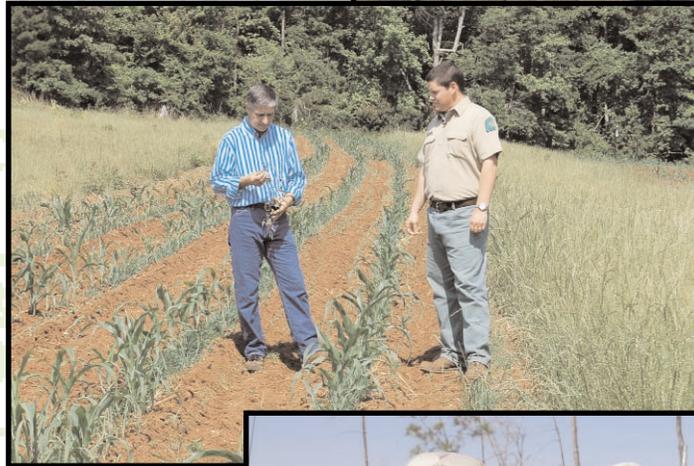


2005-2006



**Alabama  
Forestry  
Commission  
ANNUAL REPORT**



# ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION

October 1, 2006

The Honorable Bob Riley  
Governor, State of Alabama  
600 Dexter Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36130

It is with great pride and pleasure that I report the Alabama Forestry Commission's accomplishments and services to the public in this 2005-2006 annual report.

A prolonged drought in the spring and summer of 2006 contributed to heavy wildfire activity during the fiscal year. Approximately 4,932 wildfires burned 70,069 acres for an average of 14.2 acres per fire. The firefighting efforts of the Alabama Forestry Commission directly protected 1,726 homes, 821 other structures, and 1,122 vehicles from being damaged or destroyed by wildfire. In an effort to help decrease the severity of wildfire, the AFC conducted prescribed burns on approximately 41,501 acres of land and installed 1,321 miles of permanent fire breaks. Commission associates continued to assist the state's 998 rural volunteer fire departments with training, equipment acquisition, and grants. The Commission administers the grant program through legislative appropriations, and this year almost \$1.9 million was distributed among 993 volunteer fire departments. In addition, 50 Wildfire Prevention Grants were awarded totaling over \$106,000.

During the last fiscal year the Commission's professional foresters and technicians implemented approximately 7,000 forest management practice cases on nearly 350,000 acres of private forestland. Another 154,000 landowners were educated about proper forest management in 530 landowner workshops and tours. We prepared 409 TREASURE Forest plans covering 59,537 acres. Forty-three new TREASURE forests were certified totaling 13,755 acres. Currently there are 2,054 landowners in the TREASURE Forest program for 1.9 million acres.

The AFC continues its commitment to attracting and serving minority landowners by implementing programs that will directly assist them with the management of their forestland. Just a few of the programs include Alabama Forestry Camp, landowner education programs, the Outreach Advisory Council, and working with partners such as the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Tuskegee University, and Alabama A&M University.

In the future, much more emphasis will be placed nationally and globally on non-traditional forestry issues such as forest health; carbon credits; invasive species; watersheds and water quality; endangered, threatened, and impaired species; wildlife habitat; and insect and disease control. In the past year we have taken steps to prepare for these changes by employing professional foresters to work in these areas to ensure that Alabama is a leader in these issues. Our southern pine beetle detection, mapping, and landowner notification program continues to be second to none in the nation.

We spent much of the year continuing to assist landowners with hurricane recovery programs. The AFC continued an aggressive fire prevention campaign which resulted in an overall 20% decrease in the number of debris burning fires. In the last fiscal year, the Commission also sent wildland firefighters to Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, and Oregon to assist with firefighting efforts.

I am proud to say that the Alabama Forestry Commission associates have done an outstanding job in their duties. Their names are listed on pages 28 and 29 of this report. The Commission will continue striving to provide the best quality assistance possible to Alabama's citizens. Through knowledge, technology, and training we will ensure healthy forests, abundant wildlife, and clean air and water for all citizens of Alabama. We are Making Alabama a Better Place Through Forestry.

Sincerely,



Timothy C. Boyce  
State Forester

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*Cover photographs courtesy  
of Mike Kyser and Paul Hudgins*



**Bob Riley**  
*Governor of Alabama*

***Board of Commissioners***

**Don Heath, Chairman**  
**Jerry M. Smith, Vice Chairman**  
**Johnny Dennis**  
**Ted DeVos**  
**Gary Fortenberry**  
**Jett Freeman**  
**Jerry Lacey**  
**David Long**  
**Kenneth Real**

**Timothy C. Boyce**  
*State Forester*

**Richard H. Cumbie**  
*Assistant State Forester*

**Jerry Dwyer**  
*Administrative Division Director*

**Wayne Strawbridge**  
*Northwest Regional Forester*

**Stephen May**  
*Fire Division Director*

**Phearthur Moore**  
*Northeast Regional Forester*

**John Pirtle**  
*Management Division Director*

**Bruce Springer**  
*Southeast Regional Forester*

**Gary Cole**  
*Southwest Regional Forester*

*The Alabama Forestry Commission is an equal opportunity employer and provider. In accordance with federal law and Alabama Forestry Commission policy, this agency does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). To file a complaint of program discrimination write to: Alabama Forestry Commission, Title VI Coordinator, PO Box 302550, Montgomery, AL 36130 or call (334) 240-9342.*

# ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

## PERSONNEL

The Alabama Forestry Commission continues to struggle with the impact that budget reductions have caused over the past several years. The budget reductions, along with limited numbers of qualified applicants, have forced this agency to further realign personnel in order to ensure that counties were adequately manned and critical programs were not neglected. Separations and retirements resulted in a loss of 29 Commission associates, reducing our overall staffing to 336 personnel.

Our associates' dedication to protecting the citizens and forest resources of Alabama, along with their commitment to each other's safety, has allowed us to move personnel throughout the state to suppress wildfires. Although moving personnel and equipment is neither efficient nor economical, this commitment is what allows the Commission to continue to meet its obligations in serving the citizens of Alabama.

The 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons placed additional strains on the agency as we responded to the challenges associated with these natural disasters. The two hurricane seasons caused destruction

to the forest resources predominately located in the south and southwestern part of the state. Thousands of downed and damaged trees from these storms will continue to have a dramatic impact on firefighting activities for several more years. The Commission will continue to transfer manpower and equipment within the state to ensure the safety of our associates, and protect the citizens and forest resources of Alabama.

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial records of the Alabama Forestry Commission are maintained in accordance with accepted accounting procedures and conform to state and federal law as defined by the Comptroller, Examiners of Public Accounts, and the USDA Forest Service.

The 2006 Operating Statement on page 7 (Figure 2) was prepared with unaudited data. Also included in this annual report is a Balance Sheet for Fiscal Year 2005-2006, found on page 8 (Figure 3).

