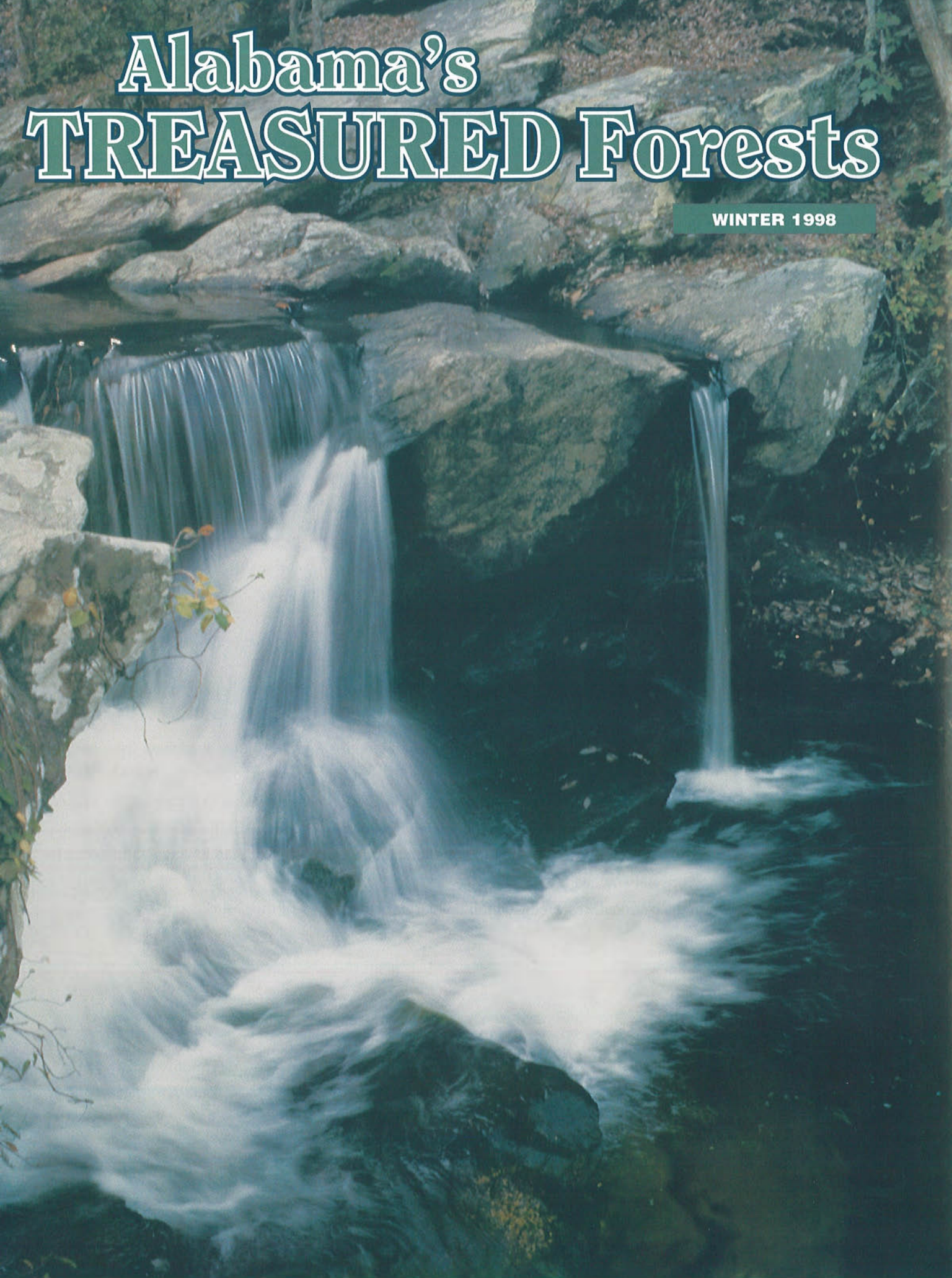


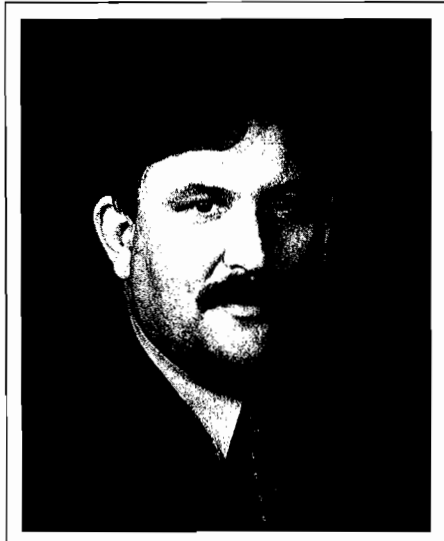
Alabama's **TREASURED Forests**

WINTER 1998



STATE FORESTER'S MESSAGE

by TIMOTHY C. BOYCE, State Forester



In early November the National Research Council released its preliminary findings on nonfederal forests. This report highlights the significant impact of private forests on our nation's wood and fiber supply as well as natural resources sustainability. For example, in 1991, 88 percent of the nation's timber harvest came from nonfederal forest. The report indicates that there are nearly 490 million acres (two-thirds of the total forestland in the United States) in nonfederal forests, 75 percent of which is in the Eastern United States. Forty percent is in the South. Private businesses and individuals are the primary owners.

The report has identified major areas of priority as follows:

- Ensure the long-term integrity of forest ecosystems, including nonfederal forests.
 - Identify national interests in nonfederal forests and offer programs for landowners.
 - Strengthen programs to assist rural and urban landowners in growing sustainable forests.
- Foster innovative private and public investment policies to support nonfederal forests.
 - Improve quality and access to information.
 - Acknowledge rights and responsibilities of forest landowners.
 - Provide leadership to ensure that the nation's nonfederal forests contribute positively to healthy global economies and environments.
- I hope this report will be the catalyst that causes us, especially at the national level, to turn the debate from our public-owned forests to our private-owned forests. Every interest group will interpret this report differently, but what I see it saying is that our future lies with privately owned family forests. It further emphasizes the importance of the TREASURE Forest Program and landowner involvement through county chapters of the TREASURE Forest Association. What you as a landowner are willing to do today both on your land and to empower other landowners will mean a lot to the future of Alabama and privately owned family forests.
- More details included in the National Research Council's report are on page 15 of this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Timothy C. Boyce". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Timothy C. Boyce
State Forester

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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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COVER: Clean water is one of the many benefits our forests provide, as shown in this photo taken on the Talladega National Forest. Photo by Kim Gilliland.

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BIGGER Is Not Always Better

Blount County Landowners Manage Big on a Small Scale

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

Many people believe that successfully managing timberland means that you must have hundreds or even thousands of acres of land. Marvin and Barbara Whited of Blount County have proven this theory wrong with their 21-acre TREASURE atop Easley Mountain near Oneonta.

Managing for timber and wildlife, the Whiteds' TREASURE Forest is growing proof that bigger is not necessarily better. Although they may not reap the greater economic benefits a larger landowner does, they are able to enjoy a closer and more personal relationship with their land that is often impossible when managing forestland on a large scale.

Close Ties to the Land

The Whiteds make their home on their TREASURE Forest. This fact, along with the property's small size, gives them many advantages. As you walk down the firelanes with the couple, one of them is constantly pointing out different features. Marvin and Barbara are the kind of landowners you like to watch as they enjoy their land. Seeing them both point out things and tell about what happens on their farm is part of the thrill of visiting them. You can immediately tell that they spend a great deal of time working on their farm because of comments like, "This wasn't here yesterday," or "Now this is something new."



Mature hardwoods provide mast for wildlife and shadow a riot of spring flowers and fall color.

From boundary line to boundary line the couple seems to know everything that goes on. Marvin can tell by looking at deer tracks whether or not the deer has been there before or if it's someone new. They are familiar with the songbirds and who's nesting where, and any new "critter" is welcomed into the fold as one of the family.

They seem to almost have a personal relationship with their young pine seedlings, even calling them their "babies," and at least one has been given a name. Most of the 9,000 pine seedlings on the Whited farm are approaching 10

years of age. Since they were first planted, each one has been cared for and nurtured like a child. In 1993, when ice and snow threatened to bend and break the spindly limbs of the trees, Marvin donned his coat and went out and shook the snow off as many as he could. When one tree is bent over from winds, snow or any other reason, it is straightened and tied until it can stand on its own.

Marvin chooses not to use chemicals or prescribed fire on his place. Since he first planted the seedlings, he has kept up a mowing schedule with his big red Troy-Bilt walk-behind mower. One third of the farm is mowed every year, allowing the seedlings the opportunity to grow and to provide a continuous supply of food and cover for wildlife.

Marvin has a particular tie to his land in that it has been in his family for several generations. He remembers working with his father planting and harvesting vegetables that were sold to the King Phar Canning Company in Cullman. Marvin is still working the land, planting and watching things grow, but now his crop is young loblolly pine seedlings.

Small But Diverse

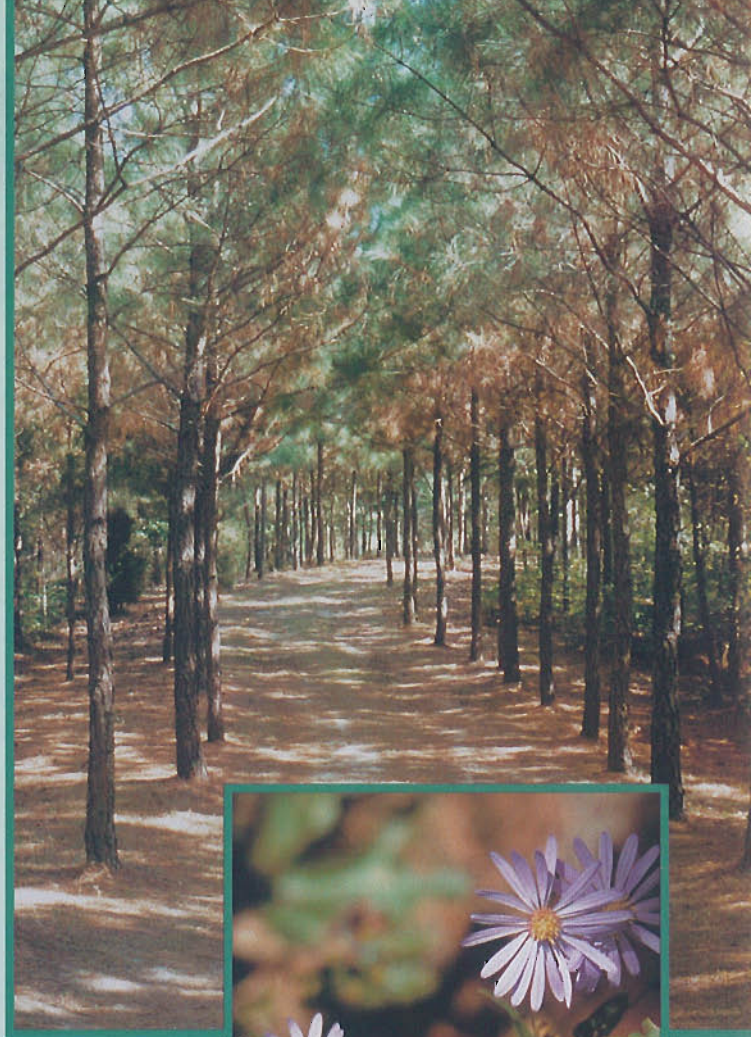
The most astonishing thing about the Whited TREASURE Forest is its diversity. They have as many tree species and different kinds of wildlife on their small

Ten-year-old loblolly pines border this firelane, which also serves as a nature trail.

21 acres as many large landowners have—they just don't have a large quantity of the species. Aside from the pine plantation they have large mature hardwood trees that provide an abundance of mast such as acorns, hickory nuts, persimmon and dogwood berries. In the past they have planted a special pea patch for the deer and fruit and nut trees provide food for many species of animals. Approximately 34 bluebird houses have been installed and a deer feeder has been

constructed where grain and a salt block is available. Brush piles are maintained in drainage areas along the hillside to help with erosion as well as provide cover for many small animals, snakes and birds.

Several things have been done to entice game and non-game birds. A hedgerow of bicolor lespedeza has been installed along a fence. Barbara tends a flower garden where she's planted many species of flowers like zinnia, marigold and sunflowers to attract songbirds. They have also planted wildflowers around their farm and maintain the many that grow naturally. In the spring the hardwood area is painted with the colorful blooms of oakleaf hydrangea and Alabama azalea.



This deer feeder attracts many animals to the Whited property.



Barbara and Marvin Whited relax on their TREASURE Forest.

Working Intimately with Nature

Unique features of the land include three Alabama champion trees: gum bumelia, Carolina buckthorn, and witch-hazel. A champion tree is the largest of its species to have been found in Alabama. Marvin is especially proud of these three trees and you can't leave the farm without going to see them. The couple also has a single American chestnut on the farm that they watch and hover over trying to do all they can to ensure its survival.

The Whited property was certified as Alabama's 800th TREASURE Forest in 1990. Since then they have been honored as Blount County's Tree Farmer of the Year, Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award district runner-up in 1992 and 1993, and as district winner in 1995. They are also members of the Blount County Forestry Planning Committee and energetically serve as Blount

Wildflowers are abundant on the Whited farm spring through fall.

County's Adopt-a-School TREASURE Forest.

When you visit Marvin and Barbara you immediately become uplifted through their enthusiasm, joy, and love of their land, for each other and their family, and life itself. Each could be a spokesperson for not only the TREASURE Forest Program and Adopt-a-School, which they have taken an active part in for several years, but for just plain living. Living a good life on their land, working intimately with nature to create something beautiful and lasting, and sharing their accomplishments not only with their family and friends, but with Blount County and virtually every citizen in Alabama. ♣

Editor's Understory

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

Marvin and Barbara Whited love to show their TREASURE Forest to other people. They have worked hard over the years to mold their small 21-acre tract into a showplace. For years the site has been used as a demonstration forest where the Blount County Forestry Planning Committee has held several field days. The garden club has held functions there several times and FFA forestry judging teams have frequented the place. The Whiteds love to show and share what they've done, and if you drive up in their driveway you'll be welcomed and given the grand tour with the same amount of energy and enthusiasm as if you were a busload of people. But a most wonderful and important group they share their farm with is local school children.

When the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association initiated its Adopt-a-School program several years ago, Marvin and Barbara were among the first TREASURE Forest owners to jump on board. They immediately began inviting children from nearby Cleveland School to their farm and they soon discovered one of the things they loved the most—showing kids their TREASURE Forest.

In the last few years other schools have begun to visit the Whited TREASURE Forest, including first graders and the FFA team from Locust Fork School, first graders from Southeastern School, and the entire kindergarten from Hayden Elementary.

