1988. ♣

The author expresses appreciation to the following individuals and agencies for their valuable assistance and input on this four-part series:

- Dr. Warren Flick, Auburn School of Forestry
- Dr. Robert Gastaldo, Auburn University, School of Geology
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- Jerry Johnson, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- C.W. "Bill" Moody, Stewards of Family Farms, Ranches and Forests
- Gary Moody, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Cynthia Page, Alabama Forestry Commission
- Bob Pasquill, USDA-Forest Service
- Dr. Bessie Sheldon, Site, Inc.

CALENDAR

July 17-18. Tuscaloosa, AL. "Liability, Property Rights and Environmental Regulations," an Auburn University short course. For more information call Chris Isaacson, 334-844-1042.

August 5-7. Auburn, AL. "The Economics of Wildlife Resources on Private Lands" will be held at the AU Hotel and Conference Center. Topics will include fee and lease hunting; lease rates and determinants; threatened and endangered species and impacts on land values; community impacts; marketing strategies and more. Exhibit space available. For more information call Rhett Johnson, 334-222-7779.

August 7-8. Auburn, AL. "Wetlands Management Series," an Auburn University short course. For more information call Chris Isaacson, 334-844-1042.

October 3-4. Thirteenth Annual Alabama Landowner and TREASURE Forest Conference. Indoor session on Oct. 3 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Montgomery. Outdoor tour of the Tuskegee National Forest on Oct. 4. Details and registration form can be found on pages 30-31 of this issue.

October 15-16. Auburn, AL. "Forest Roads," an Auburn University short course. For more information call Chris Isaacson, 334-844-1042.

September 18-21. Mobile, AL. Southern Community Forestry Summit. "Changing Landscapes" is the theme for this summit, which will focus on the future challenges of urban natural resource conditions, policy and management in the South. For more information, call Neil Letson, 334-240-9360.

December 11-13. Athens, GA. Southern Forestry GIS Conference will focus on forestry and natural resources GIS applications. For registration and exhibit information, call Kristi Hefner, 706-542-6645.

BUILD AN EASY


Bluebird Box!

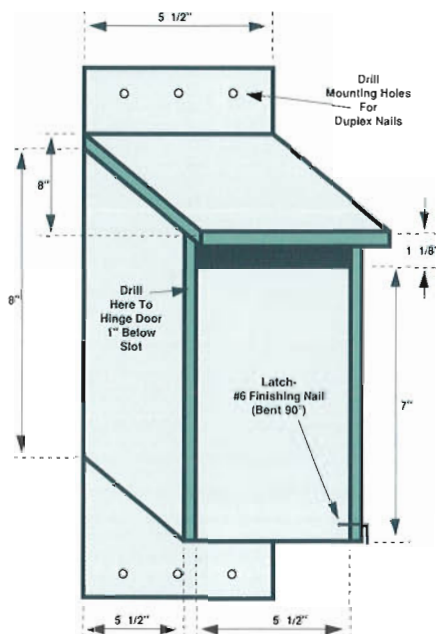
TREASURE Forest landowners Ron and Anna Ham actively participate in bluebird conservation activities. They monitor bluebird boxes and compile data provided by other volunteers to keep track of the bluebird population. Here they share with readers a modification to the standard bluebird box design. The advantage is that it can be built by anyone without the use of expensive equipment.

The North American Bluebird Society has been testing different types of bluebird boxes. Test results have not

determined which design is best for the bluebirds, but there is no question that every box should be built so that it is easy to open. This is required because the nest

must be removed each time the birds fledge. Bluebirds always build a new nest.

The difference between this box and other designs is that the entrance is a 1 1/8" slot across the top of the door instead of the traditional round hole. It is critical that the slot entrance be as close to 1 1/8" as possible. If this slot is any deeper, it will allow starlings to enter the box. 



The material used is a standard piece of 1 x 6 inch dressed lumber, 48 inches long. Each piece requires a straight cut with the following dimensions:

Back	5 1/2" x 15"	Door	5 1/2" x 7"
Top	5 1/2" x 8"	Bottom	5 1/2" x 4" with 3/8" cut off each corner
2 Sides	5 1/2" x 8"	Be sure to locate the bottom 1/4" up inside the box.	