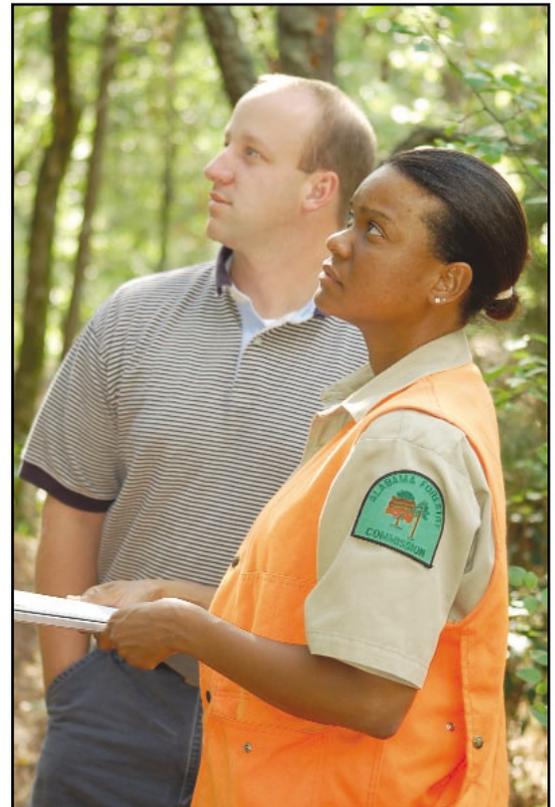


Photo by Michael Kyser

Figure 1

### 2005-2006 Alabama Forestry Commission Personnel

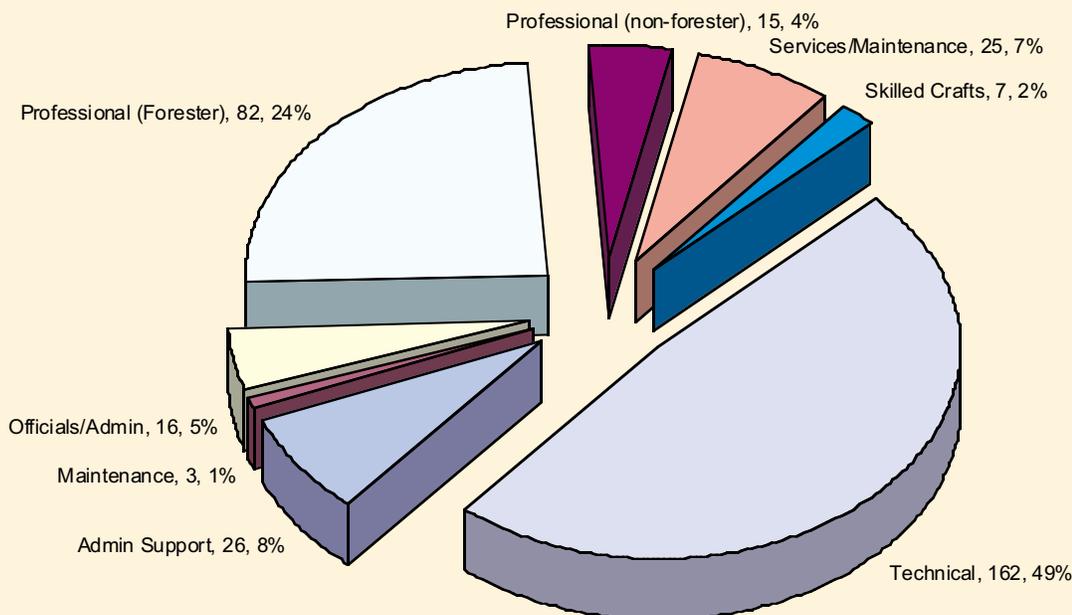


Figure 2

## Alabama Forestry Commission Statement of Operations for Fiscal Years Ending September 30

|                                     | Actual            |                   |                   |                   | FY06 Budget       | Balance           |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                     | FY03              | FY04              | FY05              | FY06              |                   |                   |
| <b>Expenditures</b>                 |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Personnel                           | 13,448,098        | 13,027,129        | 12,427,941        | 13,499,714        | 13,499,715        | 1                 |
| Fringe Benefits                     | 3,637,489         | 3,673,581         | 4,134,666         | 4,520,274         | 4,520,275         | 0                 |
| In-State Travel                     | 228,059           | 122,166           | 142,293           | 205,156           | 205,156           | (0)               |
| Out-of-State Travel                 | 11,283            | 10,109            | 8,393             | 37,065            | 37,065            | (0)               |
| Repairs and Maintenance             | 310,186           | 215,309           | 253,932           | 418,010           | 418,011           | 1                 |
| Rentals and Leases                  | 136,340           | 121,756           | 107,275           | 131,732           | 131,732           | 0                 |
| Utilities and Communications        | 755,420           | 669,070           | 650,909           | 699,549           | 699,549           | (0)               |
| Professional Services               | 508,865           | 389,705           | 399,541           | 653,434           | 653,434           | (0)               |
| Supplies                            | 1,141,551         | 1,070,748         | 934,707           | 1,114,328         | 1,114,328         | (0)               |
| Transportation Operations           | 1,208,236         | 1,143,103         | 1,358,768         | 1,968,626         | 1,968,626         | 0                 |
| Grants and Benefits                 | 3,941,291         | 2,081,216         | 3,496,315         | 11,220,454        | 11,220,454        | 0                 |
| Capital Outlay                      | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 89,999            | 89,999            | (0)               |
| Transportation Equipment            | 50,000            | 0                 | 2,247,321         | 120,000           | 120,000           | 0                 |
| Other Equipment                     | 295,688           | 247,690           | 133,316           | 520,858           | 520,858           | 0                 |
| Excess Available                    | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>           | <b>25,672,505</b> | <b>22,771,582</b> | <b>26,295,377</b> | <b>35,199,198</b> | <b>35,199,201</b> | <b>3</b>          |
| <b>Revenue Budget</b>               |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| <b>AFC Funds:</b>                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Severance Tax                       | 5,184,818         | 5,386,762         | 5,400,544         | 5,310,196         |                   |                   |
| Timber and Turpentine               | 41,970            | 43,098            | 42,817            | 42,033            |                   |                   |
| Fishing Permits                     | 3,454             | 2,335             | 1,454             | 1,136             |                   |                   |
| Fines and Forfeits                  | 3,407             | 8,227             | 3,087             | 7,755             |                   |                   |
| Radio Leases                        | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |                   |                   |
| Oil Royalties                       | 11,128            | 12,568            | 14,281            | 14,020            |                   |                   |
| Insurance Proceeds                  | 0                 | 0                 | 104,866           | 64,552            |                   |                   |
| Miscellaneous                       | 4,724             | 6,665             | 47,577            | 30,765            |                   |                   |
| Prior Year Refunds                  | 13,964            | 24,729            | 120,902           | 10,402            |                   |                   |
| Contract Services                   | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |                   |                   |
| Equipment Sales                     | 44,471            | 37,968            | 36,378            | 65,652            |                   |                   |
| Timber Sales                        | 1,093,377         | 1,289,421         | 206,523           | 49,781            |                   |                   |
| Other Sales                         | 6,650             | 3,503             | 2,000             | 19,529            |                   |                   |
| Seedling Sales                      | 446,878           | 411,401           | 275,763           | 76,035            |                   |                   |
| Donations                           | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |                   |                   |
| Intragovernment Sales               | 12,676            | 23,636            | 83,467            | 24,566            |                   |                   |
| Equipment Rentals                   | 150               | 300               | 473               | 0                 |                   |                   |
| Other Rents                         | 24,939            | 24,049            | 30,670            | 52,153            |                   |                   |
| Plowing Firebreaks                  | 138,540           | 176,614           | 135,541           | 223,472           |                   |                   |
| Prescribed Burning                  | 123,912           | 181,102           | 163,633           | 305,952           |                   |                   |
| <b>AFC Funds</b>                    | <b>7,155,058</b>  | <b>7,632,379</b>  | <b>6,669,976</b>  | <b>6,298,000</b>  | <b>6,298,000</b>  | <b>0</b>          |
| <b>State General Fund</b>           | <b>13,273,934</b> | <b>10,048,065</b> | <b>10,215,811</b> | <b>10,482,769</b> | <b>10,482,769</b> | <b>0</b>          |
| <b>Federal Funds</b>                |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Federal Grants                      | 3,711,591         | 1,995,212         | 10,991,751        | 17,789,133        |                   |                   |
| Federal Agreements                  | 13,977            | 4,343             | 500               | 0                 |                   |                   |
| Federal Reimbursements              | 79,010            | 148,520           | 82,559            | 856,162           |                   |                   |
| Interfund Federal Reimbursements    | 0                 | 0                 | 185,910           | 88,399            |                   |                   |
| <b>Total Federal Funds</b>          | <b>3,804,578</b>  | <b>2,148,075</b>  | <b>11,260,720</b> | <b>18,733,695</b> | <b>18,733,695</b> | <b>0</b>          |
| <b>Local Funds</b>                  |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| County Appropriations               | 271,614           | 203,703           | 129,523           | 277,958           |                   |                   |
| Acreage Assessments                 | 1,810,861         | 1,785,847         | 1,787,263         | 1,765,721         |                   |                   |
| Local Grants                        | 4,291             | 8,500             | 2,303             | 58,000            |                   |                   |
| <b>Total Local Funds</b>            | <b>2,086,766</b>  | <b>1,998,051</b>  | <b>1,919,089</b>  | <b>2,101,679</b>  | <b>2,101,679</b>  | <b>0</b>          |
| <b>Budgetary Transfers In (Out)</b> |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Supplement                          |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Severance Tax—County Share          |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Operating Transfers                 |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Capital Transfers                   | (322,900)         | (178,606)         | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |
| <b>Total Transfers</b>              | <b>(322,900)</b>  | <b>(178,606)</b>  | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>          |
| AFC Balance Forward                 | 1,470,900         | 2,047,060         | 2,069,584         | 1,922,837         | 1,922,837         | 0                 |
| Federal Balance Forward             | 1,954,000         | 1,702,143         | 556,000           | 4,472,965         | 4,472,965         | 0                 |
| Local Balance Forward               |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| <b>Total Forward</b>                | <b>3,424,272</b>  | <b>3,749,203</b>  | <b>2,625,584</b>  | <b>6,395,802</b>  | <b>6,395,802</b>  | <b>0</b>          |
| <b>Total Revenues and Transfers</b> | <b>29,421,708</b> | <b>25,397,166</b> | <b>32,691,179</b> | <b>44,011,945</b> | <b>44,011,945</b> | <b>0</b>          |
| Capital Transfers                   | 322,900           | 178,606           | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |
| Capital Outlay                      | 177,686           | 31,065            | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |
| Unallotted Capital Transfers        |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Reserve for Capital Outlay          | 145,214           | 147,541           | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 |
| <b>Agency Funds Available</b>       | <b>29,744,608</b> | <b>25,575,772</b> | <b>32,691,179</b> | <b>44,011,945</b> | <b>44,011,945</b> | <b>44,011,945</b> |
| Agency Expended and Reserved        | 25,995,405        | 22,950,188        | 26,295,377        | 35,199,198        | 35,199,200        | 3                 |
| <b>Ending Cash Balance</b>          | <b>3,749,203</b>  | <b>2,625,584</b>  | <b>6,395,802</b>  | <b>8,812,746</b>  | <b>8,812,743</b>  | <b>3</b>          |