Because of the age of the children, the Whiteds, with the assistance of the Blount County Forestry Planning Committee, have developed a unique program designed especially for small children.



Barbara and Marvin Whited with one of their Adopt-a-School classes.

The children visit stops designed to stimulate their senses.

At the touch stop they are blindfolded and get to feel different things from the forest like the difference in the bark of a

pine tree and a hardwood tree. At the smell stop they smell film canisters filled with different materials and scents associated with the forest.

Barbara runs the taste stop where every child gets to sample jellies and preserves she has made from the berries and fruits that grow on their farm. To stimulate the sense of sight they look for animal tracks, hunt for signs of where animals live, and look at different kinds of trees and plants. Their sense of hearing is challenged throughout the day listening for the sounds of the forests like wind, the rustle of leaves, and the call of birds.

Because of their outgoing personalities, energy, and enthusiasm, the couple captivate the children who visit them. The Whiteds bless the children with opening their farm to them to enjoy and learn from, and the children bless the Whiteds with their eagerness to learn, their laughter, and their appreciation for nature.

It's a dream of the couple to begin a FAWN (Forestry Awareness Week Now) program for all sixth grade students in Blount County in the future. FAWN is an environmental education program where students are taken through the forest in groups and rotate at stops where they learn about soils, forest management, forest products, etc. Through the Whiteds' unselfish efforts of sharing their farm with youngsters, the children of Blount County are learning first-hand to love and appreciate the land. ♣

Lyrate Bladderpod

by JAREL HILTON, Director, Alabama Natural Heritage Program

The lyrate bladderpod (*Lesquerella lyrata*) is a small annual mustard species. It is named for its leaf shape (somewhat like the stringed instrument called a lyre) and its smooth, globe-shaped fruits. It was once thought to be extinct by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service because it had not been seen since its initial discovery in 1955. Rediscovery in 1984 helped lead to its eventual listing under the Endangered Species Act as a threatened species. It is known to exist on only six sites in the world in Colbert, Limestone, and Franklin Counties.

Life History

The lyrate bladderpod is a winter annual that occurs on shallow limestone soils in association with cedar glades in northwestern Alabama. Cedar glades are special plant communities characterized by open limestone outcroppings and shallow soils dominated by Eastern redcedar, hackberry, and aromatic sumac. The open limestone expanses of the glades support a unique group of plants adapted to the shallow and droughty soils. While the bladderpod is a component of this group of plants, it can also occur without the other glade plants, usually in rocky fallow cultivated fields and pastures. It is adapted to surviving the harsh, often desert-like conditions of these habitats by remaining dormant during the summer months, waiting to germinate in the fall. Plants overwinter as rosettes, and the yellow flowers occur from mid March to early or mid April.

The lyrate bladderpod is believed to be an early successional species that colonizes the shallow soils on and adjacent to cedar glades. It is eliminated by shade and

competition from other plant species, and requires soil disturbance to remove competitors and stimulate germination. Populations decline and altogether disappear in response to natural succession and lack of



soil disturbance, yet local populations can respond dramatically to renewed soil disturbance. To date, beneficial disturbances have been supplied by agricultural activities, primarily row cropping, which is compatible with this species if ploughing is timed with its life cycle.

Habitat

There are few remaining cedar glade systems in northwestern Alabama that have escaped human disturbances, especially those areas that support the last known remaining populations of the lyrate bladderpod. Cedar glades once dotted the landscape across the Moulton

Valley, which is a relatively flat area underlain by Mississippian age limestone stretching across the middle of Morgan, Lawrence, and Franklin Counties. Today little of this habitat type remains due to fragmentation by road and home building, trash dumping, and agriculture.

One of the best remaining examples of a cedar glade complex occurs in Lawrence County near the Flatrock Community. The Nature Conservancy is working with local landowners to protect this site, which also supports the best known population of the Lyrate bladderpod. The bladderpods are growing on slightly deeper soils in a grazed pasture in association with the limestone outcroppings on the cedar glade.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is funding two research efforts on this population. Drs. Jerry and Carol Baskin of the University of Kentucky are researching the germination biology of the Lyrate bladderpod, and the Alabama Natural Heritage Program has initiated a monitoring study to measure the effects of cattle grazing on this species. It is suspected that the presence of cattle has been instrumental in providing needed disturbance for the bladderpods to keep the site open from competing vegetation, and to promote germination. In time, it is hoped that we will be able to piece together enough information to begin understanding the natural system to which the lyrate bladderpod is a part. If we are successful in our stewardship of this species it will be there for future generations to know. For further information contact the Alabama Natural Heritage Program of The Nature Conservancy, Huntingdon College, Massey Hall, 1500 E. Fairview Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36106-2148. ♣

Bigleaf Magnolia

by TILDA MIMS, Education Specialist, Alabama Forestry Commission, N.W. Region, Tuscaloosa

The bigleaf magnolia (*Magnolia macrophylla*) has the largest flowers and the largest leaves of all native North American tree species. Its huge, deciduous leaves, 20-30 inches long and 8-10 inches wide, are often widest above the middle, with rounded or bluntly pointed tips. Fragrant, cup-shaped flowers are 10-12 inches in diameter, with three sepals that later turn dull yellow, and six creamy-white petals with rose at the base. The seedpods are often decorative and colorful, adding fall interest as well.

This species of magnolia prefers the moist soil of valleys, especially ravines, and the understory of hardwood forests. It will grow to a height of 30-50 feet with a straight trunk commonly 18-20 inches in diameter. The broad, rounded crown features stout spreading branches.

The bigleaf magnolia is found statewide in Alabama, most commonly on the western side of the state. An unusual and attractive tree, it grows naturally in the forest but is sometimes transplanted for use as a landscape tree.

The roots are thick, fleshy and fragile. They should be handled with great care when transplanting. Allowing the root ball to dry out or damaging the roots in any way will result in severe transplant shock or even death. Because of the delicate root system, soil compaction around the tree should be avoided. This tree should be planted in areas where there will not be a great deal of foot traffic.

Newly planted trees should be staked, especially in windy locations. Since the leaves are generally quite large, wind



will cause them to tatter. Be sure to install the stakes before planting to avoid root damage.

As a lawn tree, it will do better if an area equal to the crown or greater is grass-free. A layer of mulch will conserve moisture and keep the roots cool. However, do not pile mulch against the trunk of the tree.

Proper fertilization is perhaps the greatest challenge with magnolias. On one hand, they are nitrogen lovers and appreciate a regular nitrogen feeding program. On the flip side, too much nitrogen can cause leaf burn and excessive green growth at the expense of flowers. Up to one-half pound of actual nitrogen per inch of the trunk's dbh each year is a general recommendation. To avoid burning, apply half the amount in spring and half in midsummer. Fertilizer should be broadcast and watered in well.

Pruning should be kept to a minimum, and is best scheduled after the trees have bloomed. Removing any deadwood is usually all that is required. In windy locations, some thinning may be required

yearly to prevent breakage. Branches and twigs should be removed to their bases, since flowers occur on the tips.

The bigleaf magnolia has been called the "queenliest of all the deciduous magnolias." It was named by the French naturalist and explorer Andre´ Michaux (1746-1802), who discovered this tree near Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1789. ♣



Dumping in Alabama

by PAT BYINGTON, Director, Alabama Environmental Council

It is a child's game.

Taking a magnifying glass and focusing the sunlight through the glass to burn twigs, blades of grass, and yes, sometimes to "zap" ants.

Now imagine that an illegal garbage dump has been created by an unfriendly neighbor and is hidden on your 40 acres of forestland. Used tires filled with mosquito-infested water, toxic half-filled paint cans, fast food Styrofoam and paper plates and cups, and smelly glass beer bottles have all been carelessly tossed about the forest that has been owned by your family for generations.

Suddenly, just after you discover this dump, it is ignited by a ray of summer sun traveling through the glass bottle, striking and concentrating on its combustible target. The dump is gone and so is your forest.

It is no longer a child's game.

This is just one of the perils forest owners face as a result of the proliferation of illegal garbage dumps littering Alabama. The numbers are staggering.

The Cost to Alabama

According to the Alabama Department of Public Health, county offices investigated 3,913 unauthorized illegal garbage dumps between October 1996 and August 1997. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) estimates that they received and investigated more than 25 complaints a month, or a total of 300 annually in 1996. Other agencies including the Alabama Forestry Commission, Department of Conservation, county and city commissions and local sheriffs' departments collectively receive hundreds of complaints a year and play a role in abating this horrendous environmental and private property epidemic.

The financial, environmental and public health costs to Alabama's forest owners are dramatic. They include the following:

Environmental Costs—Since many dumps are located in drainage ways and ravines, water that runs through a dump can pick up pollutants that on occasion are

highly toxic. The dumps endanger our wildlife, groundwater drinking supplies, rivers, lakes and streams. The combustible nature of dumps and people's tendency to set them on fire or "burn them off" is a problem that has become one of the leading causes of wildfires in the state. Obviously, this has devastating impacts on forest owners and the environment.

Public Health Costs—Illegal dumps are the source of many public health concerns, especially in rural communities. Discarded tires and open cans, bottles and cups are perfect incubators for breeding mosquitoes. Besides being very inconvenient, sometimes mosquitoes can carry and transmit serious diseases such as encephalitis. Dumps also cause infestations of rats and mice, which leads to additional public health problems.

Financial, Safety and Aesthetic Costs—Destroying a forest owner's lifetime investment in managing their forest is just one example of the financial and social impacts of illegal dumps. Dumps cause a devaluation in property values, an increase in property insurance because of the danger of wildfires, and additional financial and legal liability to forest owners that may prevent them from selling their land.

On a safety level, dumps place volunteer fire departments in grave danger because of the many hazardous materials such as solvents, pesticides and paints that may be hidden in a dump during a

fire. In some cases putting water on a fire might worsen it and place unsuspecting firefighters at risk.

Aesthetically, dumps are flat-out ugly and contribute to the destruction of a community's sense of pride. Alabama is blessed with some of our nation's most beautiful natural scenery. People's image of Alabama is marred as a consequence of these dumps.

Who Is Working to Solve the Problem?

So, what are we doing in Alabama to address this epidemic?

As far as enforcement is concerned, the ADEM and Public Health Department

(Continued on page 27)

Down in the Dumps

- Last year 3,913 unauthorized illegal dumps were investigated by the Department of Public Health.
- Last year the state of Alabama did not spend one cent to clean up illegal garbage dumps.
- One of the leading causes of wildfires in Alabama is the burning of illegal dumps.

How to Report An Illegal Dump

- If you see someone dumping, report it to the local police authority. Evidence, such as addresses off envelopes, names on bills, phone numbers and photographs can be helpful in catching dumpers.
- Report dumps to your local Public Health Department or the Alabama Department of Environmental Management. They will work to abate the problem.
- Report dumps near public boat ramps or wildlife management areas to the Department of Conservation.
- Report dumps that may potentially cause a fire hazard in your forest to the Alabama Forestry Commission.

Have questions or need help? Call the Alabama Environmental Council's Environmental Watchdog Helpline at 1-800-WTCHDOG.

What Has the Pulp & Paper Industry Done for You Lately?

by RICK OATES, Executive Director, Alabama Pulp and Paper Council

Appropriately, much of *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* magazine focuses on the resource side of the forest industry. Often overlooked is the important role played by the pulp and paper segment of the industry. What happens in the 14 pulp and paper mills operating in Alabama drives almost every other segment of this industry we call forestry. Therefore, understanding the impact of pulp and paper production on Alabama's economy is key to understanding the impact of the entire industry.

Since Alabama's first paper mill was built in Tuscaloosa in 1929, the state's paper industry has grown beyond imagination. The industry's impact extends well beyond the mill gates, the woodyard, the logger or the private landowner's 40 acres. It impacts the entire state, from the "mom and pop" grocery store in Andalusia, to the catfish restaurant in Monroeville, to the bank in downtown Union Springs.

A 1995 study by Dr. William Gunther of the Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research describes in detail the direct and indirect impacts of the pulp and paper industry. In addition to the obvious impact on jobs, timber markets and taxes, the industry infuses billions of dollars into the state's economy in other ways.

Employment Impacts of the Industry

The impact of an industry on a local economy may be measured in several ways. Perhaps the most obvious is by the number of jobs and the amount of wages it provides. In 1995 the Alabama pulp and paper industry directly accounted for approximately 16,000 jobs and more than \$745 million in salaries and wages. Thus we see an average wage of \$47,000 annually for pulp and paper mill employees, the highest for any industrial sector in Alabama.

When considering the economic impact of an industry, one must also look beyond the number of people who receive their paycheck directly from the local mill to

those who earn a living from the industry's presence yet are not directly employed at the paper mill. Suppliers of chemicals, fuel, electricity, equipment and other necessities are also heavily dependent on this industry and fall into this "indirect" employment sector. Dr. Gunther's study estimated the pulp and paper industry indirectly provided jobs for 54,000 Alabamians. Without the pulp and paper industry, these people would have to find other purchasers for their goods and services and look for other ways to support their families.

Further, the construction projects always underway at mills create still additional jobs. Gunther found that construction activities at mill facilities accounted for some 19,000 additional jobs. All totaled—directly and indirectly—in 1995, pulp and paper (not including forestry related jobs) accounted for some 89,000 jobs, or 5 percent of the state's work force.

Pulp and Paper Dollars Spread Beyond the Mill

What effect do these 89,000 employees have on Alabama? How do their wages impact the economy? For starters, food, housing, clothing, and other purchases they make support the communities in which mill employees live. The wages they earn, compared with national estimates on consumer expenditures, provide a method to gauge the broader impact of the pulp and paper industry on Alabama's economy.

Dr. Gunther used statistical models to estimate the number of businesses supported by pulp and paper dollars within seven primary business sectors. Consider them as the equivalent number of businesses supported, not as direct estimates of establishments impacted.

For example, in 1995, the expenditures of employees (direct and indirect) of the paper industry at food stores in Alabama amounted to \$200.9 million. The average annual sales at each of the 3,235 food stores in the state was \$1.8 million. Thus,

the equivalent of 111 (\$200.9 million divided by \$1.8 million), or 3.5 percent, of the state's grocery stores were supported by our industry. This means managers, cashiers, food suppliers and every other employee of these 111 stores depended on the people whose paychecks came from the paper industry to keep their jobs. Similar calculations show the industry's impact on the types of businesses listed in Table 1.

Pulp and paper dollars combine to provide a host of other jobs, services and sales in communities around mill sites. Without the paper industry, many smaller, privately owned businesses, especially those in rural Alabama, could not exist.

There are also obvious impacts to forest landowners surrounding mills as well. In 1995, almost \$1.5 million was paid to landowners for the raw materials necessary to keep the industry running. Landowners use this money from timber harvests for retirement, sending children to college, home purchases and other necessities (or luxuries) of life.