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Showcasing Ecosystem Management

Tuskegee National Forest

by TAMMY FREEMAN TRUETT, Public Affairs Specialist, USDA-Forest Service

Ecosystem management is the latest buzz word. We read numerous articles about this new ecological approach in managing national forests where the needs of people and environmental values become one. This union produces healthy, diverse, productive, and sustainable ecosystems within a forest. But can we really get the total picture of ecosystem management on paper? The National Forests in Alabama have recognized that the most effective way to communicate ecosystem management is through demonstration projects to be located on the Tuskegee National Forest.

Alabama's First Demonstration Forest

The National Forests in Alabama, through the forest land resource planning process, will recommend the 11,000-acre Tuskegee National Forest to become a demonstration forest where all ecosystem management projects in timber, wildlife, recreation, and other natural resources will be showcased to the public. John H. Yancy is forest supervisor for the Bankhead, Talladega, Tuskegee, and Conecuh National Forests. If approved, according to Yancy, the Tuskegee Demonstration Forest will be a model for the state and an important educational tool.

"The best way to learn about ecosystem management is to go out into the field to see examples of ecosystem management in action," says Yancy. "Through demonstration projects on the Tuskegee, visitors and private landowners will not only learn how the national forests are managed, but they will gain knowledge of new and innovative ways to manage their forest without harming surrounding ecosystems or threatened and endangered species."

Under the ecosystem management concept, certain strategies will be applied to the Tuskegee National Forest demonstration project. For example, there will be a

variety of cutting methods used to accomplish research and demonstration objectives. As for recreation, ecosystem management goals will involve people who look to national forests for their livelihood to become part of the planning and decision-making process. An ecological classi-

fication system will be implemented for inventorying various resources, which promotes a better understanding of ecological variation across landscapes.

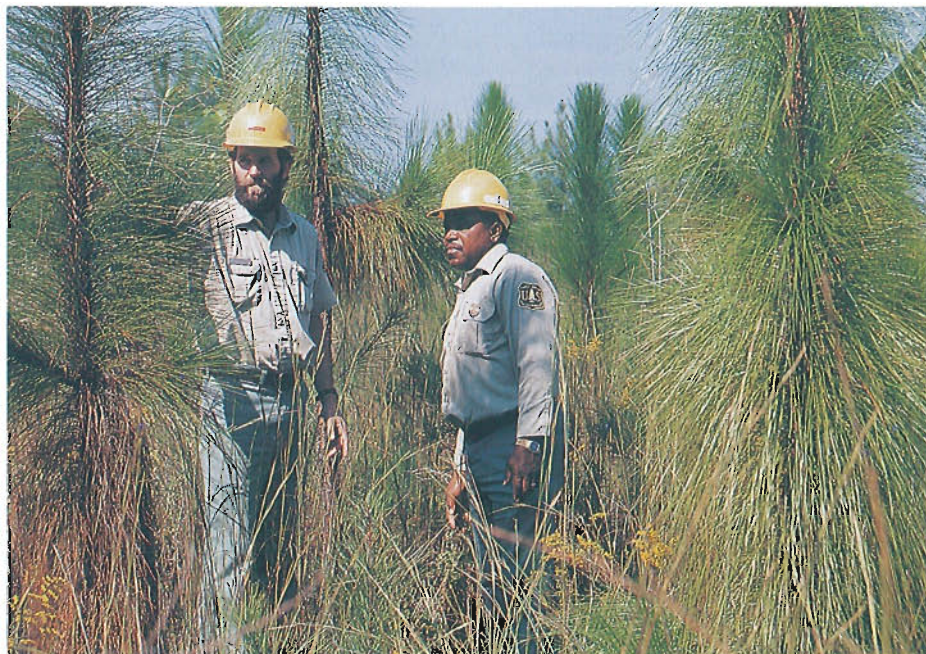
In addition, geographic information management practices will be demonstrated to identify and display various ecological and cultural relationships. Sensitive species will be actively monitored to determine the positive and negative effects of vegetation manipulation. Through communication and education, things like field trips, literature, and forest classrooms will provide learning opportunities about ecosystems and ecosystem management. Research will also be integrated to determine how ecosystems function under different management strategies.

All demonstration projects approved for implementation must adhere to the



Tuskegee National Forest is one of the smallest national forests in the nation.

(Continued on page 30)



Forest Service Resource Specialists Jeff Seefeldt (left) and Charles Reese assess the health of a longleaf pine stand in the Tuskegee National Forest.