Figure 3

**Alabama Forestry Commission  
Fund Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2006**

|                                     | AFC Operations<br>Fund | Emergency<br>Fund | County Taxes<br>Fund |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Cash                                | 10,498,773.59          | 95,778.29         | 21,296.43            |
| Accounts Receivable                 | 15,899.88              |                   |                      |
| Due from Other Funds                |                        |                   |                      |
| Advance Travel                      |                        |                   |                      |
| <b>Assets</b>                       | <b>10,514,673.47</b>   | <b>95,778.29</b>  | <b>21,296.43</b>     |
| Vouchers Payable                    |                        |                   |                      |
| Seedling Sale Deposits              |                        |                   |                      |
| Due to Other Funds                  |                        |                   |                      |
| Due to Other Governments            |                        |                   |                      |
| Clay County                         |                        |                   | 10,829.38            |
| Henry County                        |                        |                   | .02                  |
| Limestone County                    |                        |                   | 0.00                 |
| Randolph County                     |                        |                   | 0.12                 |
| Blount County                       |                        |                   | 10,466.91            |
| Deferred Revenue:                   |                        |                   |                      |
| Federal Funds                       |                        |                   |                      |
| Local Funds                         |                        |                   |                      |
| Due to Employees                    |                        |                   |                      |
| Taxes Payable                       | 46.46                  |                   |                      |
| Prepaid Reservations                | 3,566.70               |                   |                      |
| Accounts Payable                    |                        |                   |                      |
| Receipts Pending Disbursement       |                        |                   |                      |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                  | <b>3,613.16</b>        | <b>0.00</b>       | <b>21,296.43</b>     |
| Reserve for Pre-Encumbrances        |                        |                   |                      |
| Reserve for Encumbrances            | 615,797.16             |                   |                      |
| Reserve for Capital Outlay          |                        |                   |                      |
| FY 00                               | 422,943.15             |                   |                      |
| FY 01                               | 141,493.07             |                   |                      |
| FY 02                               | 225,325.17             |                   |                      |
| FY 03                               | 145,214.41             |                   |                      |
| FY 04                               | 147,541.01             |                   |                      |
| FY 05                               |                        |                   |                      |
| FY 06                               |                        |                   |                      |
| Unallotted Capital Transfers        |                        |                   |                      |
| Reserved Fund Balance               | 1,698,313.97           | 0.00              | 0.00                 |
| Unreserved Fund Balance             | 8,812,746.34           | 95,778.29         | 0.00                 |
| <b>Liabilities and Fund Balance</b> | <b>10,514,673.47</b>   | <b>95,778.29</b>  | <b>21,296.43</b>     |

# FIRE DIVISION

Photo by Gib Burke



*In FY 2006, about 4,932 wildfires burned approximately 70,069 acres. Pictured here, the Seminole-Lillian Fire in Baldwin County consumed 1,846 acres before it was finally contained.*

## FIRE SUPPRESSION

- FY2006 was a heavy fire season for Alabama.
- About 4,932 wildfires burned 70,069 acres.
- Average size fire was 14.2 acres.
- Wildfires destroyed or damaged 45 houses, 182 outbuildings, 196 vehicles, and 1,128 large hay bales.
- The efforts of the Alabama Forestry Commission resulted in the direct protection from wildfire of 1,726 homes, 821 other structures, 1,122 vehicles, and 1,853 large hay bales.
- A prolonged drought in the spring and summer of 2006 was the primary cause of the increase in fire numbers. In addition, the drought led to an increase in the number of wildfires caused by lightning.
- During FY 2006, the two largest causes of wildfires in Alabama were arson (57%) and debris burning (20% – a significant drop from about 40% in previous years). Lightning caused 8% of wildfires (compared to a normal impact of 1%).

## HAZARD MITIGATION

The Commission completed about 41,501 acres of prescribed burning across the state. Total prescribed burning (including AFC, private landowners and contractors) involved 21,135 burns on 945,157 acres. This is about average for Alabama (which is normally 28,000 burns on 900,000 acres).

In an effort to increase prescribed burning in the state, the Commission presented a series of six workshops this year on Prescribed Burn Planning and Fuels Management. Over 200 Prescribed Burn Managers across the state attended these workshops.

## HURRICANE RECOVERY

Hurricane Ivan damaged the forest on nearly half of Alabama's land base in late 2004. This was followed by Hurricanes Dennis and Katrina in 2006, which added to the total wind damage. The AFC, working through a series of federal grants, assisted those Alabama landowners hurt by the hurricanes to better protect their property from wildfires. An aggressive fire prevention campaign was

run in South Alabama including over 10,250 radio announcements; 42,000 fire prevention flyers; and two door-to-door campaigns in high fire-prone areas. This effort was effective in lowering the percent of wildfires caused by careless debris burning.

The AFC also enhanced its detection and communication programs in the southern half of the state, again using federal funding. This included an additional 300 fire detection over-flights by contract pilots and the replacement of 42 Commission radios.

The Commission trained 75 volunteer fire fighters in wildland fire fighting tactics and safety, enabling them to better handle any fire situation.

## RURAL COMMUNITY FIRE PROTECTION (RCFP)

The Rural Community Fire Protection Steering (RCFP) Committee, created under Alabama law and composed of 25 volunteer firefighters from the four Commission regions, monitors all appropriations for the volunteer fire service funded by the Alabama legislature through the Commission's budget and provides recommendations to the State Forester for the distribution of these funds. The RCFP Committee also monitors the RCFP radio system and makes recommendations on upgrades.

The Commission assisted over 998 volunteer fire departments over the past twelve months by implementing several beneficial programs.

- Assisted in forming two new departments in areas where fire protection was needed.
- Provided a state contract to assist fire departments in the purchase of over 100 items in equipment and firefighter clothing.
- Administered \$1,891,939 in grant monies, which amounted to over \$1,900 for each department when divided equally among 993 qualifying volunteer fire departments.
- Worked closely with county and district fire associations by providing information and grants.

- Compiled, updated, and printed a roster of over 33,000 firefighters eligible to purchase a distinctive firefighter license plate. Provided this directory to all county license commissioners and probate judges.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The AFC operates and maintains two complete radio systems and 200 tower sites.

Commission personnel use the VHF system statewide for routine communication and fire prevention and suppression operations. It consists of mobile radios, handheld radios, repeaters, and control stations.