Tax Dollars at Work

In 1995 the paper industry paid a total of \$42.3 million in direct taxes, including property and corporate income taxes and payments made in lieu of taxes to the state of Alabama. As with other industry impacts, there are indirect tax revenue consequences as well. Approximately \$46.7 million in sales taxes were paid on food, clothing and other purchases made by employees. Another \$63.7 million in individual income taxes were collected on employee wages and \$8.7 million in corporate income taxes from companies supporting the industry. The total tax bill for the pulp and paper industry in 1995 was estimated at \$162 million, not including property and severance taxes paid by 214,000 forest landowners. During this period, the total taxes collected by the state was \$4.2 billion, meaning the paper industry's contribution marked almost 4 percent of the state's tax revenue.

Table 1. **Impact of Pulp and Paper Industry on Other Businesses**

Type of Establishment	Number Supported	Percent of State Total
Food Stores	111	3.46
Eating and Drinking Establishments	224	4.82
Clothing and Accessory Stores	189	7.70
Transportation-Related Establishments	355	7.81
Entertainment Establishments	504	17.19
Health Care Establishments	328	9.58
Home Sales	7,634	30.00

Pulp and Paper Industry Supports Communities As Well

The Alabama pulp and paper industry has a long record of providing community support, financial and otherwise, to local communities. Without this aid, many vital needs of our state's citizens could not be met. In 1996, pulp and paper companies in the state contributed more than \$5 million in cash, goods and services to our communities.

Education is the area most emphasized by the pulp and paper industry. Writing to Read, one of the industry's more ambitious projects, is a computer-based literacy program. By providing kindergarten and first-grade students with access to computers and software, Writing to Read allows them to bridge the gap from the spoken language to the written word. First introduced in several counties in southwest Alabama, this program has expanded statewide to more than 360 schools and 3,100 teachers. To date, the program has purchased almost 2,000 computers for use by 70,000 students.

The industry also actively supports Project Learning Tree and the Teacher's Conservation Workshop, programs which help teachers recognize the importance of science in making resource-use decisions. Other programs aimed directly at young people include FAWN (Forestry Awareness Week Now), forestry and mill tours for students, summer camp programs, and many others. D.A.R.E (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), literacy programs, Adopt-a-School, scholarships, and adult learning centers are just a few other ways the industry works to help educate the people living in local communities. Many mills also allow their employees to serve

as instructors at local colleges and other schools on company time. All totaled the industry contributes approximately \$2.2 million annually to educational programs.

Education is not pulp and paper's only area of community involvement. By now, the public is aware of the tremendous impact the industry has on children through Log-a-Load for Kids. More than \$1.65 million has been raised in six years to support children's hospitals in the state. CHIPS (Children's Hospital Intervention and Prevention Services), a child

abuse center in Birmingham with statewide outreach programs, was established through Log-a-Load proceeds.

Additionally, supplies, manpower and money are often donated to Boy Scout troops, libraries, emergency medical services, volunteer fire departments, United Way, Red Cross and a host of other community endeavors to allow these organizations to provide services and carry out their missions. An estimated \$2 million, not including time and manpower, is given each year by the industry to support these organizations and projects.

Obviously, the paper industry is a major player in the Alabama economy. While the impact on jobs, taxes and communities are vital, they are often overlooked or taken for granted by the public. So, no matter what your involvement in forestry is, even if you don't think there is a connection, stop and ask yourself, "What has the pulp and paper industry done for me?" In some way, probably many ways, the pulp and paper industry has affected your life. And, as the designation "wood basket of the world" becomes increasingly applicable to the state, this impact will no doubt become greater. ♣

Burdette Receives Forest History Journalism Award

Don Burdette recently received the John M. Collier Award for Forest History Journalism for a series of articles that appeared in *Alabama's TREASURED Forests*. Entitled "The Southern Forests," the four articles appeared between October 1995 and July 1996. The articles explored the development of primeval forests up to our modern-day fourth forest and took many hours of research and interviews to complete.

The John M. Collier Award is presented annually by the Forest History Society. The award recognizes the author of the best article on forest and conservation history published in newspaper, trade press or general circulation magazines. An independent panel of judges considers depth of research, quality of analysis, clarity of expression and overall significance when evaluating submissions.

Forest History Society President Steve Anderson presented Burdette with a framed, limited-edition woodcut by Vincent Perez in recognition of the achievement. The ceremony took place at the Cradle of Forestry in North Carolina.

John Collier was a Louisiana journalist skilled in many areas of communication including advertising and sales promotion and public, government and media relations. He was also a working scholar and prolific writer of articles and special features for the daily, weekly and industrial press. He completed his journalis-



Don Burdette, left, receives a limited edition woodcut from Steve Anderson, president of the Forest History Society.

tic career with the Southern Forest Products Association and also served on the Forest History Society Board of Directors. Following an untimely death due to cancer, his friends arranged for an endowment to underwrite the costs of the memorial award.

Burdette was a regular contributor to *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* magazine while he was employed as a forester with the Alabama Forestry Commission. Spurred by an interest in forest history, he set out to write a two-part article. The overwhelming amount of information, however, quickly necessitated the expansion of the series to four articles. Burdette is now employed by the Alabama Department of Conservation, Division of State Lands, where he acquires and manages land for the agency. ♣

Editor's note: This is the third in a five-part series on how federal tax laws affect forest landowners. The first two articles discussed timber sales and reforestation. This article will discuss casualty losses. Future articles will discuss management expenses and estate taxes.

The Scenario

Al McCoy owns 120 acres of mixed forestland in northeast Coosa County near the town of Goodwater. He inherited 80 acres from his father in 1980, and purchased an adjoining 40-acre tract in 1987. Daddy's tract had been in the family for years and was forested when he died. The new tract was an open field that Al had planted to pines in 1988.

Al is a retired lawyer living off his savings of about \$500,000 and his and his wife's Social Security, but no pension. He paid off the mortgage and owns his house. Two years ago Al sold the timber on the 80 acres he inherited from his father and found how capital gains treatment of timber sales was a benefit to all landowners. He then reforested the tract and learned about reforestation tax credits and amortization.

Beetle Attack

In August Al received a letter from the Alabama Forestry Commission telling him about a Southern pine beetle spot sighted in the 40-acre tract of young pulpwood. The next day Al drove out to the tract and found an area of 10 acres with dead and dying trees. He called his consulting forester, Steve, and asked for help.

Steve checked with the AFC county manager and then called some of his logger contacts. After a bit of persuading, a

A Year in the Life of a Taxpayer

Part 3

by LOU HYMAN,
Deputy Director, Forest Programs Division,
Alabama Forestry Commission

logger agreed to cut the beetle trees and salvage what he could. Al was lucky; the logger was able to get to the stand quickly, so the infestation spread to only 20 acres. The logger cut all the dying trees and took a wide buffer strip as well. Steve was sure that they got all the beetles and that the rest of the stand was safe for now.

The trees on Al's tract were very small, so the logger was only able to market about half the wood, and then for a very low price—just \$10 per cord. Still, Al was able to collect \$2,000 for his salvaged wood, less the 10 percent commis-

sion to Steve, who in Al's opinion really worked hard to save the rest of his timber.

The tract was a mess, with small trees that could not be sold simply cut and left. So Steve arranged a prescribed burn and had the stand replanted the next January. The total cost of the regeneration was \$85/acre or \$1,700 total. Al figured he came out about even, with a total "profit" of \$100. At least, Al figured, there will be a big tax write-off.

Tax Time

Al brought all of his paper work to his cousin Vinnie, a CPA, to get his tax forms done. Then Al got the shock of his life: There will be no big tax write-off. In fact, Al owed taxes on his salvage sale! "How can that be?" Al wanted to know.

In order for an action to be considered a **Casualty Loss**, the loss must result from an event that is sudden, unexpected and unusual. Vinnie explained that according to the IRS, having Southern pine beetle-killed trees is not a casualty loss. When the beetles attack the tree and kill it, the tree can still be sold as pulpwood at full value. The trees lose value after they are killed, as various diseases and rots set in. The *decay* caused the trees to sell for only \$10 per cord, not the beetles. The IRS claims that the decay is not sudden, but happens over time, so the landowner should have prevented the loss by salvaging quickly. Therefore, the loss is not due to a casualty, but due to landowner neglect. So there can be no casualty loss.

The trees could be considered as an **Involuntary Conversion**, however. This means the trees were cut down against Al's wishes, due to some agent outside

Reforestation Tax Credit and Casualty Losses

In the story, Al had not used the Reforestation Tax Credit when he planted the original stand in 1988. If he had, the results would be different. Under the Reforestation Tax Credit and Amortization rules, a landowner can write off the cost of site preparation and tree planting over eight years. At the end of that period, the taxpayer has recovered all the original cost of the work and has an adjusted basis of \$0.

Under the IRS rules, a casualty loss or involuntary conversion deduction is limited to the basis of the property lost. If the basis had been amortized, then there is no basis. "No Basis—No Loss" says the IRS. Any salvage of damaged timber will then result in a gain, which must be either deferred by replanting or taxed as a capital gain.

Similarly, a naturally regenerated stand

that grew from wild seed and stump sprouts has no cost associated with it, hence no basis. When that stand is destroyed by wind, fire or bugs, the IRS says that since there was no cash investment, there can be no loss. It does not matter that the natural stand is over 40 years old and worth more than \$10,000 per acre. According to the IRS there is no loss if the stand is destroyed.

Other Types of Casualty Losses

This story focused on a Southern pine beetle attack as the cause of the loss. Other events may damage or destroy your forest. In Alabama, the most common casualties come from windstorms such as tornadoes and hurricanes, from ice storms, from severe fires in young forests, or from timber theft. All of these incidents are handled the same way as outlined in this story.

The key issue in all these cases is that the loss is limited to the adjusted basis of the timber lost. **There is no loss for potential profits.** If the trees are mature sawtimber and the storm reduces its value

to pulpwood, the loss is still limited to the basis of the timber. If that pulpwood salvage brings in more than the basis, you still have a "gain" and need to either defer it or pay taxes.

In a windstorm or ice storm situation where only some of the trees are damaged, the basis of the damaged trees is allocated using the depletion system used for timber sales. Here the basis is figured on a per cord or per MBF level and then applied to the amount of timber salvaged. (See "A Year in the Life of a Taxpayer, Part 1," *Alabama's TREASURED Forests*, Summer 1997.)

Al's control that acted in an unexpected or unusual manner.

The other bad news is that the amount of loss for both a casualty loss and an involuntary conversion are calculated the same. It is decrease in value of the trees, limited to their **Basis**, less any recovery from salvage or insurance. The loss must be based on the actual investment in the trees—their cost, not on their potential value. It does not matter that the trees could have been worth thousands of dollars before they were destroyed; the loss is limited to their original cost.

The basis of this stand was just \$75 per acre, based on the original cost to plant the trees back in 1988, for a total basis of \$1,500. The salvage sale brought in \$2,000, less the \$200 commission. So the "loss" is calculated as the basis less the net salvage. In this case, there was no loss, but instead the salvage made a profit of \$300 (\$2,000-\$200-\$1,500). Al would have to pay capital gains tax of \$45 on this profit (15 percent of \$300). Al was flabbergasted. Not only was his

investment wiped out, but he had to pay taxes on top of it.

The Hurricane Frederic Rule

Vinnie did some further research and found that Al's loss could come under the reinvestment rules of Revenue Ruling 80-175, the Hurricane Frederic Rule. Under this regulation, gains made from an involuntary conversion as a result of an unusual or unexpected event, such as a hurricane or insect epidemic, may be deferred if the proceeds are used to buy replacement property within two years of the loss. In forestry, replacement property includes site preparation and replanting, or purchasing new forestlands.

By replanting the stand, Al can delay paying taxes on his gain until the new timber is sold. The basis of the new stand is its cost, less the "gain" that is being delayed. In Al's case, he spent \$1,700 to clean up the site and replant. The new basis is now \$1,700 less the \$300 capital gain he is deferring, for a net basis of \$1,400. This adjusted basis may be used to qualify for the Reforestation Tax Credit and Amortization (see "A Year in the Life of a Taxpayer, Part 2," in *Alabama's Treasured Forests*, Fall 1997). If Al had not chosen to replant, then he would have to pay taxes on the capital gains from the salvage sale. Once again, planting trees helped Al save tax money.

The beetles wiped out more than just Al's trees. He was mentally tired from all this worrying and decided to take a long vacation. He asked Steve to look after the place for him, and while he was at it to do several projects to fix the place up a little ... but that is the next story. ♣

To Be Continued

NEW CAPITAL GAINS RULES

The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 was signed by President Clinton in August 1997. The new law changed several aspects of how timber sales are taxed.

Under the previous law, the capital gains tax rate was either 15 or 28 percent, depending on the other income of the taxpayer. Under the new law, the maximum capital gains tax rate will initially be set at 20 percent for all assets sold after May 6, 1997. Taxpayers in the 15 percent tax bracket (less than \$41,200 taxable income for families and less than \$24,650 for singles) will have their capital gains taxed at only 10 percent. In order to qualify, the asset must be owned by the taxpayer for 18 months prior to sale.

After the year 2000, assets held for over 5 years and then sold will have their capital gains tax rate dropped to 18 percent for the upper tax brackets and 8 percent for those in the 15 percent tax bracket.

These changes make it even more important that anyone who sells timber needs to use capital gains treatment of the income. Beside being taxed at lower rates, capital gains only taxes the "profit" from the sale instead of the whole income. It also enables a retired person to maintain full Social Security coverage while avoiding any self employment taxes.

For more information, see "A Year in the Life of a Taxpayer, Part 1," in *Alabama's TREASURED Forests*, Summer 1997. ♣

If No Salvage Is Done

In the story, Al McCoy was able to salvage some of his trees and make a small profit. If he had not been able to find a buyer for his wood, the proper management action to control the Southern pine beetle epidemic would be to do a "cut and leave," where Al or a contractor would go in and cut down all the infested trees and a buffer strip and then burn the piles. In this case the loss is either the cost of the corrective action or the basis, whichever is less.

However, by salvaging and replanting, Al was able to shelter his capital gain and get back a new productive stand of trees.

Permanent Firelanes Offer Protection and More

by WAYNE CRAFT, Alabama Forestry Commission, Pike County, and BOB DEVAUGHAN, Alabama Forestry Commission, Barbour County

Most forest landowners recognize the timber on their property as a valuable asset that should be protected. One of the greatest needs for protection throughout the South is from the threat of wildfires.

This threat has caused more and more landowners to construct some type of firelane on their property. Over the past few years many landowners have found that a permanent firelane offers them the best fire protection and provides numerous other benefits as well.