The Red-cockaded Woodpecker in Alabama

New Information for Landowners

by MARK A. BAILEY, Zoologist, Alabama Natural Heritage Program

The Alabama Forestry Commission, in cooperation with other public and private groups and agencies, is working to develop a statewide plan to provide landowners reasonable solutions that will conserve the red-cockaded woodpecker while minimizing or eliminating the legal responsibilities of private landowners. It is hoped that this effort will result in greater support for endangered species protection and reward stewardship of private land by removing the concerns that some private landowners now have. An anonymous response survey is being sent to many landowners to determine whether there is a need for the Conservation Department to develop a program to trap and relocate woodpeckers. The survey form is included at the end of this article.

A Species in Trouble

The endangered red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) was once common throughout the pine forests of Alabama and the Southeast. It is the only bird that makes nesting and roosting cavities in live southern pines. Although this bird does require at least a few old trees, it does not need "old-growth" forest. As long as their needs are considered, RCWs can do quite well with some types of timber harvest within their habitat.

These specialized birds have three basic requirements:

- At least some old living pines for roosting and nesting
- From several dozen to a few hundred acres of pine or mixed pine woods for foraging
- An open understory such as that maintained by fire

The removal of old pines from much of the landscape has been a major factor in the decline of the RCW. Although the birds often use loblolly, shortleaf, and slash pines, the decline of the RCW has

coincided with the decline of longleaf pine forest across the Southeast. Once covering millions of acres, most of this forest type has been converted to other uses or has been altered by the absence of periodic fires.

Due to declines of its habitat, the RCW has been listed as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State of Alabama since the early 1970s. It has disappeared from most private lands across its 13-state range, and fewer than 4,700 breeding pairs are known to exist. The few remaining healthy populations are found on relatively large fragments of good habitat. Most of these areas are publicly-owned and have periodically burned uneven-aged pine forests managed for benefits other than maximum wood or fiber production. About 150 breeding pairs are known to remain in Alabama, with most on the Oakmulgee District of the Talladega National Forest. No one knows how many RCWs remain on private land in Alabama. Estimates range from 20 to 120 groups scattered here and there, mainly in the southern half of the state. Whatever the actual number, it is believed to be declining.

Perceptions and Myths

Often due to exaggeration and misinformation, some landowners and managers have a negative perception of the red-cockaded woodpecker. This negative attitude is very detrimental to public support for RCWs and rare species management in general.

Many landowners are under the impression that the government prohibits cutting any trees within a half mile of a RCW cluster. There is also widespread belief that RCWs will likely "infest" pine woodland when the trees exceed 40 years of age even when there is no nearby source of dispersing birds.

As a result of this fear, it appears that some landowners and managers are going to shorter harvest rotations and are

managing against mature open longleaf pine stands. This increases the rate of decline of not only the RCW, but the entire array of plants and animals that require this habitat type.

The Challenge

If present trends continue, most of the scattered RCW populations remaining on private lands will continue to disappear. Since the birds do not typically fly long distances, isolated groups will most likely die out within a few years without contributing to the future gene pool or recovery of the species. Meanwhile, these birds and their habitat remain protected by federal law.

This appears to many to be a lose-lose situation: landowners with RCWs may find restrictions placed on the use of their land, but these small groups of birds, isolated from larger, more viable populations, are likely to eventually disappear anyway. How can the species be recovered while at the same time reducing the landowners' legal responsibilities?

New Solutions

The State of Alabama is developing a statewide conservation plan on behalf of landowners who wish to take advantage of it. Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Texas are also preparing plans to conserve woodpeckers while respecting landowners' rights. The purpose of these statewide plans is to offer innovative and flexible conservation solutions that will benefit both woodpeckers and landowners.

In Alabama, two voluntary options are being considered:

1. Safe Harbor—One strategy, called a "Safe Harbor" agreement, is already being prepared for Alabama. It is most attractive to landowners who do not currently have RCWs but would like to manage for large sawtimber, poles, or simply an old and aesthetically pleasing pine forest.

For example, say you don't have RCWs or you have them on only a portion of your property when you sign the Safe Harbor agreement. Then, because of your good stewardship, they either move onto your land or expand their existing population into a new area. Safe Harbor allows you to convert this previously unoccupied habitat to other uses if you change your mind at a later date. The only provisions are that you must 1) maintain any cavity trees and foraging habitat of RCWs that were present on the land prior to the Safe Harbor agreement, 2) avoid converting the land during the nesting season, and 3) allow the trapping and relocation of birds, under the supervision of the Department of Conservation, if the habitat is to be adversely altered.