The UHF radio system, containing over 155 mobile repeaters and 50 control stations, is provided for the volunteer fire service at no charge. The AFC provides maintenance on these repeaters 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Within this UHF system, 785 volunteer fire departments own and maintain over 6000 radios (mobiles, portables, and pagers).

During the past year, several counties received a Homeland Security grant to improve their communication system. These counties contracted with the Commission to do the upgrade. In Coffee

County, a repeater was added to the southern part of the county. In Calhoun County, a complete redesign was necessary. One complete new repeater was required and three repeaters were relocated, plus an upgrade for the dispatch center. Dale County required one new repeater and the relocation of two repeaters. In Perry County, three new repeaters were required to give the fire fighters countywide coverage. Sumter County was notified that their grant was approved, and the AFC Communications Section is currently working on plans to upgrade this system.

## FEDERAL EXCESS PROPERTY PROGRAM (FEPP)

The Commission is responsible for obtaining federal excess property for wildland fire suppression use through the USDA Forest Service and the General Service Administration (GSA). This excess property is obtained from military installations through two programs. In the Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) program, the property is considered on loan and must be tracked and accounted for "from cradle to grave." When this property is no longer of use, it is sold at auction and the proceeds are

returned to the GSA. The second program is the Firefighter Property Program (FPP) which allows the AFC to obtain property, and once obtained it becomes state property that can be transferred directly to a volunteer fire department.

Any fire department that receives property through either of these two programs must sign a Memorandum of Agreement defining the guidelines for the property.

Total items acquired from both programs during Fiscal Year 2006 was 16 trucks valued at \$248,007.

## CENTRAL SHOP

The AFC operates an equipment repair shop that is located near Autaugaville. The shop staff consists of two mechanics (one part-time), two inmate workers, a supervisor, and one mechanic slot not filled at this time. The shop makes repairs to Commission trucks, tractors, and cars. The staff also inspects Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) as it is received, and makes repairs as needed to ensure that it is in safe operating condition before being issued to volunteer fire departments. Shop activity for FY2006 is summarized below:

- Repaired 83 transport trucks, pickups, and cars;
- Repaired 13 FEPP vehicles;
- Filled 28 FEPP parts requests;
- Assisted with disposal of 250 items to the state sale lot.

## SAFETY

The Commission strives to put safety first in everything, the safety program being the responsibility of the Fire Division. Many of the activities in which Commission associates engage are inherently dangerous such as fire fighting, operation of bulldozers, chainsaws, all-terrain-vehicles, etc. In spite of these dangers, the AFC continues to maintain an excellent safety record. This outstanding record is the result of training, safety equipment requirements, and an accident investigation program.

For Fiscal Year 2006, there were 16 reportable accidents: 4 personal and 12 vehicular. All accidents were investigated, with six being classified as avoidable and ten determined unavoidable.

Photo by John Pirtle



*The Alabama Forestry Commission completed about 41,501 acres of prescribed burning across the state during FY 2006.*

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

By the end of FY2006, the AFC had 35 law enforcement officers, down from 40 in 2005. Four of these officers are dedicated strictly to law enforcement; the remainder have both forestry and fire control responsibilities in addition to enforcement.

This year one new officer was commissioned, Chris Mead, Manager of Geneva State Forest, who attended Minimum Standards Training. Due to increased use of the state forest and incidents that have happened there, a need was determined for a full-time law enforcement officer at the park.

Lead investigator Tony Chandler and other AFC officers were involved in a sting operation in conjunction with International Paper that resulted in the arrest of eight individuals. Each was charged with two felony counts, and seven logging trucks were seized. The cases have not gone to court at this time.

AFC officers spent 7,000 hours on law enforcement actions and handled one formal investigation during FY 2006. They made 46 arrests and issued 71 unlawful burning notices, with 159 ongoing investigations. A total of 71 additional investigations were transferred to civil actions. AFC enforcement actions resulted in \$138,400 being paid to landowners and state agencies in fines, court costs, restitutions, suppression charges, rewards, and civil penalties.

## WILDLAND/URBAN INTERFACE AND FIRE PREVENTION

The Commission takes a proactive role in informing and educating the public about the responsibilities of fire prevention in the wildland/urban interface. To promote these efforts, there are now two associates dedicated to the program areas of Wildland/Urban Interface and Wildland Fire Prevention. These pro-

grams are funded in part by grants from the National Fire Plan.

The AFC continued to work in 2006 with the Alabama Association of Volunteer Fire Departments (AAVFD) in providing Wildfire Prevention Grants to volunteer fire departments. The primary intent of this program is to assist the state's volunteer fire departments in the development of wildland fire prevention



Photo by Jason Barrett

programs for their coverage areas. A total of 50 grants totaling \$106,251 were issued.

Alabama was one of only three states in the nation to be selected to participate in the Firewise Communities Grassroots Outreach Project. The Alabama Forestry Commission contracted the project with the CAWACO Resource Conservation & Development Council in Birmingham to develop an organized outreach initiative at the grassroots level in Walker, Jefferson, and Shelby Counties to (1) educate homeowners living within the wildland urban interface of proactive steps that they could take on their own to reduce their vulnerability to wildland fires, (2) motivate these homeowners to take action in making these changes, and (3) identify and enlist influential local professionals and community members to encourage others to learn more about the Firewise Communities program. The project was completed in the summer of 2006.

Ten volunteer fire departments in the three counties participated in the project

by (1) coordinating one community Firewise presentation (2) performing ten site evaluations of homes for residents living in high wildfire risk areas, and (3) distributing Firewise information to local decision makers including county commissioners, developers, real estate agents, insurance agents, community planners, and high-risk residents, etc. Nine of the ten fire departments received \$1,000

each from the CAWACO RC&D Council for their work with the project. As a result, 307 people attended the community presentations and 95 Firewise home assessments were performed. In addition, 90 local decision makers were contacted and over 8,000 citizens were exposed to the Firewise program through other public events.

A Firewise booth, which included the

USDA Forest Service's "Living on the Wild Side" fire awareness display, was set up at the following high traffic events in Jefferson County:

- Earth Day at the Gardens;
- Samford University Earth Day;
- Congressman Spencer Bachus' Grant and Funding Resource Conference.

The Commission also continued to work in partnership with the Wildland/Urban Interface Advisory Council of Southwest Alabama. This organization provided local leadership, education activates, and training for wildland urban interface issues in the Mobile and Baldwin county areas.

Alabama was the host state for the week-long Wildland/Urban Interface – Fire Prevention Exchange Workshop in February 2006. Thirteen states from across the south participated in the workshop along with the USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, Southern Group of State Foresters, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and others.

# MANAGEMENT DIVISION

## FOREST MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE

The forests of Alabama provide valuable economic, recreational, environmental, and social resources to every Alabama citizen. They provide the most efficient natural filtration system, shade, and stream bank protection available to ensure clean water. They also provide an abundant habitat for Alabama's diverse population of plants and animals, including threatened and endangered species. Recreational opportunities for the hiker, biker, camper, birdwatcher, hunter, and many other outdoor enthusiasts are added benefits provided by good stewardship of Alabama's healthy forests.

Forestry is extremely important to the economic stability of Alabama with over 50,000 people employed directly and another 70,000 employed indirectly in the industry, representing about 15% of the state's workforce. It is the second largest agricultural industry in Alabama with an annual payroll of over \$2 billion. Of the 22.9 million acres of commercial forestland, 82% is owned by private, non-industrial landowners. Last year, over 77% of the harvested timber came from these lands; therefore, it is extremely important that they be properly managed.

Although no new hurricanes impacted Alabama in 2006, we endured a "50 Year" drought that further stressed our forests, causing new forest health issues and a banner wildfire season. Our pilots

recorded widespread spots of Ips engraver beetles and a year-end increase in southern pine beetle infestations. All our associates are to be commended for continuing to provide a wide array of forest management services and managing to keep wildfires in check with minimal damage to people, forests, and property. In addition, our county managers and regional personnel were tasked with implementing many new cost share programs targeted at hurricane impacted areas, while continuing to service existing cost share programs and extensions.