A permanent firelane is basically a bulldozed lane, 12 to 20 feet wide, where all the grass, brush, and small to medium sized trees have been removed. In some cases, such as where a landowner wishes to incorporate a wildlife food plot into the firelane, an opening 40 to 50 feet in width may be used. This leaves a clean break that can be easily maintained with a farm tractor and disc harrow. In contrast, the other most common type of firelane is a plowed firelane constructed with a crawler tractor and a fireline plow. This type of firelane is only 4 to 6 feet in width and must be replowed each year with the same type of equipment.

Obviously the initial cost of the permanent lane is greater than that of the plowed lane but the savings in annual maintenance is significant. Also, if the landowner has his own equipment, he can work his lanes whenever he wishes and need not depend on someone else to do the work.

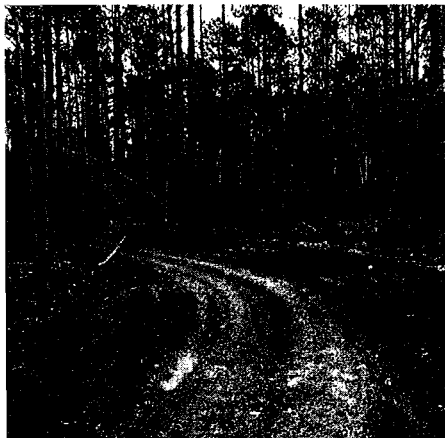
It is easy to see that the wider lane provides much greater protection as it lessens the probability of a wildfire "jumping" the firelane. These permanent lanes are usually put in anywhere property meets a road and

access should a wildfire occur on some remote part of the property. This access will also be beneficial when performing silvicultural operations such as firewood cutting, herbicide treatment, timber cruising,

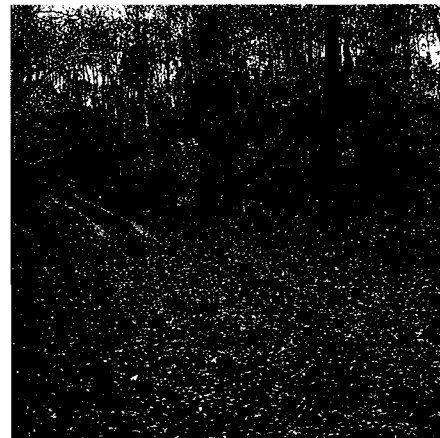
timber marking and harvesting. Permanent firelanes can serve as very definite timber sale boundaries as well as routes over which harvested products can be removed. Conducting a prescribed burn is also quicker and easier in stands where permanent firelanes are present. Another benefit is that firelanes provide a very definite notice of change of owner-

ship when used along property lines.

If the firelane is to be used as a road on a regular basis, a 20- to 40-foot lane will allow the development of a grassed roadway as well as a firebreak. The roadway should be grassed while the remainder of the line is kept disced for fire protection. These areas are then rotated annually. This is an especially good scheme on hilly terrain or anywhere erosion may be a problem. Proper diversion structures should always be used no matter what type of firelane is constructed. Water bars with proper outflow protection should always be used on hills. Several small water bars are preferable to a few large ones. Large water bars are difficult for vehicles to cross and tend to get worn down quickly. All water bars should be angled to help divert the



This firelane is seeded and ready for use.



A turnout to the right of this firelane helps divert water away from the road.

along boundary lines. Other locations include areas where two different timber types or stands of different ages meet, such as where a natural pine stand meets a hardwood bottom or where a 2-year-old planted pine stand joins a 15-year-old pine stand. Firelanes can also be used to break up large stands of planted or natural pines into more manageable units.

Firelanes Have Many Benefits

The greater fire protection provided by permanent firelanes is probably reason enough to use them, but they provide many additional benefits. Most permanent firelanes can be used as a road system, allowing the landowner ready access to all parts of his property. This can be beneficial when scouting for insect and disease attacks and, of course, provides quick

(Continued on page 27)

New Report Stresses Importance of Nonfederal Forests

A National Research Council report scheduled for publication in early 1998 is highlighting the importance of nonfederal forests. "Forested Landscapes in Perspective: Prospects and Opportunities for Sustainable Management of America's Nonfederal Forests" reflects recommendations from a national committee of representatives from universities, state forestry agencies, and other forestry organizations. Nonfederal forests include those owned or managed by states, industry, private landowners, American Indian tribes and communities.

The executive summary of the report makes the following seven recommendations:

Recommendation 1—Ensure the long-term integrity of forest ecosystems that comprise the nation's nonfederal forests, actively addressing conditions that diminish their ability to contribute to the well-being of the nation's citizens.

- The federal government should strengthen programs that monitor nonfederal forest health, with special focus on early detection of conditions that could lead to catastrophic consequences.
- Federal assistance to states should be strengthened for wildfire suppression and fuel management technologies, while recognizing fire as critical to functioning, healthy ecological processes.

Recommendation 2—Improve the ability of the federal government to focus on the national interest in nonfederal forests, especially the ability to identify national interests in nonfederal forests and to deliver programs and support that will enable accomplishment of these national interests.

- A national policy for nonfederal forests that is grounded in a comprehensive policy for the nation's forests should be established.
- Federal strategic-planning processes should identify national interests in nonfederal forests and subsequently set forth a strategic plan for federal action.

- Organization and coordination among federal agencies and programs focused on nonfederal forests should be improved and administrative and organizational links between federal programs focused on nonfederal, public, and private forests should be simplified to be more effective.
- Institutional partnerships that foster the coordinated use, management, and protection of large forested landscapes involving public and private forest landowners should be promoted.

Recommendation 3—Coordinate and suitably strengthen incentive, technical assistance, and regulatory programs for nonfederal forests, and broaden their application to a wide variety of individual and societal interests.

- Privately initiated programs that lead to investments in nonfederal forests should be promoted.
- Coordination of federal incentive, regulatory and technical assistance programs should be improved and these programs, as well as tax policies and programs, should be periodically evaluated to improve effectiveness. Technical assistance, fiscal incentive, and tax programs that target special landowner categories should be considered.
- A clear set of purposes for educational programs focused on nonfederal forests should be established with a well-defined statement of federal agency responsibility for attaining these goals.
- Tax policies and programs that discourage investments in the sustained management of private nonfederal forests should be eliminated.
- Federal and state regulatory programs for nonfederal forests should be designed to honor public and private interests in nonfederal forests.

Recommendation 4—Promote public and private investments in nonfederal forests by establishing innovative investment policies and by fostering healthy

national and regional economics. Investment should be broadly construed to include financial, intellectual, human and ecological resources.

- Major deterrents to private investments in forestry that affect investment by nonindustrial private landowners, especially lack of sufficient advance capital and low expected rates of return should be eliminated.
- Federal fiscal and technical assistance programs leading to investments in private nonfederal forests should be large enough to affect the use and sustainable management of nonfederal forests.
- Innovative public and private revenue sources for investments in nonfederal forests should be established, including general obligation bonds and various forms of private trusts.

Recommendation 5—Improve the quantity, quality, and timeliness of information about nonfederal forests and enhance access to this information.

- Research focused on nonfederal forests should be strengthened by expanding public and private investments in research, improving organization and management of research and guiding research with a strategic research plan for nonfederal forests.
- Programs for transferring information about nonfederal forests to landowners, managers and citizens should be strengthened. Cooperative partnerships should be used to assist in this effort.
- Programs for monitoring condition and use of nonfederal forests and systems used to manage this information should be strengthened, with emphasis on establishing consistent information gathering protocols for monitoring activities.

Recommendation 6—Acknowledge public and private rights and responsibilities associated with nonfederal private forests and the multitude of ways that

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LANDOWNERS



LEGISLATIVE • ALERT

ALABAMA

by FRANK SEGO, Legislative Liaison, Alabama Forestry Commission



As we closed out this column in the fall issue of *Alabama's TREASURED Forests*, the Legislature was still grappling over provisions of a \$971 million general fund budget for fiscal 1997-

98. As that column was finalized, lawmakers were snarled in the 10th day of a special session with still no end in sight. (A special session has 12 legislative days to complete its work or face sine die.)

September 15, 1997, was to be the final day for the session. State government would be faced with a possible shutdown by October 1. The die was cast. Conference committees had met and re-met. One member was replaced by another in order to reach some solution to a rejection by the governor.

Before midnight on the 12th day, both the Senate and House had given final approval to a compromise budget that the governor accepted after relinquishing ground to a \$5 million item for funding a new children's health insurance program.

Executive vs. Legislative

The session did not end without bitter confrontation between officials of the James administration and budget writers of the House and Senate. Gov. James had said all along that he supported the children's program for which matching funds were available on a four to one basis, but he contended that 1998 would be early enough to get the state involved.

The governor still threatened to call another session to try for a \$700-plus million highway and bridge bond issue, a bond issue for the state parks system and a voter identification bill, which he has long favored.

The session never came about, however, as the governor returned from a trade mission to Israel in October and called off another session for 1997. The 1998 regular session begins on January 13.

The AFC Budget

When all the dust had settled over the special session, the Forestry Commission analyzed the final version of its 1997-1998 budget. The bottom line projected a figure of \$11,967,999 in general fund revenue, leaving us with less money to spend this fiscal year.

The governor had recommended \$12,061,499 for the new fiscal period. The House and Senate shuffled the figure around from one number to another. The conference committee went along with a House transfer of \$300,000 for rural and community fire protection. This action raised the volunteer fire departments to \$2,311,017.

These funds are appropriated to the Forestry Commission each year for use in the volunteer fire department program. The funds are to be used for a variety of purposes that benefit all such fire departments in the state, as recommended by the Rural Community Fire Protection Steering Committee.

The above-mentioned funds are divided equally among all qualifying departments. Funds divided among county and district associations are to be divided only on an equivalent basis.

A resolution will be introduced in the next regular session to protect volunteer fire department funds from being earmarked for a particular fire department or group of fire departments in any legislative district.

Funding Is a Necessity

There always seems to be a struggle for funding for forestry purposes. It's no secret that there is an ongoing challenge for the AFC to hold the line against cuts in the general fund budget. No pressure is ever exerted on legislators; rather, an evenhanded approach is taken. Over the long haul this can mean more than forceful tactics, which can result in nothing but animosity from a legislator.

It has always been the contention of the state forester and this legislative liaison that if we tell our story in a factual manner, stressing our needs and the impact that our agency has on Alabama's forestry program, good results will be forthcoming.

We are quick to point out that every citizen has a stake in the forests that enrich the land of Alabama. Each of us are shareholders in this God-given heritage that must be enriched and protected. Upwards of 70,000 Alabamians earn their living in the forest industry either planting, harvesting or converting our trees to lumber, furniture, paper products and even their own homes.

They provide essential services to nurture these activities that eventually distribute wood products to consumers throughout the nation and the world.

AFC Has the Role

In short, the Forestry Commission will continue in its role as a servant of the forests and of its people only by maintaining the public's confidence. Education and public relations can only do so much. It takes the backing of the Alabama Legislature to make this happen! And it can happen only through adequate funding. That's the quest of your Forestry Commission.

(Continued on page 21)

CRP Thinnings to Hit Markets Sooner Than Expected

Downward Impact on Prices Seen Greatest in South

by MARSHALL THOMAS, President, F&W Forestry Services, Inc.

Several years ago, I did an article that attempted to assess the effect that thinnings from the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) stands would have on pulpwood prices in coming years. In that article, I assumed that thinnings would begin at age 15 and that any impact the CRP harvest had on pulpwood prices would begin about the year 2000, the year the first thinnings of the 1985 plantings would probably occur. I concluded that harvests from CRP acres would likely depress pulpwood prices from the years 2000 to 2005.

In last year's Farm Bill, the CRP was extended for another 10 years. No further extensions in existing contracts were allowed, but owners were given an opportunity to re-enroll their expiring acres in new contracts subject to a number of conditions related to environmental and wildlife concerns.

CRP Re-enrollment High in South

In the first CRP sign-up under the new program, 747,000 of the 1,292,000 CRP acres expiring in the South in 1997 were re-enrolled. Requirements imposed under the new contracts require another look at when, and to what extent, CRP thinnings might affect pulpwood stumpage markets in coming years.

The conditions of the new sign-up place an emphasis on wildlife. They require that many stands be thinned within three years and that 15 to 20 percent of the stands be opened up for wildlife feed plots. Since the stands that were re-enrolled this year range from ages 10 to 12, the thinnings that I anticipated would take place around age 15 are going to take place much earlier. In addition, since the thinnings are a requirement with many of the new CRP contracts, they will take place within a three-year period.

Using an assumption of 10 cords per acre in the thinning, which may be conservative since 15 to 20 percent of many stands have to be clearcut for wildlife,

the requirements of the CRP re-enrollment on 747,000 acres will create a flood of an estimated 7.5 million cords of pulpwood into the market over the next three years. Should this be spread out evenly, it would amount to 2.5 million cords per year coming to market. It is likely, however, that the thinnings will be bunched towards the end of the three-year period. We could easily be looking at 4 or 5 million cords of thinnings from these stands in the year 2000.

In the Southern states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia—where 76 percent of the CRP acres planted to trees nationwide are located—the acreage re-enrolled is 661,900. Using the same assumptions as above, an estimated 6.6 million cords of pulpwood will be removed from these stands over the next three years. That's about 13 percent of the 1994 pulpwood consumption in the seven-state area, which will begin to hit the market during one of the worst pulpwood markets in years.

Impact of Pulp Industry Recovery Diminished

Most forecasts indicate that the pulp and paper business is beginning to pick up and that we may enjoy a recovery in

pulpwood prices extending over the next several years. Unfortunately for us in the South, the impact of this recovery may be severely diminished by the requirement that the CRP acres re-enrolled in the latest 10-year sign-up must be thinned over the first three years. More pressure on pulpwood prices will come from the 423,000 acres of CRP trees whose contracts expired Sept. 30 and were not re-enrolled in the new program. An additional 438,000 acres of CRP trees will be released from contracts in annual increments from 1998 through 2002. And finally, pressure will come from non-CRP pine plantations that will reach thinning ages over the next several years.

The obvious conclusion is that we face several years when supply of pulpwood from plantation thinnings will likely exceed demand—barring a dramatic and sustained lift in industry fiber requirements. Pulpwood prices may not recover during this period, which presents some interesting questions. Will government-required thinnings in CRP plantations cause delayed thinnings in non-CRP plantations, offsetting the desired wildlife benefits? And will the contractually-required thinnings hold pulpwood prices down enough to hurt landowners not involved in CRP? ♣

CRP Status in 7 Southern States

	Total CRP Tree Acres 1/97	Estimated CRP Acres Expired '97	CRP Acres Accepted in 15th	New CRP Acres Offered in 15th	CRP Acres Existing 1998-2002
Alabama	293,100	208,317	124,100	28,300	84,783
Florida	109,500	68,560	46,800	7,100	40,940
Georgia	547,900	342,959	111,700	14,900	204,941
Mississippi	521,000	310,912	252,700	83,800	210,088
North Carolina	83,000	53,541	25,500	1,700	29,459
South Carolina	208,000	141,645	90,700	17,200	66,355
Virginia	28,300	17,098	10,400	1,000	11,202
Total	1,790,800	1,143,032	661,900	154,000	647,768

Source: USDA

Father and Son Manage TREASURE Together

by COLEEN VANSANT, Information Specialist, Alabama Forestry Commission, Cullman

For decades local hunting lands in Randolph County were open to almost anyone for the asking, but a new trend developed in the late 1980s. This same land was now either being closed to hunting or leased to out of town “high collar, paying” clients. This is where Tommy Hendon’s TREASURE Forest story begins. According to Tommy, he and his son John began “in earnest to locate a piece of property that we could afford to buy and manage for the purpose of hunting.”