2. Translocation of Isolated Groups—
If this summer's landowner survey indicates there is sufficient interest, a second option will be made available for those who currently have RCWs. Under this option, the State of Alabama will obtain a federal permit allowing the relocation of isolated RCWs to other suitable areas.

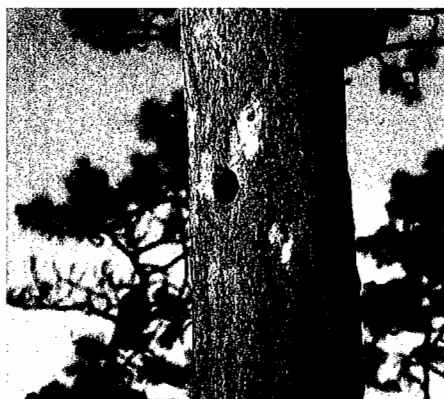
The plan calls for the trapping and removal of RCWs from the nest cavities, with birds being moved to approved areas with a substantial RCW population and available habitat. After a landowner has allowed RCWs to be relocated, he or she would be exempted from any additional legal responsibilities related to RCWs, and would be free to cut all remaining trees, including nest cavity trees.

Under this option, only lands with isolated RCW groups will be eligible; five or more groups within an area will be treated as a biologically functional population that should not be relocated.

Identifying the Habitat


Red-cockaded woodpeckers require fairly open pine woods. Ideal nesting habitat is a mature open stand with 50 to 80 square feet of basal area per acre, and few hardwood trees should be above 15 feet high. The best way to detect RCWs is to find their cavity trees, which are often coated with resin and are visible for long distances in open forest. If you don't own or adjoin open pine forest with at least some trees in the 60 year or older class, your chances of having RCWs are practically zero. If your land fits the description of RCW habitat, your

chances of having these rare birds are only slightly greater. If 200 of Alabama's 214,000 forest landowners have RCWs, that's still fewer than one in a thousand.



A red-cockaded woodpecker cavity in a longleaf pine. Pitch oozes from holes pecked in the bark and bare sapwood is exposed around the entrance.

Identifying the Bird

There are eight woodpecker species in Alabama, and all but the red-cockaded woodpecker have red visible on the head (the tiny red feather "cockade" is almost always concealed beneath other feathers). The RCW is slightly larger than a bluebird and is essentially black and white. Look for the lack of red on the head, the white cheek patch, and the "ladder-back" pattern. The RCW most closely resembles the hairy and downy woodpeckers, but those both have a white stripe down the back. Remember: if you see red, it's probably not a red-cockaded woodpecker. 

An informative brochure about the red-cockaded woodpecker is available upon request from the Alabama Natural Heritage Program, 64 N. Union St., Montgomery, AL 36130.

ATTENTION ALABAMA FOREST LANDOWNERS

Your cooperation in returning this **anonymous** response survey form will help the State of Alabama in the planning and development of a **voluntary** statewide conservation program for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker.

Please take a moment to complete the survey form. For your input to be considered, the form must be returned by **August 15, 1996**.

**Mail to: Department of Conservation, Natural Heritage Program,
64 N. Union St., Montgomery, AL 36130.**

Please check the boxes that apply to you:

- I am reasonably certain I have RCWs on my property.**
- I have seen the birds.
 - I have seen the cavities in live pines.
 - A forester or biologist has confirmed that I have RCWs.
 - I would be interested in having the birds relocated from my property.
 - I would prefer to keep the birds on my property.
- I am reasonably certain I do not have RCWs on my property.**

If you have RCWs:

- I would be interested in having the birds removed from my property.
- I would prefer to keep the birds on my property.

I manage my land primarily for:

- Timber Aesthetics
- Wildlife Other: _____

Regarding potential RCW habitat (open pine woods), I own:

- Fewer than 50 acres 50-250 acres more than 250 acres

Thank you for your help

YOU DO NOT NEED TO PROVIDE YOUR NAME OR ADDRESS

Pond Construction



by **PERRY L. OAKES**, State Conservation Engineer,
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Ponds constructed by private forest landowners in Alabama can provide recreational, wildlife, and firefighting benefits as well as provide one of the most aesthetically pleasing attributes to the property. Ponds can be as simple as a small dug pond for wildlife, or as complex as a watershed-type embankment pond. In any case, proper construction of a pond must be preceded by proper planning and design. For small ponds, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Alabama can provide free planning, design, and construction assistance to private landowners in the state. The NRCS has been the recognized expert in this area for over 60 years.