Our foresters and ranger technicians assist non-industrial, private forest landowners with making forest management decisions based on their individual objectives. These landowners range from being extremely knowledgeable, to having no knowledge of forestry practices. Additionally, our agency refers landowners to licensed forestry consultants and forest industry professionals where applicable. The following programs are the primary avenues used to provide direct and indirect assistance:

- TREASURE Forest and National Stewardship Programs
- Landowner Assistance Programs
- Insect and Disease Protection Programs
- Best Management Practices (BMP) Programs

- Landowner Outreach Education Program
- Resource Information, Marketing, and Economic Development Programs
- Forest Inventory and Analysis Survey Program
- State Lands Management and Assistance
- Forest Legacy Program
- Urban Forestry Program.

Collectively, Commission assistance through these programs was a catalyst for the implementation of professional forest management practices (6,998 cases) on nearly 350,000 acres of private forestland in Alabama (Figure 4). Another 154,066 landowners were educated about proper forest management in 530 landowner workshops and tours. The AFC also had a banner year by plowing 1,321 miles of fire breaks and prescribed burning 41,501 acres for landowners.

## TREASURE FOREST AND NATIONAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS

The word **TREASURE** is an acronym for **T**imber, **R**ecreation, **E**nvironment, and **A**esthetics, for a **S**ustained Useable **R**esource. The program, which was established in 1975, promotes sound multiple-use forest management through education and recognition. Education is accomplished through *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* magazine, on-the-ground technical assistance to forest landowners, and various educational workshops. Recognition is accomplished through the certified TREASURE Forest award, which is given to landowners that are actively implementing TREASURE Forest principles on their land. This helps gauge the progress of increased land management. The Commission gets reimbursed through federal funds for some of these activities.

- During the year, the Commission received 61 web application forms from landowners interested in managing their property under the TREASURE Forest philosophy. Each of these was followed up with a visit from an AFC resource professional.

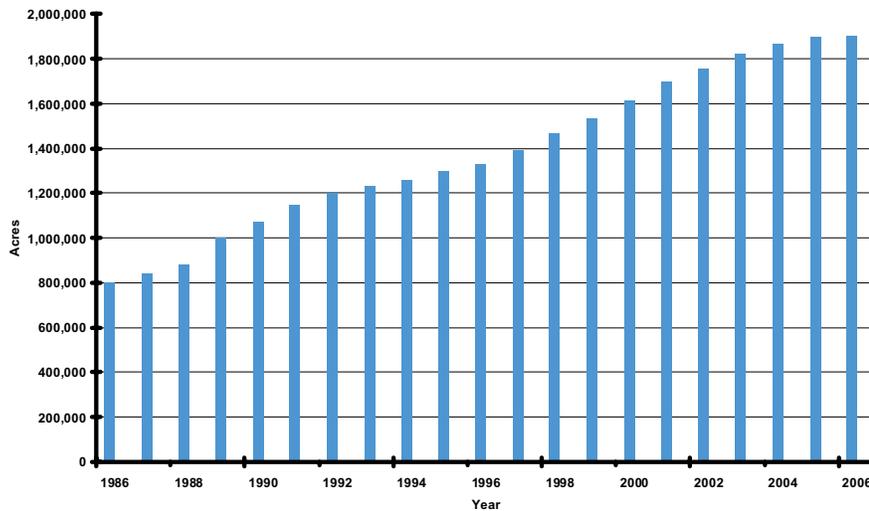
Figure 4

### Statewide Forest Management Accomplishments FY06

| Program                          | Landowners Assisted | Impact         |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| TREASURE Forest Management Plans | 409                 | 59,537 acres   |
| New TREASURE Forests Certified   | 43                  | 13,755 acres   |
| Stand Management Recommendations | 2,180               | 192,167 acres  |
| Tree Planting                    | 302                 | 14,202 acres   |
| Timber Stand Improvements        | 1,514               | 25,459 acres   |
| BMP Investigations/Consultations | 94                  | 1,942 acres    |
| Prescribed Burning               | 627                 | 41,501 acres   |
| Fire Lane Plowing                | 840                 | 1,321 miles    |
| Landowner Workshops/Tours/etc.   | 530                 | 154,066 people |
| Forestry Consultant Referrals    | 459                 | N/A            |

Figure 5

Cumulative TREASURE Forests Certified Acres  
1986 - 2006



## LANDOWNER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Non-industrial private forest landowners were assisted one-on-one by Commission field personnel as requested, with the major emphasis on multiple uses of forest resources. Each landowner was provided with a plan, including a cover letter with detailed recommendations for the landowner's goals and objectives for his/her forest, stand and type maps, and management information sheets as appropriate. This included education workshops and printed publications as well. The AFC also assisted other organizations and agencies in providing some of this assistance.

Our Landowner Assistance Coordinator designs various forms, manages databases, approves payments to landowners, and coordinates activities with the regions and federal agencies in administering the programs. The state and federal programs listed in Figure 6 were available to landowners and implemented by AFC associates.

- Our professional foresters prepared 409 TREASURE Forest management plans covering 59,537 acres during the year.
- The AFC conducted training sessions for the GIS mapping system. This program enables the Commission to provide both landowners with informative maps of their property and taxpayers with the status of our forests statewide.
- The Commission continued to revise standard management information sheets that incorporate the latest technologies in an easy-to-read format for landowners. These new information sheets are available in print or on the AFC web site.
- Under the Stewardship Program, three wildlife biologists provide specific wildlife information to landowners. In 2006, they provided assistance to 136 landowners covering 50,714 acres. They also conducted 15 wildlife presentations at landowner tours attended by approximately 500 people.
- Contributed articles to *Alabama's TREASURED Forests*, a magazine that the Commission publishes three times a year. With a national circulation of approximately 14,000 and availability on the AFC's website, this publication is a valuable tool in getting information to forest landowners.
- During the year, 43 new TREASURE Forests totaling 13,755 acres were certified. Currently, there are 2,054 certified TREASURE Forests in

Alabama that collectively represent 1.90 million acres of forestland under TREASURE Forest management. The number of landowner certifications and acres accepted into the TREASURE Forest Program has increased by 43% during the past ten years (Figure 5).

Figure 6

### 2006 Cost Share Programs

- Invasive Plant Control Program (IPCP)
- Emergency Firelane Clearing & Prescribed Burning Program (Hurricane Ivan)
- Forest Land Recovery Program (FLRP)
- 33rd Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- CRP Hurricane Ivan
- CRP Hurricane Katrina
- Re-enrollments of 29th CRP
- Extensions of 29th CRP
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)
- AFC Prescribed Burning Program (FLEP)
- Emergency Forestry CRP (EFCRP)
- Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)
- Continuous CRP Riparian Forest Buffer (CP-22)
- Continuous CRP Field Borders (CP-33)
- Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
- Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)
- Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)
- Private Stewardship Grants Program (USFWS)
- Partners for Fish and Wildlife (USFWS)
- Longleaf Pine Restoration Program (The Longleaf Alliance)
- Longleaf Legacy Program (The Longleaf Alliance)
- Wildpower Program (Alabama Power and Rural Electric Cooperatives)
- Alabama Forestry Commission SPB Prevention Program

Once a management plan is prepared for a landowner, he/she is urged to carry out these activities to maximize the use and benefits from his/her property. The Commission assists private landowners with implementation of these activities through various cost-share assistance programs, direct landowner services, forestry information, and education programs.

The Commission also serves as technical advisors for each of these programs and makes prescriptions for landowners enrolled in these programs. Follow-up ensures that each practice is completed according to the program requirements and that government funds are appropriately utilized. During the year, AFC personnel provided written guidance and inspected completed forestry practices such as site preparation, tree planting, timber stand improvement, and habitat improvements on more than 908 sites covering approximately 44,775.

A large portion of the above-referenced assistance was brought about by the impact of Hurricanes Ivan, Rita, Dennis, and Katrina. Supplemental hurricane funding was made available through the USDA Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to assist landowners in protecting forests from wildfire, insects, diseases, invasive plant species, and also set up cost share assistance for site preparation, tree planting, and herbicide release. The Forest

Land Recovery Program alone is providing over \$4 million in cost-share payments to landowners for restoration of stands impacted by Hurricane Ivan in 2004. The Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Committee is administering the cost-share program and providing oversight. However, during the signup period, over \$11 million in assistance was requested on nearly 80,000 acres, so payments were limited to \$10,000 per forest landowner. At the end of fiscal year 2006, a total 583 landowners had been approved for assistance on 43,206 acres and over \$800,000 reimbursed for completing approved practices.