In 1990 their dream came true when they purchased 85 acres near Wedowee in Randolph County. The purchase of an adjoining 42 acres in 1993 made their dream a little bigger, along with the hard work of managing the land and making it their own. For a relatively small tract of land, the Hendons carry out one of the most intensive forest management programs that you will ever see. With timber and wildlife as their primary and secondary management objectives, every inch of their 127 acres is managed to its fullest potential.

Access roads have been constructed throughout the property and natural pine stands have been thinned and prescribed burned. Their goal is to create a “stair step” forest with all age levels and species of trees from 1-year-old pines to 100-year-old white oaks. This great diversity creates what they feel is needed to support wildlife populations on the property.

Five wildlife food plots have been established including several acres of utility right-of-way. The father and son team has planted more than 4,000 bicolor lespedeza plants, 25 autumn olive, pear and apple trees for wildlife, along with sawtooth oaks

and Chinese chestnuts. A two-acre dove field is replanted each year in browntop millet and sunflowers, and permanent salt stations have been constructed.



L-R: Alabama Forestry Commission Randolph County Manager Charles Wise, John Hendon and Tommy Hendon.

Tommy’s experience as a vocational school woodworking teacher has been extended to his forestland. He and John have constructed and installed 12 bat houses, 18 squirrel nesting boxes, two wood duck boxes, 20 bluebird houses and 116 purple martin gourds. They have also constructed four wildlife observation towers on their food plots.


The Hendons read everything they can about forest and wildlife management so that they can better manage their land; they are also not afraid to try new things. Starting a fertilization program on both their pine and hardwood stands and experimenting with a pruning program that they intend to continue for pine and hardwood are two examples of this experimentation.

With such small acreage “we don’t waste anything,” says Tommy. When Hurricane Opal blazed through several years ago, the Hendons were left with extensive hardwood damage. Over the past couple of years they have worked hard to salvage everything they could from the wreckage including firewood, pulpwood, and wood suitable for cooking barbecue, which was sold to local restaurants. In addition they have salvaged 15,000 board feet of logs, which are presently curing for the construction of a cabin on the property.

In 1993 the Hendons’ work and commitment to their land paid off when they were awarded the distinction of TREASURE Forest. In 1996, they were honored with the Tree Farmer of the Year Award.

For John the education extends beyond applying it to his land. His devotion to nature has won him several honors, including the 1995 Alabama FFA Forest Man-

agement Award and the 1996 Alabama FFA Wildlife Management Award. He was also the recipient of the Southwire Corporation’s Community Environmental Award, the 1996 Governor’s Youth Conservationist Award, and was the 1997 Alabama FFA Soil Conservation Award Winner. He was also the winner of the 1996 National Wildlife Management Award.

Tommy and John both feel that owning land carries a great responsibility, and they intensively manage what they have. According to Tommy, “In 30 years we’re going to have quality saw logs.” In the meantime they’re reaping all of the benefits that their land has to offer—the greatest being the joy they receive from managing their land together. 

Pine Hill Day Camp

by TILDA MIMS, Forest Education Specialist, Alabama Forestry Commission

Pine Hill Day Camp's promotional brochure says it is "the place for fun and adventure that most children just dream about," and after spending a pleasant day there, I have to agree. Each summer day for eight weeks, 200 children from 4 years old through high school arrive by bus to enjoy a day of horseback riding, exploring caves, canoeing, and other recreational activities found on this 120-acre TREASURE Forest in Morgan County.

Carolyn and Frank Price established Pine Hill in June 1976. They bought the land in Frank's home state of Alabama with the goal of creating a day camp that is child-centered. The camp's creed includes a dedication to creating a fun-filled environment free of competitive pressures, to stimulating creative minds and to strengthening "a recognition of the inherent worth and dignity of every individual, a feeling of unity among all people and an awareness of and concern for our earth."

This noble and refreshing approach to summer camp dovetails easily with the mission of the TREASURE Forest Program. The Prices manage their forestland with an eye toward education, aesthetics and recreation. Timber management at Pine Hill is designed to accomplish two goals: to ensure camp safety and to facilitate activities related to camp activities.

Openings have been established to allow adequate space for group activities and to create trails for walking, hiking and horseback riding. They also opened up a few stands to accommodate ropes courses. Several years ago they decided to let some areas of the mowed fields go fallow to let the kids see what would happen. "We used those areas to let the chil-

dren see natural succession in progress as pines, hardwoods, flowers and vines sprouted in those areas," said Carolyn.

The Southern pine beetle caused havoc for the camp last summer. About two-thirds of a six-acre plantation was removed in the winter of 1996 due to an infestation of beetles. Unfortunately, that



Carolyn and Frank Price work with a young camper who is learning to groom Ladybug.

six acres was home to the camp's council ring, where campers gathered for large meetings and other activities that included all 200 campers. Frank said they insisted on using horses for logging to minimize impact to the area and the results were excellent. Natural successions of both pine and hardwood is abundant, but there will be insufficient shade for several years. Morgan County Forester Roger Nichols is working closely with them to select a new location for the council ring.

When summer campers go home in August, the Prices remain busy with Pine Hill Equestrian Center and Pine Hill Corporate Picnics. The equestrian center is open to both adults and children. The Prices own 25 horses, mainly quarter horses, and offer


instruction in English riding, dressage riding and hunter jumper riding. There is also a small cross-country riding course. A large indoor riding arena includes a riding floor, stalls, storage and horse care areas for year-round use.

Pine Hill is a popular place for corporate picnics on weekends throughout the year. Guests are invited to swim, ride horses, pitch horseshoes and take full advantage of all the recreational opportunities available. The Prices will also coordinate catering and special fun activities for children.

Carolyn and Frank Price are celebrating their 21st year as the owners and directors of Pine Hill. Their two sons, Chip and Ed, were quite young when the camp opened, but together they built their home and camp buildings, developed the site and chose camp activities. Today, Frank "Chip" Price, III is a Ph.D. candidate in philosophy at the University of Georgia and Ed

is a Ph.D. candidate in physics at the University of California in San Diego. Although they are away much of the time, they remain actively involved in the camp.

Pine Hill's 120 acres of rolling fields and wooded hills feature healthy trees, abundant wildlife and clear sparkling water like many TREASURE Forests. What sets this award winner apart is the emphasis on management for recreational, aesthetic and educational benefit.

In a time when many children are learning to be alarmed about the environment, it is encouraging to see so many young people learning to appreciate and enjoy nature. They not only reap the benefits of this forestland, they have first-hand experiences in the responsibilities we all share as stewards of this beautiful land. 

ALABAMA ROADS

A Network Necessary for Forestry's Economic Success

by BILL JONES, Alabama Forestry Association

The value of forest products is often determined by adequate access to markets. In the Southeastern United States, where over 90 percent of our timberland is privately owned, we are able to access the marketplace through a well-planned primary and secondary road network. The economic return we enjoy through this access to Alabama timber markets is equal to the addition of a Mercedes automobile plant every month. We are indeed fortunate to enjoy a transportation network of rail, waterway, and road systems to deliver \$13.2 billion in forest products every year. Maintaining, funding, and policing Alabama roads will be a great challenge and an important factor in the present and future economic development of our state.

The forest industry is dependant on both the primary and secondary road system, just as the forest landowner is dependant on the road network to access the timber market. However, we are beginning to see warning signs of the deficiencies in the system.

In 1995 the cost of maintaining Alabama's 93,000-mile road network exceeded \$1 billion. This investment in the administration, maintenance, construction, and policing of our roads came from federal, state, and local funds. Alabama continues to be a donor state to the Federal Highway Trust Fund in that we receive less than a dollar for every dollar we contribute in fuel, excise, and sales taxes. Congress is currently examining the reauthorization of the Federal Highway Program that may increase Alabama's share of federal highway dollars. In the debate is 4.3 cents earmarked for federal deficit reduction that could mean an additional \$200 million. Alabama ranks 10th among Southeastern states in road expenditures (\$264) and ninth highest in road debt (\$41) per capita.

In June 1994 the Federal Highway Administration rated Alabama bridges 34 percent deficient, either structurally or by

design. These deficiencies have been on the decline since 1994 but still Alabama ranks seventh out of 12 states in the Southeast survey. On pavement conditions Alabama ranked third with pavement conditions on the decline. Alabama traffic

Counties are responsible for the maintenance of 8,800 bridge structures. A recent inventory of county bridges show that 3,600 bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete by Federal Highway Administration standards. In all, 53 miles



Alabama's forest industry relies on the state's 93,000-mile road network to transport raw materials and finished wood products. John Russell of Trotter Timber in Ramer is pictured here ready to roll with another load.

congestion and rate of injury-causing accidents remained well below Southeastern levels (Spring 1997 PARCA Report).

County road systems play an important role in accessing Alabama's 22 million-acre forest for management, recreation, and harvesting. It is important to recognize the county road system because it constitutes 58,000 miles or 84 percent of the state's road network. The county system includes 22,000 miles of dirt roads and 36,000 miles of paved county roads.

of county bridges are structurally deficient with only 861 bridges considered to be federal "on line" bridges that are capable of receiving federal funds.

Counties play a major role in maintaining, constructing, and financing highways and bridges. In Randolph and Clay Counties, local commissioners have enacted road resolutions that require log haulers and other heavy road users to obtain permits from the county commission for road use. In Autauga County the engineer has

lowered the legal weight limit on county roads. Other counties have considered taking similar measures. In neighboring Georgia, 58 counties have different road use regulations. Washington County currently has 37 bridges that have been posted at less than half of the state weight limit.

In Macon County the engineer recently conducted an informative meeting with timber haulers regarding road maintenance, conditions, and funding problems. The purpose of the meeting was to begin a cooperative method for dealing with road use problems concerning log trucks. The effort will be constructive in identifying road hazards as well as communicating concerns about timber access. The engineer indicated that many counties are restructuring from a district to a unit system where engineers will have greater responsibility for determining road maintenance priorities. He also indicated the level of monetary limitations placed on the road system. In Macon County for instance, road funding comes from local fuel taxes. Only a small percentage comes from federal or state "on system sources." All of these situations are indications that we will have new challenges and opportunities in financing and maintaining our county road system while at the same time providing landowners with access to strong forest product markets.

Should safety be discarded in order to maintain access to strong markets? Absolutely not. Safety must be a major consideration in determining road use. The same roads used to access strong markets also provide access to school for our children and access to work and recreation for each of us. However, the reality of reduced legal bridge weights and other

road use restrictions is usually alternative routes and an increased cost of transporting products/goods/people, including forest products and school children. In some instances, costs may increase to the point of being prohibitive.

Alabama's economic future depends on our ability to provide safe transportation to Alabama citizens as well as efficient access to resource markets. To have both, we must be wise in our road use and maintenance and realize that our transportation network is more than just primary roads and interstates between cities. We must all be part of the solution and get involved to examine and identify funding mechanisms for county, state and federal systems to ensure a safe road system that provides the efficient access we currently enjoy.

Taking inventory of our road network is similar to looking in the warehouse of Alabama's forest. Our road conditions as well as our forest inventory will continue to change, but both of these important Alabama resources respond well to maintenance and management. However, it will be increasingly difficult to profit from one without maintaining the other. ♣

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Landowners Legislative Alert

Continued from page 16

Speaking of the Legislature, it's only a short few months before the next statewide election. By the time you read this column, many candidates will have qualified to run for the state's 140 legislative seats. All constitutional offices will be up for grabs. There will be incumbents. There will be newcomers.

We reflect on Alabama Forestry Association Executive Vice President John McMillan's hard-hitting column in the fall issue of

Winter 1998

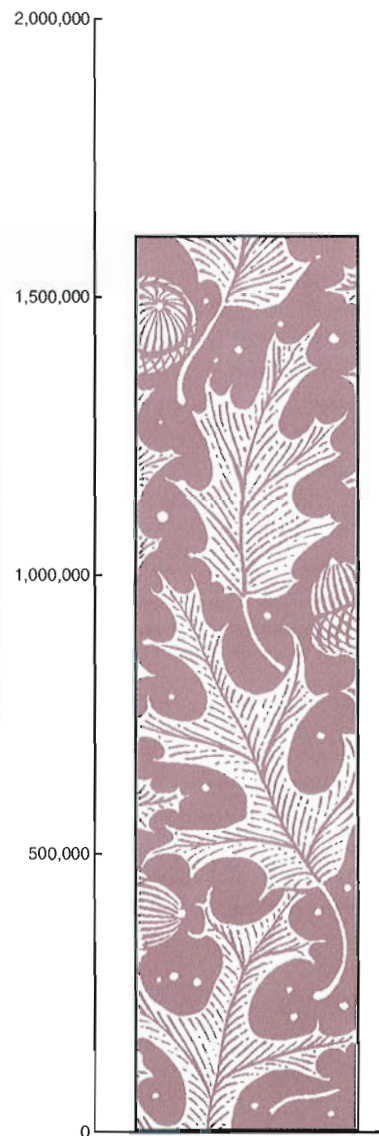
Alabama Forests magazine. He quoted Will Rogers, who said, "Politics has got so expensive that it takes lots of money to even get beat with." The late humorist said that in the Twenties. In 1998, it will cost millions to seat the new Legislature. Every vote and every seat is critical to Alabama forestry. We must be vigilant. We must analyze the merits of each candidate and get his or her commitment to support the Forestry Commission's program, so vital to every citizen of this state. 'Nough said!

In our spring issue, we will take a closer look at the primaries of 1998. 'Til then ... ♣



UPDATE

The TREASURE Forest Program has set a goal of having 2 million acres in the program by the year 2000. The chart below shows the number of acres currently enrolled in the program.



Preserving Native American Heritage

by BRUCE D. BIZZOCO, Ph.D., Shelton State Community College

As a community college instructor, I am often asked many interesting questions by my students about Alabama and its archaeological heritage. The state of Alabama is rich in many resources, and one of the most unique and endangered is our historic and prehistoric archaeological record. This record is reflected in the locations where activities of the past took place. As Alabama seeks and finds opportunities for development, our record of the past has come under increased danger. Sites are disappearing rapidly and everyone needs to do their part in conserving the remaining sites for the future. Here are some of the most often asked questions about Alabama's heritage.