Planning and Design

Adequate planning for a pond involves several steps. Site selection is very important. The soils must contain sufficient clay to hold water and prevent seepage. The topography must also be considered since this can drastically affect the economics of building a pond on the site. The watershed must be large enough to yield enough runoff water to maintain an acceptable water level in the pond during drought conditions, but not be so large that expen-

sive overflow and bypass systems are needed to control the runoff. Finally, the pond should not affect adjacent properties.

Each pond site is unique and therefore requires an individualized design. The hydrology of the watershed must be determined to get an accurate account of different storm runoffs. A smaller magnitude storm is used to design the pipe overflow system (principal spillway) and a larger magnitude storm is used to design the emergency spillway which allows the runoff from that storm to safely bypass the dam. Future conditions must also be considered when designing the pond. Changes in a watershed such as clearcutting or urbanization can significantly change the volume and rate of runoff produced by the storms.

Pond sites that involve a total of 5 or more acres of land disturbance during construction are required to have a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit issued from the Alabama Department of Environmental Management. This permit requires that a Best Management Practices (BMP) plan be developed and implemented to control erosion during construction and also requires monitoring the BMPs to ensure

they are functioning properly. Even if the site is less than 5 acres, the landowner and contractor should make a conscious effort to control erosion during construction. A simple way to do this is to clear the pool area only after the dam is near completion. This minimizes land disturbance and creates a basin to trap the sediment produced when the area above the dam is cleared. In all cases, vegetation should be established to control erosion as soon as possible after construction.

Wetlands are another area which must be considered. If wetlands are on the pond site, a 404 permit from the Corp of Engineers may be needed. When a wetland is converted for non-agricultural use, certain procedures must be followed to ensure that the landowners who are participating in USDA programs remain in compliance.

Construction

The earth moving work is the most costly component of pond construction and has to be done properly to ensure the dam does not leak, thereby creating maintenance and safety hazards. Topsoil should be salvaged and stockpiled as one of the first operations of construction; it

will be used later to help establish vegetation. After the topsoil has been salvaged, the foundation of the dam must be properly prepared by excavating a trench down to an impervious layer of soil material. Trench excavation can be hazardous work. Cave-ins can occur if the walls of the trench are not sloped. When an impervious layer has been reached, the earthfill process begins.

The central portion of the dam, called the core, must be constructed of good clay material and all the earthfill for the dam must be adequately compacted. The two main ingredients of good compaction are compactive effort and moisture. Heavy equipment and/or sheepfoot rollers should be used to ensure the soil receives adequate compactive effort. The moisture content of the soil must be monitored. Soil that is either too dry or too wet will not properly compact, regardless of the compactive effort.

During the construction process, the dam should be slightly overbuilt to allow for settlement, which will occur over time. The dam should also have at least 3 (horizontal) to 1 (vertical) side slopes that are easy to maintain. The dam's top width should be at least 12 feet if it is to be used for a road.

The principal spillway through the dam is designed to control runoff from a smaller design storm and has several key components. The pipe through the dam, often referred to as the "barrel pipe," should have anti-seep collars installed on the outside to ensure water from the pond does not leak between the outside surface of the barrel pipe and the earthfill of the dam. Good compaction of the earthfill around the barrel pipe is extremely important. This area is often the weakest portion of the earthfill and where the majority of dams fail.

The vertical pipe attached to the barrel pipe at the front of the dam is called the "riser." The riser must be adequately sized to deliver water to the barrel pipe and is usually one to two pipe sizes larger than the barrel pipe. A trash rack must be placed on the riser to keep floating debris from clogging the pipe system. A sleeve type trash rack can be used for deep water release to help improve the pond water quality. Often overlooked is the fact that, due to buoyant forces, the riser has a tendency to float. This should be prevented with a concrete counterweight at the base of the riser.

The principal spillway pipe system can be constructed of many different kinds of materials such as steel, corrugated metal, and various types of plastic. If plastic is used, the outlet of the pipe must be protected from damage by fire.

The emergency spillway for the pond is designed so runoff from larger storms can be carried safely around the dam. The spillway is generally located on one end of the dam in undisturbed soil and should be established and maintained to a good stand of grass. The flow through the emergency spillway should be shallow, slow, and uniform to minimize the possibility of the spillway eroding and causing failure of the dam.