The Commission installed 1,321 miles of permanent firelanes and completed 41,501 acres of prescribed burning. These practices proactively protect our valuable natural resources from the destructive force of wildfires while also improving tree growth and forage available to wildlife.

Commission professionals provided technical forestry assistance to landowners on an individual basis who are not under a cost-share program, which usually includes current site conditions, a map, and recommended management prescriptions. During the year, AFC personnel prepared 2,180 Stand Management Recommendations covering 192,167 acres.

The Commission also maintains a current list of registered consulting foresters, forestry vendors, and timber buyers

known to provide services in the local area. During the year the AFC referred 459 landowners to other professionals for further assistance.

This past year, the Commission's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) crew completed 799 FIA plots in Alabama, while continuing a survey of primary and secondary forest industries. This list is posted on the AFC's website and will be periodically updated as new data is collected and entered into the database. Other plots were evaluated to determine the effects of ozone on forest health.

The Commission produces many publications designed to educate forest landowners with proper management techniques. Previously mentioned are the new *Management Information Sheets* that are updated as needed to reflect the latest research and management techniques. *Alabama's Best Management Practices for Forestry* manual was updated with a new cover, photographs and diagrams, ready to be reprinted in 2007. Also, provided technical review and co-authored *Alabama's Timber Industry – An Assessment of Timber Product Output and Use, 2003* with the USDA Forest Service (Resource Bulletin – SRS 107).

The Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) provides additional financial, technical, and educational assistance to non-industrial private landowners. The Commission has and will be performing the following activities through FLEP:

- Provided assistance to non-industrial private forest landowners for firelanes and prescribed burning to reduce heavy fuel build-up areas and to also restore native species of Alabama's unique ecosystems. A high risk for devastating fires and control hazards exists as a result of downed trees, salvage activities, and a trend of landowners' reluctance to burn. A total of 265 landowners were approved with 69,283 acres to be burned. Landowners are being reimbursed for 75% of their costs until the \$360,000 set aside for the program is spent.
- A Best Management Practices (BMP) forester was hired for two years to inspect harvesting, site preparation, and reforestation sites to determine compliance with Alabama's Best Management Practices. The forester

Photo by John Pirtle



The AFC installed 1,321 miles of permanent firelanes.

educated non industrial private landowners, loggers, consultants, and others about the BMP requirements, proper application, maintenance, and closeout as required. Increased silvicultural activities have already begun and are expected to continue for the next two to three years as forest landowners work to salvage, replant, and protect their forest resources. The current manual of *Alabama's Best Management Practices for Forestry* serves as an educational tool and guidance document for landowners, loggers, forestry professionals, and the general public. This manual had been updated with new photographs and diagrams and will be printed in early 2007. A durable "BMP Pocket Guide" is also being developed from the manual for use by field personnel, loggers, and others in the working environment.

- Continued working with Auburn University and the Alabama Forest Foundation on developing a book for landowners on Sustainable Forestry (managing forests for game and non-game species, benefits of different types or harvesting and regeneration methods, the use and benefits of prescribed burning, economic considerations, etc.) to serve as a reference tool for professional foresters and landowners.
- Conducted training workshops and provided technical assistance to minority and other under-served landowners who may not be fully aware of how to manage their property for multiple use and benefits. Leading minority landowners were selected to serve as mentors, form local committees, organize and conduct landowner workshops, and make presentations at those workshops. Digital county plat maps were purchased to help identify underserved landowners and develop maps showing locations of those landowners for mentoring activities. Technical assistance in agro-forestry was provided as well as advice on forest recreational opportunities. Three training workshops were held to educate landowners about forestry cooperatives and marketing opportunities for their land and timber resources.



Photo by Elishia Ballentine

- Distributed 15,000 brochures entitled *Streamside Management Zones in Alabama: Functions and Management* relating to the benefits and management of riparian forests in Alabama, showing the different types of streams and riparian areas and how to manage them properly.

The Commission continues to support other organizations and groups who promote good forest management. These groups actively engage landowners and educators to properly manage and understand our natural resources. They provide training workshops and mentoring programs to landowners. Examples include the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association, the forestry centers at Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities, the Alabama Wildlife Federation, Wildland-Urban Interface Councils, and the Alabama Farmers' Federation. The AFC also helped conduct 530 workshops and tours attended by over 154,066 people.

The agency has a specialized staff of outreach foresters to locate and provide technical assistance and education to under-served landowners. During the year, Commission employees provided assistance to 293 under-served landowners.

Through the AFC website, <http://forestry.state.al.us>, landowners can obtain valuable forestry information. This website receives approximately

20,000 visits per month, and contains information on southern pine beetles, placing orders for seedlings, cost share programs, a forest industry directory, forestry vendors, protecting your home from wildfires, forest statistics, links to other information, and much more.

## INSECT AND DISEASE PROTECTION PROGRAMS

Disease is the most destructive agent to forest stands, following insects, wildfires, weather, and animals, respectively. The most destructive disease to Alabama forests is from a fungus: annosus root rot. It causes mortality to pine stands second only to the southern pine beetle. These two destructive pests cause more damage than wildfires! One method the Alabama Forestry Commission is implementing to control these two forest pests is by providing information to landowners. An increased control effort is being initiated by including prevention recommendations and map illustrations (GIS maps) in all stewardship management plans.

A group of forest pests not usually in the forefront, but a major concern to Alabama's forest ecosystem is non-native invasive plants. Continuing efforts are being made to evaluate, monitor, and control these plants. In 2005, an invasive plant control cost-share program was established to assist private landowners in controlling cogongrass, privet, and tal-

Figure 7

**SPB Information by Detection Flight - FY 2006**

|                 | Jan/ Feb | Apr/May | Jun/Jul | Aug/Sep |
|-----------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of Spots | 33       | 21      | 599     | 1,141   |
| Infested Trees  | 760      | 430     | 6,510   | 56,346  |

Foresters Forest Health Task Force group. The Forest Health Coordinator attended the 8th Annual Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Control

low tree. The program has not been renewed for 2006, but the original program is still in progress. Landowners approved for this cost share program have two consecutive years to control the specific invasive species. This program will end in 2007. Another effort in controlling non-native invasive plants in the state comes from the work by the North Alabama and Huntsville Land and Trust. This organization received funding to research, manage, and eradicate Asiatic bush honeysuckle in the Monte Sano State Park in Huntsville. For continuing current information about invasive pests, the Forest Health Coordinator attended the annual Alabama Invasive Plant Council meeting and continues to be active with this group.

Not just invasive plants, but many destructive, invasive, non-native forest diseases have been introduced into America's forest ecosystem. One in particular is the fungus, *Phytophthora ramorum*, that causes Sudden Oak Death. This pathogen is currently out West in California, Oregon, and Washington, but has the potential to spread into other areas in North America. Close monitoring is done to detect the pathogen here in Alabama. The Commission assisted representatives from Mississippi State University in sampling previously established survey plots located in north Alabama. The results from the survey reported no pathogen located in the state.

To predict the current year's southern pine beetle (SPB) infestation, an SPB pheromone survey was completed this spring. Traps were established in two counties: Lowndes and Tallapoosa. Samples of southern pine beetles and clerid beetles were collected and counted in the traps every week for four weeks. After data analysis, the prediction trend for Alabama was that the number of SPB infestation would be moderately stable to declining.

As the AFC continued to monitor for SPB infestation, a total of four SPB

detection flights were completed during the year. The number of beetle infestations started low: 33 spots and 760 infested trees, with no epidemic counties during the January/February flight period. By the last flight period of August/September, the number of beetle infestation increased drastically: 1,141 spots and 56,346 infested trees, with 18 epidemic counties. The increase was due mainly to the drought that occurred earlier in 2006. Regional SPB flight information and maps are posted on the Commission website bi-monthly.

Other efforts have been implemented to control the SPB infestation. The SPB Thinning Cost Share program was designed to reduce the risk of infestation in susceptible, dense pine stands. Through this program, financial assistance was provided to encourage timber stand improvement practices, such as thinning, to reduce the susceptibility of attack. A total of 141 landowners were approved for a total sum of \$376,166.

