



*Charlie W. Morgan selected as the State Forester of the Mississippi Forestry Commission. Log on to [www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://www.mfc.state.ms.us) for the full story.*

*Forest damaged by hurricane.*



### **MISSISSIPPI FOREST INVENTORY ASSESSES HURRICANE DAMAGE AND SETS STAGE FOR ANNUAL INVENTORY**

**T**he USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station (SRS), is spearheading an accelerated effort to assess impacts to Mississippi forests resulting from Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. Over the next year, the Station's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) unit, in cooperation with local and state forestry agencies, will conduct the Mississippi forests inventory to determine the extent of hurricane-related forest damage. Data obtained will provide an in-depth picture of the overall health of Mississippi forests and set the stage for the State's annual inventory.

"FIA's inventory will benefit forest land managers working toward short- and long-term recovery and restoration of Mississippi's forests," said Peter J. Roussopoulos, Southern Research Station

Director. The results of this effort will compare current data to the State's last periodic inventory in 1994 and will establish benchmarks allowing researchers to predict and manage future catastrophic events. FIA initiated preliminary post-hurricane work in November 2005 followed by on-the-ground crews in January 2006. Presently, 20 percent of the re-inventory has been completed.

FIA is the South's continuous forest census, projecting how forests are likely to appear 10 to 50 years from now by developing, analyzing, and maintaining annualized forest resource information for the 13 Southern States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. FIA information helps managers to evaluate whether current forest management practices are sustainable over time and assess whether current policies will affect the next generation's enjoyment of America's forests. Annualized inventories began in 1998 and States are added as funding becomes available.

## SOUTHERN STATES COMPLETE BMP PROGRAM REVIEWS

The Southern Group of State Foresters recently completed an unprecedented 3 year process of visiting and reviewing the silviculture Best Management Practices programs of all Southern state forestry agencies. States were visited by teams of two BMP specialists from other southern states and one U.S. Forest Service BMP specialist. These voluntary reviews were commissioned by the Southern Group of State Foresters in 2002 to evaluate the status and consistency of member states' BMP programs, share ideas among states for improving programs, and provide feedback to individual state foresters on strengths and weaknesses of their programs.

Each state was evaluated against a set of program criteria developed by the SGSF Water Resource Committee. Such aspects as staffing levels, program funding, BMP monitoring, complaint resolution procedures, cooperation with external parties, training and more were discussed in detail during indoor and field portions of the three day reviews.

Now that all 13 states have been visited, a report summarizing regional results will be prepared and presented to the SGSF at their June meeting in Puerto Rico. Results will be reported in a future issue of "The Southern Perspective." Contact John Greis at [jgreis@fs.fed.us](mailto:jgreis@fs.fed.us) or 850-309-0764 for more information.

## FUNDING AVAILABLE TO HELP LOGGERS KEEP VIRGINIA WATERS CLEAN

For years, Virginia loggers have had to bear the entire cost of their voluntary compliance with best management practices (BMPs) during timber harvesting operations, but that is about to change.

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) has developed a new cost-share program that will provide up to 50 percent of the actual cost (not to exceed \$2,000) of an approved stream crossing in watershed areas designated as "impaired" or those of "special interest" as defined by the Department of Environmental Quality. If the stream crossing

includes the purchase of a portable bridge, the 50 percent funding level increases to a maximum of up to \$4,000 of the actual cost.

"Virginia is the first state in the nation to offer a cost-sharing program for loggers," said State Forester Carl Garrison. "This program will go a long way toward ensuring the quality of water in the Commonwealth."

Funding for the program comes from the Virginia Water Quality Improvement Fund, which is administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. From now until July 1, 2007, a total of \$250,000 is available. This could fund as many as 125 BMP compliance projects during the next 15 months.

The idea for the pilot program came from Matt Poirot, VDOF's Water Quality Program manager. "For many years, we've asked loggers to comply voluntarily with water quality BMPs," Poirot said. "With the introduction of this cost-share program, the Commonwealth has an opportunity to help loggers do the right thing."

Program eligibility is open to loggers who: 1. Are certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative SHARP Logger program (administered by the Virginia Forestry Association and Virginia Tech); 2. have no current debt for either civil penalties or past-due bills owed to VDOF, and 3. do not have active water quality impairments open on any tracts on which they are operating.