Construction is not complete until vegetation has been established on the dam, emergency spillway, and all other disturbed areas. Topsoil, salvaged and stockpiled at the beginning of construc-

tion, should be spread uniformly over the surface of the dam and emergency spillway, when needed, to enhance vegetation establishment. A soil test should be used to determine lime and fertilizer requirements. After seeding, the entire area should be mulched with hay or straw to control erosion during grass establishment and to conserve moisture.

Prior to closing the valve and storing water in the pond, the pond bottom should be sampled and a soil test done to determine the pH and any lime requirements. This is the best time to correct pH problems that translate from the soil of the pond bottom to the water in the pond.

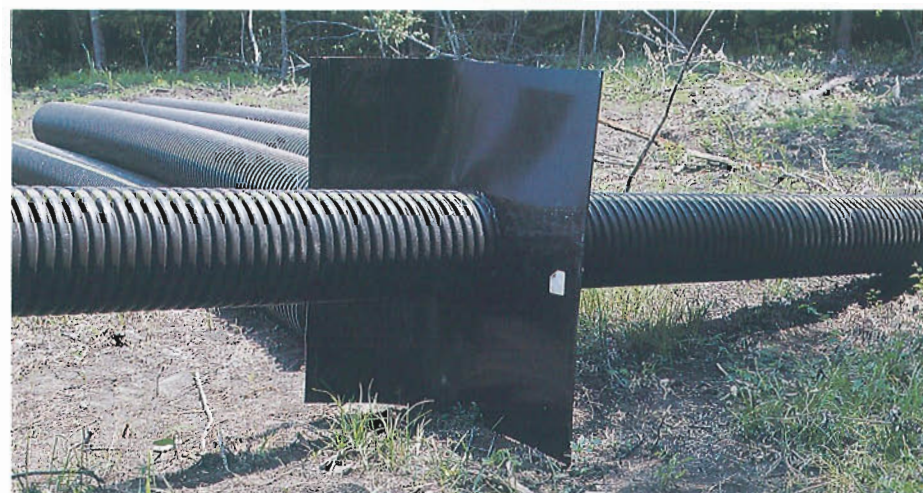
Maintenance

Once a pond is completed, certain maintenance will be needed on the pond. Vegetation must be maintained by mowing and occasionally fertilizing. Trees should not be allowed to grow on the dam or in the emergency spillway. The trash rack should have debris removed from it occasionally. The pond may need additional lime treatments to correct pH problems. Fertilizer may be needed to enhance the quality of the water for fish. Fish will need to be stocked and occasionally restocked in the pond for recreational use. Beaver control may also be needed since these animals occasionally will try to stop up the principal spillway pipe.

A properly constructed pond can provide years of beneficial service to a landowner. For assistance in the planning, design, and construction of a pond on your property, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office. 



Riser pipe with sleeve for deep water release, valve, and concrete counterbalance.



A corrugated plastic barrel pipe with anti-seep collar ready for installation.

Landowner Conference October 3-4, 1996

The Alabama Landowner and TREASURE Forest Conference returns to Montgomery on October 3-4 after an absence of several years. The conference has been the premier event in the state each year for forest landowners to receive technical information through lectures and tours.

The Embassy Suites Hotel will be the site for the indoor sessions on Oct. 3. Topics covered will include prescribed fire, wildflowers, forest taxation, small equipment technology, animal damage control, and information about the U.S.


Forest Service's connection to private landowners. Participants will be able to choose four of the six sessions to attend.

A banquet on the night of Oct. 3 will honor some outstanding TREASURE Forest landowners and county forestry planning committees. It will also take place at the Embassy Suites.

A tour of the Tuskegee National Forest will be held on Oct. 4. This national forest is being considered as a demonstration forest. Those in attendance will see the following: examples of both winter and summer prescribed burning, site

preparation techniques, and results of different harvesting operations. Lunch will be served on site after the tour.

Registration for the conference is \$35 per person until Sept. 5. This includes the indoor sessions, breaks, and banquet on Thursday, and both the tour and lunch on Friday. After Sept. 5 the registration fee increases to \$50. A luncheon for TREASURE Forest landowners only will be held from 11:30 to 1:00 on Oct. 3 for an additional cost of \$17 per person.

Please use the form on page 31 to register for the conference. 

Showcasing Ecosystem Management

Continued from page 25

current standards and guidelines of the Forest Land Management Plan (FLMP) for the Tuskegee National Forest. Yancy says the demonstration plan will be implemented through program development and budgeting in the annual work planning process.