Besides an increase in southern pine beetle infestation, there was a rise in other forest pests as well due to the drought. The number of Ips engraver beetle and black turpentine beetle infestations also increased. Many pines succumbed to these bark beetles. Not only pines, but many mature bottomland hardwoods declined this year because of the drought conditions. Both pines and hardwoods were stressed from repeated abiotic conditions. The stress to many trees from the hurricanes in 2004 and 2005, combined with the 2006 drought, allowed destructive forest pests to cause a lot of tree mortality.

To continue training in the area of forest health, the Forest Health Coordinator attended the Forest Health Monitoring Program Meeting, the North American Forest Insect Work Conference, and the South-Wide Forest Disease Workshop. Currently, the Southeastern states are establishing the Southern Group of State

Conference/4th Annual Alabama Invasive Plant Council Conference regarding invasive plant species and was also active with the Invasive Plant Council.

**GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) PROGRAM**

Many technological advances have been made at the Alabama Forestry Commission. Aerial photography flown in spring 2005 was obtained for half the state and plans have been made to acquire aerial photography flown in 2006 as it becomes available in the near future. Also, 85 "TDS Recon" PDA (personal data assistant) units and GPS (global positioning system) receivers were purchased along with software and accessories for each of the units. A training manual is being prepared, with training planned for the fall of 2006 and the beginning of 2007.

The AFC was also given the opportunity to expand its knowledge by sending representatives to various training sessions held around the state. One training session, the Southern Fire Risk Assessment (SFRAS) program demonstrated how GIS layers could be manipulated to pinpoint potentially high fire hazard areas. Representatives also attended a train-the-trainer invasive species mapping program conducted by the Alabama Invasive Plant Council, allowing users the opportunity to log locations of invasive species, promoting future monitoring. The GIS Mapping Forester was Alabama's representative at the GIS Task Force Annual Meeting, where GIS projects and concerns spanning the entire southeast were discussed. The GIS Forester also worked closely with the GIS Taskforce on several projects by providing feedback and obtaining the data necessary for the creation of both "public drinking water" and "threatened and endangered species" layers for the

Southern Critical Forestland Assessment program.

The GIS Mapping Forester also attended the Annual Forest Health Monitoring Conference in Charleston, South Carolina, where mapping of weather-related damage was the theme. Technical workgroups provided the sharing of GIS and GPS technology between states and the USDA Forest Service.

Whether through review sessions or offering technical support, the GIS Mapping Forester answered many questions throughout the year regarding Maptitude, a GIS mapping software. This allowed the user to expand his or her knowledge and to obtain help on difficult questions.

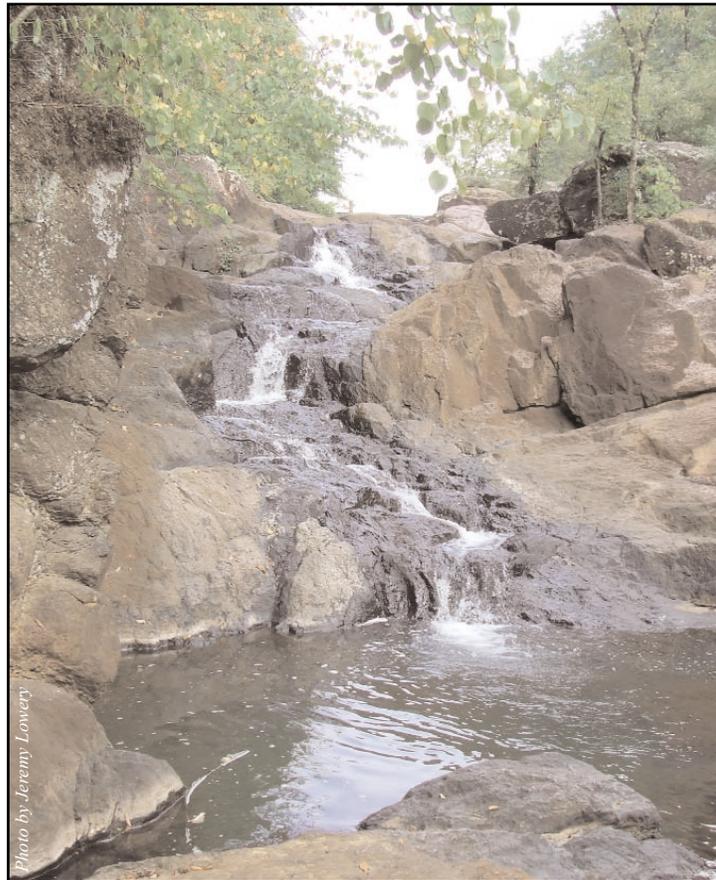
Maps were generated for southern pine beetle spots after all four flight periods (January/February, April/May, June/July, and August/September). The maps were then distributed to affected landowners through the county AFC offices. The GPS coordinates of BMP random monitoring sites were also recorded and sent to the regions for completion of that program. Maps showing the locations were printed and included in several BMP random monitoring reports.

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMP) PROGRAM

The citizens of Alabama demand protection of waterways and improvement in water quality. Past research has proven that if forestry practices are conducted while following Alabama's Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Forestry (EPA-approved guidelines), both waterways are protected and water quality is improved. The Commission's role is to ensure that Alabama's BMPs are followed when implementing forestry practices. This is done by randomly monitoring forestry practices for BMP compliance and investigating BMP complaints received from concerned citizens. The AFC also provides education and training to landowners and loggers (preharvest consultation), and serves as technical advisors on clean watershed partnership committees.

The Commission received 56 BMP complaints during the year. Of the 50 that were forestry-related, 44 have been resolved and 12 were referred to ADEM for further compliance action. Most complaints were resolved by providing BMP education and asking that minor remedial corrections be made where necessary.

In addition to investigating complaints, the BMP Coordinator worked on updating the BMP manual and educating the public, professional foresters, log-



gers, and industry by attending and speaking at Loggers Council meetings, industry training sessions, and landowner group meetings. He also participated on the Sustainable Forestry Initiative's Environmental, Logger Education, Landowner Education, and Inconsistent Practices committees to encourage the proper implementation and maintenance of BMPs. He coordinated random monitoring of active and recently logged sites with county and regional staff. Random monitoring of the two northern regions of the state was completed, finding only one violation.

A BMP Review Team from Texas, Florida, and the USDA Forest Service conducted a three-day review of

Alabama's Best Management Practices for Forestry. This was the final of 13 state reviews by the Water Resources Committee of the Southern Group of State Foresters. Tours were designed to include BMP program specialists from two visiting states and a USDA Forest Service BMP specialist. When possible, one state specialist was from a state that had already been toured; the other would represent a state yet to be visited. The Forest Service specialist participated in

all tours and ensured consistency among state visits. One half day was spent in a meeting format during which the AFC described their program in detail and answered questions. Representatives from other agencies and organizations were invited to offer their views and describe their roles in the BMP program. A full day was then spent in the field, visiting sites that represented either typical or problematic BMP situations. This afforded the group the chance to exchange ideas on potential solutions, debate alternative approaches, evaluate on-site interpretations, and generally better understand BMP implementation monitoring and the AFC's overall approach. A closeout meeting was conducted on the third morning during which the visitors shared their findings and impressions of the Commission's program and

offered verbal recommendations. The visits were followed up with a written report of findings and recommendations. Overall, the final report was complimentary of Alabama's BMP implementation, with recommendations for updating the complaint form and random monitoring procedures.

The Committee's overall conclusions after review of the 13 Southeastern states:

- State BMP programs in the South continue to evolve and mature as mainstream forestry agency programs. The commitment of State Foresters remains paramount as a factor in program development; commitment that has clearly increased over time.

Critics of the non-regulatory approach will continue to challenge its credibility and increase scrutiny of monitoring methodologies and results. Challenges to BMP effectiveness are rare, but still occur periodically. These realities will necessitate maintenance of high standards of program execution, employee training, and outreach to ever-changing landowners and practitioners.