What is an archaeological site?

An archaeological site can be any area (including buildings) that is more than 50 years old. Sites fall into two broad categories: historic and prehistoric. Historic sites are ones that appear after written history—a Civil War battlefield or old homeplace could qualify. Prehistoric sites, on the other hand, are sites that occur before written history. In North America these are the locations where native Americans were active. Both types of sites are found in Alabama and both are endangered.

How do I know if I have a site on my property?

Sites come in all shapes and sizes and are often difficult to locate. For prehistoric sites, broken shells, small pieces of pottery, stone flakes or "arrowheads" may indicate the presence of a site. Old foundations, broken glass, pieces of metal, collapsed walls and chimneys often show the location of a possible historic site. If you have anything on your property that falls into one of those categories, or if you find an object that is "out of place" with its surroundings, you need to have it examined by a professional archaeologist.

Why should we want to conserve our state sites?

Sites are fragile and are easily destroyed by the natural weathering process and by activities of modern development. Once a



These projectile points are typical of what may be found on a prehistoric site.

site has been altered or destroyed it is gone forever and cannot be renewed. Each site (historic and prehistoric) has its own unique story to tell; the archaeologist is just the interpreter of the story. But to tell the story truthfully, the archaeologist must study what was left behind. These left-behind items are artifacts and the archaeologist wants to know when, how and why the artifacts were used. If the artifacts get moved around on the surface of the ground, destroyed, or looted, then the story becomes incomplete, inaccurate, or at worst, impossible to tell. Since there are a fixed number of sites, each time a site is altered in some fashion the story of Alabama's past becomes more difficult to tell.

Do the archaeologists get to keep the artifacts for themselves?

No. The artifacts found on a site are studied, photographed, cleaned and reconstructed for display or storage in a state museum or state repository. In some cases the artifacts are returned for reburial.

Many times the archaeologist only excavates that part of the site which is endangered.

If I locate or suspect a site on my property, what should I do?

There are several organizations ready to assist Alabama landowners. Teresa Paglione, cultural resources specialist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Auburn says, "The NRCS has a Conservation Reserve Program that promotes good stewardship for the land. Through this program landowners are awarded points to qualify, so there is an advantage to having a site on your property." If a landowner is receiving technical advice from NRCS or is enrolled in a cost-share program NRCS helps administer (like CRP), then the landowner may call on the agency to look at a site that may have archeological significance.

At the state level the Alabama Historical Commission has a state archaeologist, Dr. Thomas Maher, who stresses the need to conserve the sites. Dr. Maher said, "We are very interested in the conservation of the state's historic and prehistoric sites. We, the archaeologists, would be interested in looking at the artifacts and photographing them for further study."


Another voice that is urging conservation is the director of the Alabama Indian Affairs Commission, Darla Graves. "While the Commission has no policing powers or statutory authority, we work with the Alabama Historical Commission to keep track of sites," said Graves. She says her hardest job is letting Alabamians know that these sites represent someone's ancestors. They (the sites) are not just remains of Indians from the distant past, but reminders of a unique personal history. The biggest problem is getting people to separate the past historical perspective from the present day. People need to understand that the objects (artifacts) associated with Native American burials have a

special meaning to the present-day Native Americans. Particularly distressing is the desecration of Native American grave sites. Sadly, there are individuals who will dig up graves and sell the artifacts.

What if I find or suspect that I have human remains on my property?

Anytime you accidentally find human remains on your property you need to call your local sheriff's department immediately. Unfortunately, in today's world, many times the remains turn out to be of recent origin and may be involved with criminal activity. Both the police and the archaeologist need to have the remains left in place if they are to tell the complete story. If it is determined that the remains are historic or prehistoric, then the archaeologist will be consulted. Also remember that disturbing human remains is not only improper, but unlawful.

How can I learn more about Alabama archaeology?

You can learn more about general archaeology from your local library. The Alabama Archaeological Society has local chapters all over the state that can supply you with information. "Project Archaeology," developed by Alabama's Society for American Archaeology, is designed to educate children in the conservation of archaeological resources. You can also enroll in an archaeology course at your local community college. If you wish to see artifacts and learn more about Alabama's history, you may visit the Anniston Museum of Natural History, the Alabama Museum of Natural History in Tuscaloosa, Moundville Archaeological Park, or any of the state's parks that highlight our heritage. 



Here are large boulders from an old railroad bed with workmen's drill marks.

**Promote and Support the TREASURE Forest Program
Join the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association**

The Alabama TREASURE Forest Association is composed of people who practice TREASURE Forest management, people who encourage others to practice it, and people who believe that management of Alabama's forestlands according to the TREASURE Forest concept is good for both present and future generations.

Membership in the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association is open to certified TREASURE Forest owners (Full Members), any forest landowner who is not certified (Growing Member), and persons, companies, corporations, or organizations that do not own forestland (Associate Member), but want to support and promote the sustainable and wise use of our forest resource for present and future generations.

Yes, I would like to join the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Telephone: (_____) _____

Check each category and fill in the blanks as appropriate:

- Associate Member
 - Enclosed is \$15 annual membership fee
 - Growing Member
 - Enclosed is \$20 annual membership fee
 - Full Member
 - Enclosed is \$25 annual membership fee
- primary objective _____
- secondary objective _____

Mail to: Alabama TREASURE Forest Association, P.O. Box 145, Chunchula, AL 36521

For more information about the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association contact James Malone, Executive Director, at (334) 679-6087.

Contacts for Information

State Historic Preservation Office
Alabama Historical Commission
468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, AL 36120-0900

Alabama Indian Affairs Commission
No. 1 Court Square, Suite 106
Montgomery, AL 36104

Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 311
Auburn, AL 36830-0311

Do You Need a Burning Permit?

by DOUGLAS A. SMITH, Deputy Director, Forest Programs Division, Alabama Forestry Commission

Most landowners are aware that they must obtain a burning permit before doing any outdoor burning related to agriculture. This statute is Section 9-13-11 found in Title 9 of the **1975 Code of Alabama**. This statute includes the felony fire laws, commonly known as arson; the misdemeanor fire laws associated with taking reasonable precaution; damaging or removing any type of fire warning; and the requirement for obtaining a burning permit.

Requirements

Permits may be obtained from an Alabama Forestry Commission Operations Center (counties and associated phone numbers are listed in the box on this page). Permits are generally issued on the day of the burn and only for the day of the burn. A verbal authorization from the Forestry Commission produces a permit number unique to each authorized burn.

The statute defines areas requiring a burning permit as "(6) - any new ground, field, grasslands, or woodlands." The statute continues by describing the requirements and details for obtaining a permit. The Forestry Commission will not deny any request for a permit unless the state forester has declared a "fire alert" for that area of the state due to dangerous conditions, or if the requesting party fails to meet the requirements stated in the statute. Those requirements are adequate resources to control the fire, someone attending the fire during the entire burning period and an understanding that the party requesting the permit is responsible for keeping the fire confined.

When requesting a permit, it is helpful if the requesting party calls the Operations Center responsible for the area to be burned and have available the section, township and range of the property. The Commission will also ask for the name of the person who will be responsible for the burn.

Burning permits may be revoked if it is discovered that the requesting party did not meet or no longer meets the requirements necessary to obtain a permit. Permits may also be canceled if weather conditions develop that may result in erratic fire behavior. In either case the Commission will notify the permitted party of any action.

Exception

The law requires a permit for all sizes of burns. However, the Commission developed an administrative procedure stating that some burns do not require a permit. They are those less than 1/4 acre in size and more than 25 feet from other vegetative material such as woodlands or grasslands. This allows a person to burn a small garden spot or a pile of brush and leaves without a permit. There are many of these types of burns and this procedure greatly reduces the administrative burden upon the Commission and action by the burner. Yet this in no way absolves the burner of responsibility for the fire in case it should escape or the smoke should cause harm to others.

Other Jurisdictions

Burning within a city limits or police jurisdiction is often covered by local regulations. The Commission normally yields to those requirements and lets that governmental entity handle outdoor burning. The Forestry Commission can then spend most of its energy being responsible for other lands or burns within the county. Obtaining a Commission burning permit never exempts an individual from complying with other laws or regulations, however.

Additional regulations will become more common in areas of high population growth. Madison and Shelby Counties have, or are actively pursuing, county regulations mostly associated with smoke management of open burning. Each burner should keep abreast of other city, county,

and Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) regulations.

ADEM

ADEM regulations state the following: "Open Burning. No person shall ignite, cause to be ignited, permit to be ignited, or maintain any open fire except as follows: (1) cooking; (2) recreation/ ceremony; (3) abatement of fire hazard; (4) prevention/control of disease or pests; (5) training firefighters; (6) disposal of dangerous material as authorized by the ADEM director; (7) **Fires set for recognized agricultural, silvicultural, range, and wildlife management practices**; (8) salamander fires for warming construction workers; (9) clearing rights-of-way; (10) those approved by the director."

Number seven above involves the area associated with fires permitted by the Commission. When requesting a burning permit you will be asked if your burn is for fuel reduction, wildlife, hardwood control or other similar forestry/agricultural purpose. This serves more than one purpose. It gives the Commission statistics that help in planning and organizing. Also, it prevents the Commission from mistakenly issuing a permit for unauthorized burns such as for vehicle tires, oils, asphalt, rubber, plastic or refuse. Persons requesting agriculture/forestry burning permits should be aware that the area to be burned must not contain any of these materials.

(Continued on page 27)

Burn Permit Phone Numbers

Phone #	Counties
1-800-942-3107	Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Marion & Morgan
1-800-452-5923	Bibb, Fayette, Lamar, Pickens & Tuscaloosa
1-800-292-6653	Cullman, Jefferson, Shelby, Walker & Winston
1-800-572-2017	Blount, Calhoun, Cherokee, DeKalb, Etowah, Jackson, Madison & Marshall
1-800-492-3711	Chambers, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Randolph, St. Clair, Talladega & Tallapoosa
1-800-392-5679	Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Elmore, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery & Russell
1-800-922-7688	Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston & Pike
1-800-672-3076	Baldwin, Conecuh, Escambia & Monroe
1-800-672-6912	Choctaw, Clarke, Mobile & Washington
1-800-242-2504	Autauga, Chilton, Dallas, Greene, Hale, Marengo, Perry, Sumter & Wilcox

What Part Does Soil Play in Your Plan?

by JULIE A. BEST, Public Affairs Specialist, Southeastern Coastal Plain and Caribbean Area Soil Survey Region, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Auburn, AL

Soil is just plain dirt to many people — it's the substance that you attempt to keep out of your house and onto the bank out back. Soil is, however, more than a nuisance. As the natural medium for the growth of land plants and the support for buildings and roads, it is a coveted natural resource.

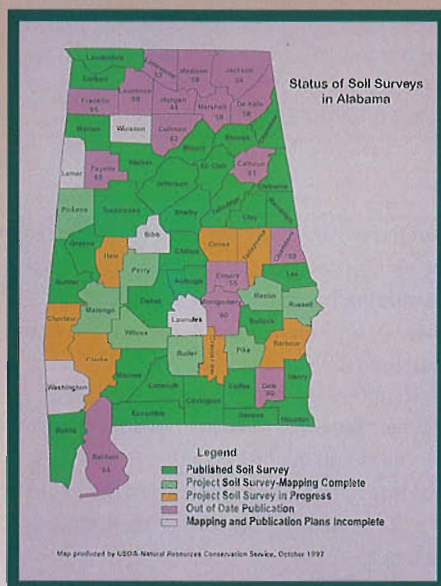
In 1899, the United States Soil Survey was initiated to get a complete inventory of the soil of the nation and to learn as much as possible about soil. The survey began as an aid to farmers who needed to homestead on soils that would produce crops. Once located, the farmers needed help in order to decide what crops and what management practices were best suited for the particular kinds of soils on their farms. Since that time, the need for soil data has grown. Today, foresters and land managers use soil data to evaluate sites and engineers use soil data to determine the suitability and limitations of soil for installing pipelines and for constructing roads, buildings, landfills, and recreation areas. Land appraisers use soil data to determine the value of land according to the productivity of the different soils making up the tract. The soil survey, once primarily used as a tool for farmers, has expanded in its uses as the competition for the demands of the soil has increased.

The study of soil is complex. Soil is so intimately associated with the total environment that one has difficulty taking it into a laboratory. All we can do is take samples of its parts into the laboratory and examine them. To interpret the results of the laboratory tests, one must return to the soil outdoors. The soil scientist then integrates the results of the lab with other factors. In this procedure, we obtain useful knowledge for making predictions about a kind of soil through our understanding of its properties and how it functions and through analyses of actual experience in use of the soil.

Information Contained in a Soil Survey

The information we want about soil is usually twofold. We want to know about it in its natural state and then we want to

know how it will respond to treatment and manipulation. When we use soil, we often change it drastically. We plow it, drain it, irrigate it, and fertilize it. We build structures and roads on it. Because of its capacity to absorb and filter liquids and chemicals, we use soil to buffer contamination of groundwater and to clean and purify effluent from sewage systems. As we use the soil, we need to know the properties of the soil in its natural state and how it will respond to management.



The soil survey contributes to our knowledge about soil and gives us the basis for applying to specific tracts of land what we have learned through research and experience. The survey includes research necessary to:

- ▲ Determine the important characteristics of soils.
- ▲ Classify soils into defined types and classificational units.
- ▲ Establish and plot on maps the boundaries among kinds of soil.
- ▲ Correlate and predict the adaptability of soils to various crops, grasses, and trees.
- ▲ Predict the soil behavior, productivity, and estimated yield of crops under defined sets of management practices.

A soil survey is made up of text, tables, illustrations, and maps. In conducting a soil survey, the soil scientist will cover all areas in the county or soil survey area, making test borings and examining the soil to a depth of six feet. The soil is examined for:

- ▲ Texture—the amount of sand, silt, or clay.
- ▲ Drainage—the frequency and duration of wet periods.
- ▲ Reaction—the amount of acidity or alkalinity.
- ▲ Permeability—the movement of water and air through the soil.
- ▲ Erodibility—susceptibility of soil loss by water or wind.
- ▲ Depth—the thickness of the potential rooting zone.

These examinations are made in order to determine and evaluate the important characteristics of the entire soil profile. The slope of the soil is measured and recorded along with factors that might affect the suitability of the soil for forest management, wildlife habitat, farming, engineering, building sites, recreation, and other uses. Aerial photographs or topographical quadrangles are used as a base for plotting soil boundaries. The soil scientist identifies the soil, locates its boundaries in the field, and places an identification symbol on the map.