"There are a lot of Virginia loggers who are eligible for this program," said Poirot. "If they are looking for some much-needed financial assistance with water quality compliance, I encourage the loggers to contact their local VDOF water quality engineers and work with the VDOF staff to submit an application."

The Virginia Department of Forestry protects and develops healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians. Headquartered in Charlottesville, there are Forestry staff members assigned to every county to provide service to citizens of the Commonwealth. With nearly 16 million acres of forest land and more than 248,000 Virginians employed in the forest products industry, Virginia forests provide more than \$30 Billion annually in benefits to the Commonwealth.



*For more information, contact John W. Campbell Jr. at 434-220-9070, or log on to [www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov).*



*Portable bridge used to protect water quality.*



For more information, contact Roy Lima, Watershed Forester, Division of Forestry or the Division of Forestry's Hydrology Section at 3125 Conner Blvd., Tallahassee FL 32399-1650, 850-414-9935 or 850-414-9934. Log on to [www.fl-dof.com](http://www.fl-dof.com) for a copy of the report.

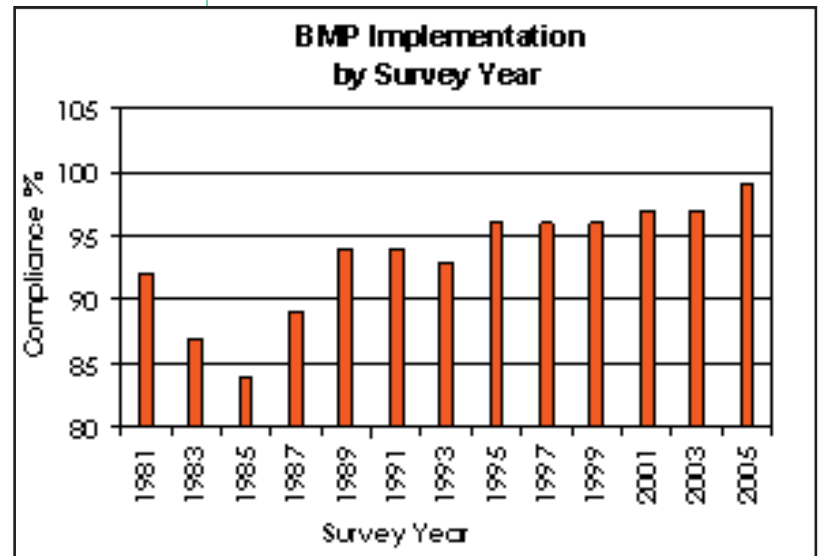
## FLORIDA FORESTRY BMPs – SPANNING 24 YEARS OF SUCCESS

Water quality protection during forestry operations is one of the most important aspects of natural resource sustainability. Research has demonstrated that when silviculture Best Management Practices (BMPs) are implemented, water quality concerns are reduced or eliminated.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services recently published the results of the Division of Forestry's 2005 Silviculture BMP Implementation Survey. The 2005 Survey is the Division's thirteenth and most comprehensive biennial evaluation of forestry operations since BMP monitoring began in 1981.

The Survey, which determines how well Florida forest landowners and loggers are following these important practices, evaluated 4,477 forestry practices on 190 individual forestry operations. This cooperative effort involved public and private forest landowners in 39 Florida counties, and showed 99% compliance with the state's BMPs – the highest level on record.

Twenty-four percent of the 2005 Survey sites were on private non-industrial (PNIF) lands, 63% were on forest industry



lands and 13% were on public lands. Overall BMP implementation on forest industry was 97%, private non-industrial landowners 96%, and public lands 99%.

Limited copies of the BMP Survey report are available by contacting the Division of Forestry at 3125 Conner Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650 or call 850/414-9934. The report is also available on the Division of Forestry website at [www.fl-dof.com](http://www.fl-dof.com)



**SOUTHERN GROUP OF STATE FORESTERS**

If you wish to offer comments about the website or newsletter, contact Mike Zupko, SGSF Executive Director at [sgsfexec@mindspring.com](mailto:sgsfexec@mindspring.com) or 770-267-9630.