Consortium Sponsors Project

One leading organization assisting the Forest Service in sponsoring the Tuskegee demonstration project is the Alabama Consortium for Forestry, Education, and Research. It is comprised of scientists from Alabama A&M, Auburn, and Tuskegee Universities, the Alabama Forestry Commission, and the USDA-Forest Service, National Forests in Alabama and Southern Forest Experiment Station. Their mission is to jointly plan and implement programs, projects, and methodologies that will enhance forest resources in Alabama and other states through expanded education, collaborative research, and technology transfer.

"We are eager for the Tuskegee to be approved as a demonstration forest," says Yancy. "Now through a coordinated effort, we can better serve the needs of the public and provide an ecosystem management concept to forest management."

National Forests in Alabama

The National Forests in Alabama have gone through many changes during the years. Before the Forest Service acquired the four national forests in Alabama, most of the lands were severely damaged. However, through scientific management practices and the integration of ecosystem management, the forests have improved and now provide multiple benefits.


Formerly known as the Tuskegee Land Utilization Project, the Tuskegee National Forest once was worn-out farm lands that the Forest Service restored.

It is home to the 200-acre Tsinia Wildlife Viewing Area, Bartram National Recreational Trail, Bold Destiny/Bedford V. Cash Memorial Trail, a shooting range and fishing ponds. The forest is located along Interstate 85 in Macon County. It is one of the smallest national forests in the nation.

In addition to the Tuskegee National Forest, ecosystem management demonstration projects will also be implemented on other national forests in the state. Located in northwest Alabama, the Bankhead National Forest occupies portions of Winston and Lawrence Counties. It offers scenic beauty, majestic trees, recreational opportunities, and abundant wildlife. At one time, approximately 50 percent of the land on the Bankhead was cutover before being acquired by the Forest Service. It is home to the popular Clear Creek Recreation Area, the 25,986-

acre Sipsey Wilderness, Owl Creek Horse Camp and Trail System, and Brushy Lake and Houston Recreation Areas.

Talladega National Forest is made up of the Shoal Creek, Talladega, and Oakmulgee Districts. Before the Forest Service acquired the Shoal Creek and Talladega Districts, the land was not excessively cut. Shoal Creek is home to Coleman Lake and Pine Glen Recreation Areas, Warden Station Hunter/Horse Camp, Pinhoti Trail, and the Talladega Scenic Drive. The Talladega District contains the Lake Chinnabee Recreation Area, Kentuck ORV Trail, a shooting range and numerous hiking trails. On the other hand, Oakmulgee District lands were cut 70 percent. After proper land management, it is now a working forest. The Oakmulgee houses the largest red-cockaded woodpecker cluster and the largest deer and turkey harvest on the National Forests in Alabama. It is home to Payne Lake Recreation Area and Vick Shooting Range.

Located in south Alabama is the Conecuh National Forest. At one time the area was similar to the Tuskegee Forest in that it contained large areas of cutover, burned, and eroded land. Today more than 83,000 acres of the Conecuh National Forest have been restored to beautiful and productive lands. It is home to Blue Lake, Brook Hines Lake, Conecuh Trail, Open Pond Recreation Area, and a shooting range. 

Thirteenth Annual Alabama Landowner and TREASURE Forest Conference

Embassy Suites Hotel • Montgomery, Alabama • October 3-4, 1996

REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) of Attendee(s):

#1 _____
 #2 _____
 #3 _____
 #4 _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

CATEGORY(IES) OF ATTENDEES (Check one category only) **Total number attending Friday's tour** _____

#1	#2	#3	#4	
___	___	___	___	TREASURE Forest Landowner
___	___	___	___	Government Agency/TREASURE Forest Landowner
___	___	___	___	Landowner
___	___	___	___	Government Agency/Landowner
___	___	___	___	Government Agency
___	___	___	___	Private Forest Industry/Consultant
___	___	___	___	Other

Indoor session on afternoon of October 3; banquet on night of October 3.

Outdoor tour of Tuskegee National Forest on October 4. Limited bus transportation will be available to the tour site.

Lunch will be provided after Friday's tour.

I am attending the conference and am enclosing
 \$35 preregistration x _____ attendees =\$ _____

I am attending the TREASURE Forest Landowner Luncheon and the conference, and am enclosing
 \$35 preregistration x _____ attendees, plus \$17 x _____ luncheon attendees = \$ _____

NOTE: The TREASURE Forest Luncheon is for TREASURE Forest landowners only. Luncheon is by preregistration only.