The text portion of the survey includes descriptions of the natural and cultural features of the area surveyed; the characteristics, land use capabilities, management concerns productivity, and predicted long-time effects of management systems for each mapping unit; and the principle factors responsible for soil formation. The finished product, called the Soil Survey Report, provides an acre-by-acre analysis of the soil of the survey area.

The method of classifying soils has changed through the years. The current method, established in 1965, is called soil taxonomy. Soil taxonomy is the national system of soil classification. The purpose of soil taxonomy is to provide a systematic ordering and naming of groups of

soils. This systematic procedure aids soil scientists and others in organizing, understanding, remembering, transferring, and using information about soils.

In Alabama, 90 percent of the land has been mapped. Forty-seven counties have a published soil survey. However, 16 of these surveys were published before adoption of soil taxonomy and will need to be updated. Mapping is complete in eight counties and the manuscripts are in varying stages of publication. A soil survey is in progress for seven counties in the state, leaving five counties in which a survey has not been initiated (see map).

Who Uses Soil Data?

The users of soil data in Alabama vary. The individual landowner is still the main user, and since approximately two-thirds of the state is in forest, foresters and forest landowners are primary users of the data. According to Gary Fortenberry, a TREASURE Forest landowner in Choctaw County, "The value of soil data is in knowing where to begin." It's economically profitable to begin work on the good sites that you manage, then gradually get to all areas. Mr. Fortenberry says, "There is some soil that is so poor it won't even grow rocks." But that does not mean it is worthless land. In the areas identified by soil data as less productive, Mr. Fortenberry often plants buckwheat and hairy vetch and he adds lime to supplement the nutrients. In some cases on a limited basis, he adds topsoil to increase the productivity of these less fertile areas. In other words, you can speed up

the growth of plants by managing the soil that you have. Mr. Fortenberry says, "Some people think all soil is the same in a field, but there can be areas that are not as productive." Mr. Fortenberry uses these less




TREASURE Forest landowner Gary Fortenberry observes the loosened soil surrounding a row of recently planted longleaf pine. The area was site prepared with a 3-in-1 plow, which loosens the soil structure, improving water infiltration, aeration and root growth.

productive areas for wildlife. In these areas, he plants mast-producing trees that are vital to wildlife habitat. "What's wrong with that? A squirrel needs a home and the tree will hold the soil together," says Mr. Fortenberry. He uses soil data to identify the best areas for growing trees for forest products and the less productive areas for wildlife habitat management. In this manner, he is utilizing his land to maximize its potential.

City planners and government agencies are also users of soils data. "We rely quite heavily on the data from soil surveys," says Bill Niemeyer of the Lee County office of the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). According to Mr. Niemeyer, a significant number of subdivisions in many counties of the state utilize on-site sewage systems. Each lot requires a soil investigation. Rick Smith, another Lee County ADPH employee says, "The general soil map has been a valuable tool to me. It gives me an idea of what I need to be aware of in the county. In other words, what am I supposed to be seeing?" "The challenge," according to David Gray, ADPH, "is to get the best information out of a survey." Many building lots are only 15,000 square feet in size. The smallest delineation on many soil surveys ranges from three to five acres. For site-specific information, one must use a combination of the text and tables in order to make determinations.

Soil surveys for public use are made by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), formerly the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), in cooperation with other federal, state, and local agencies. Published surveys are available from local NRCS offices, the county Soil and Water Conservation District Office, and are in many libraries. To request a copy of a soil survey or to get other information about soil, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office. NRCS is listed in telephone directories under "United States Government, Department of Agriculture."

As the population expands, all uses of land and soil become more competitive. In order to make responsible decisions, it is important to know and understand the properties and characteristics of the various soils within an area of management. We then can apply the practices that are best suited for the soil and base decisions on facts and previous experience. Whether you call it dirt, ground, or soil, it is the birthplace for most food and fiber and the support for our homes and other structures. Whatever your plan, be it building your dream home, digging a pond, or managing a forest, soil plays a prominent role. As good stewards of our land, it is imperative that we make prudent use of this important natural resource. To quote Mr. Fortenberry, "There's nothing better you can leave the next generation than good soil. We'll always need food and fiber." 

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Dumping in Alabama

Continued from page 9

are still limited to taking enforcement action on the landowner where the dump is located. This is very unfair to innocent landowners who are not responsible for the dump. New "prima facie" legislation was passed this year to help innocent landowners catch and prosecute illegal dumpers. But unless you find evidence in or on a dump (which is tricky), the landowner is still liable. A broad coalition of forest industry, environmental and landowner groups is exploring new legislation to limit the liability of innocent forest owners.

In the area of cleanup, Alabama still operates in a hodgepodge regulatory and bureaucratic jungle. Currently the two leading state agencies addressing illegal

dumps are ADEM and Public Health. Both groups are severely underfunded and inadequately staffed. Responsibility for dumps varies from agency to agency throughout state government. Other state and local agencies such as the Alabama Forestry Commission, Department of Conservation and County Commissions are making departmental efforts with little or no money and resources. Incredibly, the state of Alabama does not appropriate one cent toward an illegal dump cleanup fund. Because there is no concentrated or coordinated leadership to attack the illegal dump epidemic, the problem is growing.

Are There Solutions?

What are some potential solutions to the problem? Recently, there has been movement toward solving Alabama's ille-

gal dump crisis. Earlier this year Lt. Governor Don Siegleman brought together an illegal dump task force to search for and explore potential solutions. His task force included government agencies as well as business, forestry and environmental interests. In the Alabama Legislature a special joint committee to address illegal tire dumping has been convened by Senator Dwayne Freeman of Huntsville. More and more groups on opposite sides of the political spectrum are now seriously discussing potential solutions.

Illegal garbage dumps are a threat to Alabama's forest owners and our environment. It is the number one private property rights issue facing our state. If we continue not to clean up and prevent the thousands of dumps that litter our landscape, we will not be able to honestly proclaim our state as "Alabama the Beautiful." ♣

Permanent Firelanes Offer Protection and More

Continued from page 14

flow of water and turnouts should extend far enough away from the firelane to ensure that the outflow is dispersed adequately. Mulching with hay is advisable, especially on erosion prone areas.

If streams are encountered in the construction of firelanes, the landowner may wish to put in a permanent stream crossing. Such crossings may utilize culverts, pipe, bridges or rock fords. Best Management

Practices should always be used whenever a firelane approaches a stream regardless of what type firelane is being constructed.

Wildlife also benefits from the construction of permanent firelanes. The edge effect created by the opening for the firelane will serve to provide feeding, nesting and dusting areas for many different species. Both game and nongame species will concentrate in these areas, thereby increasing opportunities for viewing or hunting. All types of wildlife food may be planted in the firelanes, and bird houses, bat boxes, squirrel feeders, turkey feeders, etc. may be

placed along the firelanes as well.

Permanent firelanes tend to improve the aesthetics of a property giving it a neat, well-cared for look. Many landowners use them as an opportunity to plant ornaments or wildflowers along roadways. This in itself can increase the value of the property.

If you own forestland and have thought about wildfire protection, call your county office of the Alabama Forestry Commission. They will be glad to visit and look over your property and help you decide what type firelanes will best serve your individual needs. ♣

New Report Stresses Importance of Nonfederal Forests

Continued from page 15

these rights and responsibilities are exercised by various landowners.

- Federal program goals and objectives should build on the variety of interests and objectives of the many nonfederal forest landowner categories.
- Federal regulatory programs should be designed to reflect public and private rights, responsibilities, and interests in sustained management of nonfederal forests, especially private forests.

Recommendation 7—Exercise federal leadership, counsel and, as appropriate, resources to sustain positive contributions

from U.S. nonfederal forests to the world.

- Federal policies and programs for nonfederal forests should be consistent with international environmental and trade agreements to which the United States is a party.
- Scientific understanding of the role of forests, and nonfederal forests in particular, in mitigating global pollutants and climate change should be advanced by the United States. Monitoring effects of global climate change on nonfederal forests should be continued. ♣

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Do You Need a Burning Permit?

Continued from page 24

Smoke Hazard

Special attention should be given to the management of smoke produced by a permitted fire. Damage or problems from smoke on highways, around hospitals, interfering with aircraft traffic around airports, and other sensitive areas is the liability of the person responsible for the burn. The Commission offers training in smoke management and provides weather information that will affect both the fire and smoke.

For additional information, contact your county office of the Alabama Forestry Commission. ♣

Diverse Natural Wonders

By JENNIFER GREER, Freelance Writer

It's a perfectly still winter morning at Little River Canyon National Preserve in northeast Alabama, the kind of morning that reorders life's priorities.

Catawba rhododendrons dangle at 1,752 feet in the air, their feet clinging to rocky cliffs. A pileated woodpecker calls through the upland forest, sounding like something out of "Jurassic Park." In the background, the thunder of Little River Falls hints of danger—and world class whitewater—down river.

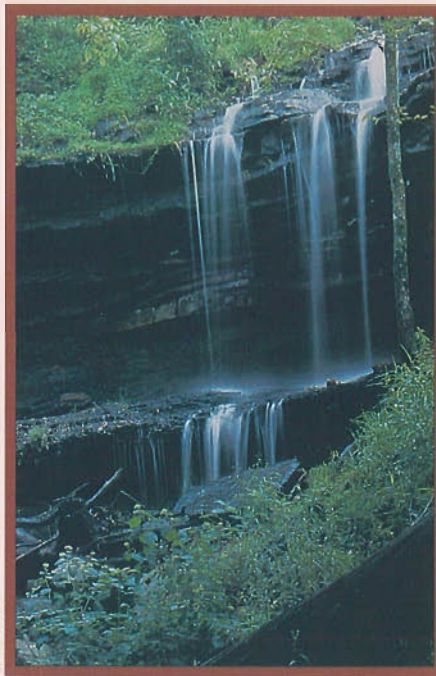
A millennium or so ago, two unruly rivers met atop this flat, alligator-shaped plateau (now known as Lookout Mountain). Fed by winter rains and lured by gravity, the east and west forks of Little River gushed south, until they discovered a secret soft spot in the sandstone rock at Little River Falls. There, over time, they carved "Alabama's Grand Canyon," eventually plunging 45 feet into one of the deepest gorges east of the Rockies.

On a hike around the canyon rim, forest ecologist/geographer Ken Wills stops and looks out over the mixed hardwood pine forest atop the mountain. Here, time is geological, measured in pancake-stacked layers of rock, hidden caves and dizzying bluffs. There are no alarm clocks, daily planners or calendars.

To Wills and others who love the outdoors, there is something liberating about that. "As a child, my family used to come here several times a year. I can remember standing on the edge of the canyon and screaming to hear the echoes off the walls," he recalls, smiling. The canyon he visited as a child had a lasting effect on Wills, a native of nearby Anniston.

He went on to earn a degree in geography and biology at Jacksonville State University, then studied at the University of Alabama, where he earned a degree in physical geography with a specialty in forest ecology. In 1992, he participated in the citizen's effort to get Little River Canyon declared a National Preserve (it was previ-

ously managed by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, with a portion owned by Alabama Power). Most recently, working for the Alabama Environmental Council (AEC), Wills helped identify Little River, the Canyon and the surrounding DeSoto State Park as one of the AEC's first 10 "Natural Wonders of Alabama."



Ed Orth

▲ Monte Sano State Park and Mountain

A Neighborhood Watch for Nature

In addition to Little River, the AEC's other 1997-98 "Natural Wonders" include the following public lands and waters:

- Monte Sano State Park and Mountain
- Bankhead National Forest
- Talladega Mountains
- Cahaba River
- Bartram Trail
- Sipsey River Swamp
- Choctawhatchee River

- Mobile-Tensaw Delta
 - Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge
- "What we are trying to do is highlight some of the best natural wonders in this state, show their importance and educate people about what threatens these places," Wills explains. "We want to raise the awareness of the general public as well as build local coalitions of concerned citizens. It's like a Neighborhood Watch, only it's for a canyon, or a river or a swamp."

All of the places are public places or waters, but some of the waters flow through private property. "In situations like this, a private landowner can make a big difference if he knows how important the ecosystem is to the state in terms of water quality and wildlife habitat. Supporting conservation efforts with forest management plans that include Best Management Practices and a sensitivity to aesthetics or conservation easements are a couple of ways they can add to the buffer area."

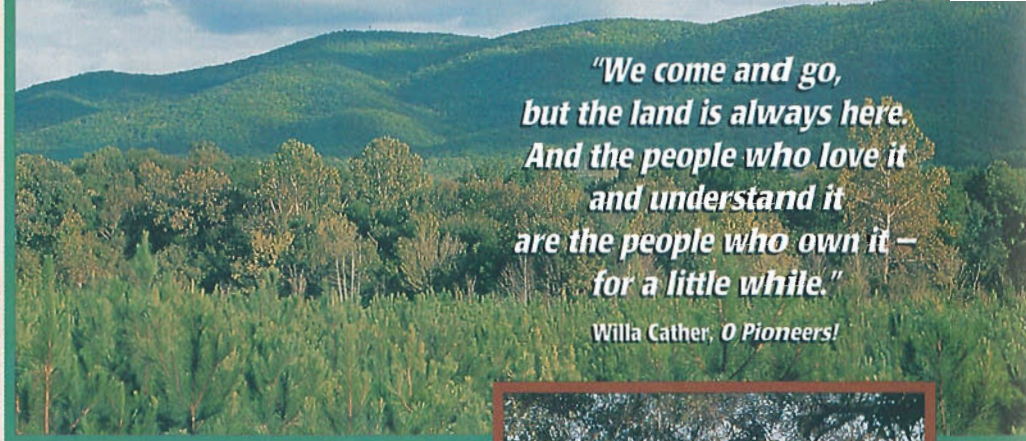
Every Major Forest Type

Several generations ago, when the state's population was rural, most Alabamians knew their landscape. Today, with more than 60 percent of the population urban, fewer people realize how unique Alabama is in its physical and biological diversity. For example, the state has more than six major forest types, with even more remnant forests of other types, says Wills. The Natural Wonders represent them all:

- In Monte Sano State Park near Huntsville you encounter classic Appalachian cove hardwood forest with sugar maples, buckeyes and basswood.
- In the Bankhead National Forest you can find ancient beech-hemlock forest.
- In the Talladega National Forest you'll see mixed hardwood and pine with some rare areas of mountain longleaf (typically a coastal plains species).

- Along the Cahaba River grow mixed hardwood and pine trees with an interesting riparian forest of sycamore, river birch and water oak. The lower Cahaba gives way to bottomland hardwood, cypress and a Blackbelt forest community with prairie plants.
- The Sipsey River Swamp is classic bottomland hardwood in a natural, functioning system.
- Bartram Trail reflects a classic coastal plain forest with longleaf pine, beech and magnolia trees and dwarf needle palm.
- The Choctawhatchee River is bordered by bottomland hardwood, beech and magnolia.
- The Mobile-Tensaw Delta has cypress swamps, bottomland hardwood, swamp tupelo and estuarine forest.
- The Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge has a maritime forest with live oak, magnolia, hardwoods, slash and sand pines and subtropical plants like saw palmetto.