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

- The first day of the conference is indoors. The second day will be an outdoor tour. **Please dress appropriately.**
- The registration fee includes indoor session and banquet on Thursday; tour and lunch on Friday. Registration will be from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Oct. 3. Preregistration fee for conference **per person if postmarked by September 5 is \$35.**
- Preregistration fee for conference and TREASURE Forest Luncheon **per person if postmarked by September 5 is \$52.**
- **NOTE: The TREASURE Forest Luncheon is for TREASURE Forest landowners only. Luncheon is by preregistration only.** Luncheon will be from 11:30-1:00.
- Registration fee for the conference after September 5 is \$50.
- Mail upper portion of form and fee payable to Alabama Forestry Conference to:

Fran Whitaker, Alabama Forestry Association, 555 Alabama St., Montgomery, AL 36104; 334-265-8733.

HOTEL INFORMATION

- You will need to make your own reservations.
- The Embassy Suites Hotel is offering a special room rate of \$99 single or double, and \$10 for each additional person. Please specify that you are attending the Alabama Landowner & TREASURE Forest Conference when you make reservations. Check-in time is 3 p.m. The Embassy Suites is adjacent to the Montgomery Civic Center.

Embassy Suites Hotel; 300 Tallapoosa St., Montgomery, AL 36104; 334-269-5055.

- A registration confirmation, map, agenda, and complete list of area hotels will be sent to everyone who preregisters.

Alabama Forestry Commission 1996-97 Season

Orders are now being taken for the 1996-97 Season. Seedlings will be available for pickup after December 1. Orders are taken on a first-come, first-served basis. To obtain an order form, call the E.A. Hauss Nursery at (334) 368-4854, fax a request to (334) 368-8624 or write to: Seedling Order Form Request, E.A. Hauss Nursery, 4165 Ross Rd., Atmore, AL 36502.

PINE & HARDWOOD SEEDLING PRICE LIST

PINES

	\$ FOR 500	\$ PER 1,000
Loblolly—Improved		
<i>Coastal Seed Source</i>	\$21	\$32
<i>Piedmont Seed Source</i>	\$21	\$32
2nd Generation Loblolly		
<i>Piedmont Seed Source</i>	\$25	\$38
Slash—Improved	\$21	\$32
Longleaf.....	\$32	\$52
Longleaf—Improved	\$40 SOLD OUT	\$60

HARDWOODS

Species: Cherrybark Oak, Green Ash, Nuttall Oak, Shumard Oak, Water Oak, White Oak, and Yellow Poplar

Hardwood Prices

Orders of hardwoods totalling

100-1,900 trees	2,000 + trees
-----------------	---------------

\$20 Per 100	\$152 Per 1,000
---------------------	------------------------

Total hardwood together to determine the price to use.

Minimum order of hardwood seedlings is 100 per species.

Discounts for orders that are picked up at Hauss Nursery in Atmore, Alabama

Pines:	500	1,000 +	Hardwood orders totalling 2,000 or more
	\$1	\$2 per thousand	\$2 per thousand

WILDLIFE SPECIES PRICE LIST

LESPEDEZA

	500 Seedlings	Per 1,000
Thunbergii	\$26	\$42
Bicolor	\$26	\$42

Discount for lespedeza orders picked up at Hauss Nursery

\$1 - order of 500 \$2 per thousand

OTHER WILDLIFE SPECIES

Autumn Olive, Chinese Chestnut, Crabapple, Dogwood, Overcup Oak, Native Pecan, Persimmon, Native Plum, Redbud, Sawtooth Oak, and "Gobbler" Sawtooth Oak—NEW.

Wildlife Species Prices

25 trees	100 trees	500 trees	1,000+trees
\$12	\$40	\$150	\$250/M

Species may be mixed on your wildlife species order.

NOTE: The minimum number of seedlings per species is 5.

The Alabama Forestry Commission encourages planting for wildlife in our TREASURE Forest plans and also in the state's cost-share program plans. To enable landowners to locate tree seedlings that would be beneficial to wildlife, we have added new species to our nursery production. A one-time planting of tree seedlings that will bear fruit for wildlife to eat can be more cost-efficient for landowners than planting different grasses annually. Call or write Hauss Nursery at the address above to request a brochure on wildlife species seedlings.



Alabama's TREASURED Forests

513 Madison Avenue
P.O. Box 302550
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2550

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
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Montgomery, AL