Henrick Snow



*"We come and go,
but the land is always here.
And the people who love it
and understand it
are the people who own it —
for a little while."*

Willa Cather, *O Pioneers!*

▲ **Talladega Mountains**

Ed Orth



▲ **Bartram Trail**

been active in building community support among diverse groups at Monte Sano State Park near Huntsville. It was one of five sites dedicated last year. "We'll do five more next year," she said. "And we take nominations from Alabamians for other future sites to include on the Natural Wonders trail."

Campaign Receiving Support

Already, the AEC's Natural Wonders campaign is receiving broad-based support. Aubrey Miller, director of the Alabama Bureau on Tourism and Travel, says the AEC is right in predicting that eco-tourism is the state's future. "These Natural Wonders are God-given and what we have to do is be good stewards and show people where they are. People will come from far and wide to see them."

Jon Hornsby, environmental coordinator for the Alabama Department of Conservation, agrees. "The Natural Wonders campaign is a great concept. The human soul needs places like this to go and visit in their natural state. Everyone needs to

Ken Willis



▲ **Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge**

be able to escape to a place where there is no influence from man."

Alabama's Natural Wonders can compete with any in the United States, says Malcolm Pierson, senior aquatic biologist for Alabama Power Company and co-author of the newly published book, *Fishes of Alabama*. A member of the Natural Wonders technical committee, Pierson stresses that aquatic diversity is much more than a scientific curiosity. "Take snails and mussels, for example. It's hard to glamorize the bottom creatures, but they play an important role in our river systems. Species like snails and mussels are the first things to be affected when you have water quality problems. Fish are more mobile. Alabama's aquatic diversity is a good indication of the overall health of the waters. That's not to say they don't have pressure on them. That's why we need programs like Natural Wonders."

A Public Environmental Ethic

In January 1997, after two years of research and planning, the AEC launched its "natural heritage revival" to put these attractions on the map. "Alabama deserves far greater recognition for its Natural Wonders, says Pat Byington, AEC's executive director. "Our state ranks first in the nation for having the most diverse physical regions for any state its size. In 10 years, we hope to see our Natural Wonders respected and cared for like historical monuments, such as the state Capitol."

The effort is more than a tourism promotion, adds the AEC's Natural Wonders Coordinator Danielle Dunbar. Through a three-part process of promotion, education and community organizing, the AEC hopes to change the way Alabamians look at the natural world around them.

"We are trying to create an environmental ethic," explains Dunbar. "The first step is awareness. The second step is experience. People go to those places and get the feeling of a place for themselves. When they get a feel of it, they care about what is going to happen to the area. They care about its future. And if they are organized into a team, they represent a much greater force for protecting that site."

Dunbar, an environmental science graduate from Auburn University, has


The Natural Heart of Dixie

Some experts predict that the population of the South will double in the next 25 years if growth continues at its present rate. Katherine Flynn, a wetlands ecologist in the Auburn University School of Forestry, also serves on the Natural Wonders technical committee. As the population grows, says Flynn, Alabamians can't afford to take its Natural Wonders for granted.

"One of the biggest threats is development, because that type of habitat destruc-

tion is permanent... As pressures increase, these types of places will become even more special. I think the Natural Wonders campaign will help make people aware that we have places to be proud of. People who never actually see the Natural Wonders will be more comfortable knowing they are there and that they are protected. If they have a chance to visit them, they will be even happier," says Flynn.

Indeed, if the Natural Wonders campaign succeeds, Alabama will one day be

as famous for its forests, canyons, and rivers as it is for football, barbecue and Hank Williams, concludes the AEC's Byington: "Once you take a good look at our geographic and biological diversity, you begin to realize that everything flows through Alabama. Everything touches us. We are the natural Heart of Dixie." 

Editor's Note: Jennifer Greer is a Harpersville-based freelance journalist who writes about natural resources.

A Look at Alabama's Natural Wonders

Little River and the Canyon

- An Outstanding National Resource Water; source of Alabama's most beautiful waterfalls.
- Supported Paleo Indians as early as 12,000 B.C.
- Hosts an array of hardwoods such as oak, hickory, blackgum, yellow poplar, American beech, dogwood, sassafras, sourwood, and huckleberry, plus wild azalea, mountain laurel and the incredibly beautiful Catawba rhododendron.
- Supports many temperate zone birds and neotropical migrants
- Home to the blue shiner, a small metallic blue fish that is federally endangered.

Monte Sano State Park and Mountain

- Its name comes from Latin, meaning Mountain of Good Health. Historically a resort area, Monte Sano now offers numerous hiking trails, old-growth forest and spectacular scenery.
- Home to significant wildflowers, including trout lily, bent trillium and shooting star.
- Slopes of limestone contain shallow caves along many trails
- Forest ranges from Eastern redcedar, shagbark hickory and chinquapin oak to northern species uncommon in Alabama—yellow buckeye, sugar maple and white basswood.
- Hosts neo-tropical migrants, such as the hooded warbler, oven-bird, tanager and vireo.

Bankhead National Forest

- Its 180,000 acres stretch across the Appalachian Plateau where the Creek, Cherokee and Chickasaw once hunted and lived.
- Its Sipsey Wilderness spans 26,000 acres and is drained by the Sipsey River, a nationally designated Wild and Scenic River.
- Its wilderness contains one of the state's largest trees, the state champion yellow poplar, which has a 22-foot girth.
- It includes trickling streams, cove hardwood, an extraordinary diversity of wildflowers, plus hemlock and beech forests not found in many other parts of Alabama.
- The forest attracts dozens of different warblers and its cool gorges support many rare and interesting plants, including mountain and silky wild camellias, bigleaf and umbrella magnolias, yellow lady's slippers, the threatened streak-sorus fern and many trilliums.

Sipsey River Swamp

- Gives life to an estimated 50,000 acres of bottomland hardwood wetlands, and one of the state's largest wetlands.

- Contains ancient cypress trees and curious oxbow lakes.
- Flooded lowlands contain tupelo-bald cypress swamps that are home to muskrat, beaver, wood duck, heron, white ibis, Mississippi kite and the rare Swainson's warbler.
- The seasonally flooded lands support bottomland hardwoods like overcup oak and provide habitat for gray fox, wild turkey and other wildlife.
- A public wetland conservation area has been established by the Alabama Department of Transportation.

Cahaba River

- Arises from the foothills of the Appalachians and passes through at least three different geological zones before it meets the Alabama River in the state's prairie region.
- Is one of the state's last free-flowing rivers and the most biologically rich river of its size in North America.
- Its bird life includes the Louisiana waterthrush, the yellow-throated warbler, northern parula warbler, Acadian flycatcher, great blue heron, pileated woodpecker, and an occasional wood duck.
- Its aquatic life includes 131 different species of fish (more species per mile than any river its size in North America) and freshwater mussels and aquatic insects found nowhere else in the world.
- It also boasts the threatened Cahaba lily, which blooms each May, and the rare Alabama croton.

Talladega Mountains

- Much of the mountain chain lies within the Talladega National Forest, Cheaha State Park, and the Cheaha National Wilderness.
- The mountains include Alabama's two highest peaks: Cheaha (2,407 feet) and Dugger Mountain (2,140 feet), the latter being the most recently proposed wilderness area in Alabama.
- Cheaha lies in a region physically similar to the Blue Ridge Mountains with its oak-hickory-pine forest giving it a character similar to Shenandoah National Park.
- Dugger supports more than 130 species of birds, 82 species of fish and a variety of mammals, including beaver, raccoon, fox, skunk, mink, muskrat and weasel.
- The mountains also contain longleaf pine on the northern end of its range.
- Mountain-chain flora includes ladies' tresses orchid, Carolina lily, Indian pink, cardinal flower, club moss, Indian pipe, chain fern, Catesby's trillium, trumpet honeysuckle, royal fern, bloodroot and crane-fly orchid.

Bartram Trail

- Named for the naturalist-explorer of the 1770s, William Bartram, who followed old Indian trails throughout the South and recorded the flora and fauna of the region.
- The 8.5-mile recreational trail in the Tuskegee Nation-

al Forest near Bartram's actual route commemorates his travels to the Montgomery area.

- The forest lies atop a transitional region called the Fall-Line Hills. It separates the high elevations of the Appalachians and the low landscapes of the Coastal Plain.
- Contains the increasingly uncommon longleaf pine ecosystem, plus upland hardwood stands, stream valleys with wetlands species, spruce pine and the subtropical needle palm.

Choctawhatchee River

- Located near Dothan and Ozark, it's one of the longest free-flowing rivers in Alabama at 170 miles in length, emptying into the Gulf of Mexico.
- The river is surrounded by high embankments and low-lying wetlands.
- The bluffs create habitat for pine, mixed beech-magnolia forests and the wetlands contain a variety of bottomland hardwoods and bald cypress.
- Home to healthy sturgeon populations, alligators, beaver, muskrat, raccoons, deer and water birds.

Mobile-Tensaw Delta

- Is the nation's second largest river delta (at approximately 10 miles wide and 40 miles long) and is the state's largest wetland (at about 250,000 acres).
- Where the waters of the Coosa, Tallapoosa, Black Warrior, Tombigbee, and the Alabama River systems converge, the delta filters roughly 15 percent of the nation's fresh water.
- Home to the state's largest population of alligators and provides habitat for black bears, the rare red-bellied turtle, herons, kites, owls, warblers, water snakes and game fish.
- Contains an array of plant life ranging from the ancient pygmy cypress to enchanting swamp lilies.
- Is a National Natural Landmark targeted for preservation under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge

- An example of Alabama's original seashore, Bon Secour is comprised of more than 6,000 acres.
- Hosts several ecosystems including bay waters, salt marshes, pond cypress swamps, and the dune system.
- Home to slash pine, dwarf evergreen oaks, rare sand pine, sawgrass, sea oats, and live oaks complete with Spanish moss.
- Provides habitat for the almost invisible cricket frog, endangered Alabama beach mouse, American alligator, the peregrine falcon (during migration), migrating songbirds, fresh-water fish and salt-water fish.
- Is often the first available landfall for migrating songbirds returning from Central and South America.

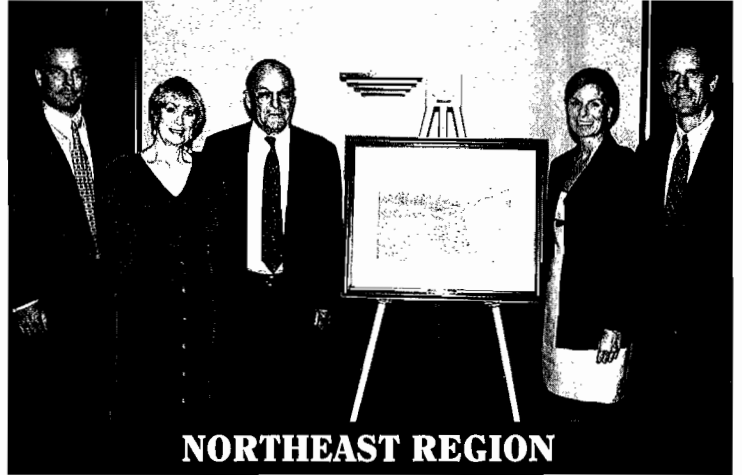
14th Annual Alabama Landowner and TREASURE Forest Conference

Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award Winners



NORTHWEST REGION

McGiffert Farm, Tuscaloosa County
Pictured is the McGiffert family



NORTHEAST REGION

Jack McQuinn, Jackson County
Pictured is the McQuinn family



SOUTHWEST REGION

Carolyn and Robert Brown, Washington County



SOUTHEAST REGION

Barney and Edna King, Crenshaw County

County Forestry Planning Committee Award Winners

Outstanding Forestry Planning Committee

State Winner—Lamar County
First Runner-up—Butler County
Second Runner-up—Talladega County

Masters Award (Tie)

Mobile County
Monroe County

Natural Resources Education Special Project Award

First Place—Butler County,
Natural Resources Youth Camp
Second Place—Mobile County,
Trees 'N Us Youth Program

TREASURE Forest Special Project Award

First Place—Pike County,
Landowner Tour
Second Place—Fayette and Lamar
Counties, *Joint TREASURE Forest
Field Day*

Alabama Prescribed Burning Law Nationally Recognized

The National Woodland Owners Association (NWOA) has recognized Alabama's prescribed burning law as the best **new** forestry law in the United States for 1996. The award was presented to State Forester Timothy C.



State Forester Timothy C. Boyce, left, accepts the new forestry law award from Don Girton of the National Woodland Owners Association.

Boyce at the Landowner and TREASURE Forest Conference in October 1997. Presenting the award for the NWOA was Don Girton, Southern Vice President of the organization. Boyce accepted the award on behalf of the Forestry Commission and other organizations that supported implementation of the law.

In their announcement of the winner, NWOA President Keith Argow noted, "In the South, prescribed burning of woodlands has long been practiced with very good results. However, as more and more people build their homes closer to these managed woodlands, there is fear that these burning practices will do more harm than good. This law protects a landowner's right to follow good forestry practices and provides for certified training under the supervision of the Alabama Forestry Commission." The law went into effect in June 1996.

According to the Alabama Forestry Commission, the primary purpose of the 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 as a Prescribed Burn Manager. Burners must attend training and pass an examination in addition to completing some home study material.

The states of Georgia, Mississippi and Florida have similar certification laws and training. The Alabama law has benefitted from the experiences in neighboring states and earned the support of the forestry and environmental communities.

This was the 12th year NWOA has honored outstanding new legislation affecting private forestry. ♣

LEADERS Program Accepting Applications for Next Class

The Alabama Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Development Program, better known as LEADERS, is soliciting nominations and applications for its Class VII, which begins in late summer 1998. Thirty participants will be chosen for this two-year program for up-and-coming young leadership in the state's food and fiber industry. Applications will be accepted through April 1, 1998.

The program consists of 50 days taken periodically over the two-year period. There are several multi-day sessions held around the state, plus an out-of-state study tour at the end of the first year and an international study tour near the end of the second year. The program's goals are to develop leadership skills and provide a broader understanding of the greater food and fiber industry. Public issues are a central part of the curriculum. Participants get to network with many new contacts and make lifelong friends in the program.

Participants pay a tuition fee, but sponsors help with about half the cost of the program. LEADERS is administered by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and Auburn University's School of Forestry and College of Agriculture with AU's College of Veterinary Medicine, cooperating. It is directed by Dr. Dennis Evans at Auburn.

For an application form, selection criteria, information on tuition, etc., call or write: Evans at 204 Duncan Hall/ACES, Auburn University, AL 36849-5635; phone (334) 844-5552. ♣



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