- At the same time, state water quality agencies are beginning to demand estimates of pollution load reductions that accrue from correct BMP implementation. As states and the Environmental Protection Agency deal, as they must, with the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) challenge, the need for credible load reduction estimates will materialize and grow in all Southern states.
- Finally, as forest industry ownership continues to fracture into smaller and smaller parcels and its role as landowner diminishes, it will be critical to find effective ways to engage the new corporate owners, Timber Investment and Management Organizations (TIMOs), and the consultants who manage their resources to ensure continuation of forest industry's positive track record in BMP implementation and support.

The Alabama Clean Water Partnerships are coalitions of private and public individuals, companies, and organizations working together to protect and preserve water resources and aquatic ecosystems. One of the major tasks of the partnerships is to write River Basin Management Plans for the ten river basins in Alabama. All of these plans have been completed except the Chattahoochee/Chipola River Basin. The AFC has professional foresters assigned to represent forestry interests and provide technical information for each river basin group. The BMP Coordinator has encouraged Commission involvement, participating in these meetings and compiling reports on the status of each river basin management plan. In addition, the AFC tracks accomplishments by river basin.

## LANDOWNER OUTREACH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University (A&M) and the Alabama

Forestry Commission recognize that the missions of the two organizations are focused on the same objectives. Both provide service and outreach to the people of the state, working closely to educate and serve the diverse people of Alabama, regardless of their means, size of land holdings, and other resources.

Alabama A&M is the only historically black college or university offering a Bachelor of Science degree in General Forestry accredited by the Society of American Foresters. As such, the institution has the technical expertise in forestry and related areas to support a program geared at preparing students drawn from populations under-represented in the forestry profession and serving traditionally under-served woodland owners.

Over the past year, A&M and the AFC have continued a successful partnership in addressing some of the needs of those who have been historically under-served by or under-represented in the forestry profession. During the past year, activities have included:

- Participation of 27 students in Alabama Forestry Camp 2006.
- Mailed information packets to 127 minority landowners in the Northeast Region.
- Ujima Math and Science Fun attended by 400 students.
- Cherokee County Farm Safety Day attended by 500 students.
- Continued to work with the Alabama TREASURED Forest Association's Mentors Program and Regional Leadership Team.
- Developed and improved a 15-minute presentation on Landowners' Success Stories.
- Spoke to students at Alabama A&M University about careers with the Alabama Forestry Commission.
- Made a presentation at the Thirteen Southern States Outreach Coordinator's

Annual Meeting and Diversity Training in Virginia.

- Made a presentation on the Commission's Outreach Program at the Federation of Southern Cooperatives Annual Meeting.
- Made a presentation on AFC's Outreach Program at the Tuskegee Small Farmers' Conference.
- Spoke with 59 students about the many careers available in forestry.
- Training with the State Forester's Outreach Advisory Council on recreational forestry.
- Assisted the Federation of Southern Cooperatives in developing workshops for agro-forestry demonstration projects.
- Three workshops on cooperative development provided jointly by the AFC, FSC, and AL A&M.
- Arione Irby, Outreach Council Chairman, formed a committee in Wilcox County and educated landowners on Alabama's Best Management Practices for Forestry.
- Bennie McDonald, Norris Carter, and Carol Pickett assisted in organizing workshops in Dallas and Crenshaw Counties.
- State Forester's Outreach Council made a presentation to legislative Black Caucus and AFC Commissioners.
- Participated in National Network of Forest Practitioners' (NNFP) week in Washington along with landowner Bennie McDonald.



Photo by Michael Kyser



## NURSERY AND TREE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The objective of the Nursery and Tree Improvement Program was to ensure that Alabama's landowners had access to top quality, genetically-improved forest tree seedlings at a reasonable price. The Commission was involved in this program for over fifty years. During this time, the AFC established orchards producing high-quality pine and hardwood seed. The E. A. Hauss Nursery near Atmore grew and sold millions of seedlings to landowners, but the Board of Commissioners voted to cease production in 2006. Only two beds of hardwood seedlings remain to be lifted and given away during Arbor Day in 2007. The former nursery will now be known as the Hauss Demonstration Forest and is being planted with longleaf pine seedlings in cooperation with the Alabama Longleaf Alliance.

Approximately 280 acres of seed orchards, progeny test sites, and production areas across Alabama are maintained each year. Maintenance includes mowing, pruning, herbicide and pesticide applications, fertilize applications, inventory, tagging, and mapping.

The AFC completed grafting of a three-year plan to establish 30 acres each of both coastal and piedmont loblolly pine, 3rd cycle orchards. Over 4,500 successful grafts were made for establishment of these orchards.

The Commission sold pine seed stored at Hauss Demonstration Forest to the highest bidder and collected \$19,529.40 revenue from the sale/liquidation of pine seed.

## RESOURCE INFORMATION, MARKETING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Alabama has the second largest commercial timberland base in the United States. As stated earlier, forestry is big business in Alabama. The Commission actively recruits new and expanding markets for forest products, and continues to be the lead agency of the **"Forestry Team"** which brings several agencies and organizations together to more effectively market our natural resources. This team includes members such as the Alabama Development Office, the Alabama International Trade Center, the

Alabama Center for Advanced Woodworking Technology, the USDA Forest Service, and the Forest Products Development Center. The AFC receives federal funding for some of this economic resource and marketing work. A few of the accomplishments of the "Forestry Team" during the year include:

The Alabama International Trade Center (AITC) and the University Center for Economic Development (UCED), both located on the campus of the University of Alabama, promote international trade of Alabama-produced forest products. Throughout the year, the AITC and UCED have provided one-on-one assistance to various companies, communities, and landowners by offering a series of programs to expand the field of forestry and related forestry issues. Those who participated received direct and practical assistance to develop plans that will increase sales; create jobs; expand the use of productive technologies; reach new markets overseas; improve utilization of wood resources; and advance the use of forests for tourism, biomass opportunities, and carbon sequestration.

**The Alabama International Trade Center** provided a number of services geared to increase export sales of Alabama wood products:

- Conducted foreign market research, education, training, and export financing services.
- Worked directly on a one-on-one basis with 28 wood product companies in the state and provided counseling, market reports, and sales leads for doing business in target markets in Europe, Asia, South America, and the Caribbean.
- Prepared reports and contact directories of importers and distributed to Alabama firms on opportunities in China, Mexico, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Dominican Republic, Bermuda, and Hungary.
- Promoted two foreign trade events in China as part of an effort to encourage Alabama companies to travel overseas and meet with potential buyers. U.S. industry participation at these two events was supported by other organizations including U.S. China Build and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

- Continued to serve on the NNFP's Cultural Diversity Working Group (CDWG).
- Attended Pacific Northwest Forum on Native Americans (one landowner also attended).
- Continued to serve on AL A&M Center of Excellence.
- Continued summer intern and work study programs for students from AL A&M and Tuskegee.
- Continued to develop database targeted at underserved landowners.
- Continued to identify and map property of minority landowners. Mapping project complete in Perry, Greene, Fayette, Wilcox, and Crenshaw counties; work started in Dallas and Talladega counties.
- Participated in two planning meetings for FLEP project to develop criteria for selection of landowners. The four components of the program include: crop to silvopasture, forest farming, forest to silvopasture, and alley cropping. Landowners will be selected from all four regions. Ten state and federal agencies have agreed to partner with us in this endeavor.
- Training/interview workshops were conducted for 40 landowners in Birmingham in September. Landowners nominated by the ten agencies were invited to attend, learn something about silvopasture systems, and invited to apply. Site visits will be conducted and four locations in each of the four regions will be selected.



- Attended the International Woodworking Fair in Atlanta, Georgia and distributed lists of Alabama wood suppliers to foreign buyers.
- Responded to inquiries from other forest product companies on export procedures and international standards by distributing copies of wood product export guides on the mechanics of exporting and resource guides listing regional companies for export logistics and financing services.
- Distributed fact sheets on international pallet standards to Alabama firms that inquired about the treatment of wood packaging materials used in export shipments.
- Provided in-depth training and financing assistance to two rural firms in the state which helped secure government-guaranteed export working loans used to support \$13.6 million in export sales.
- Reported that new export sales of approximately \$29.1 million were concluded for shipments of Alabama-made lumber and furniture to overseas markets in Europe, Asia, South America, and the Caribbean.

**The University Center for Economic Development** began a regional training and strategic planning approach with nine counties in northeast Alabama. Alabama utilities and economic development officials in other areas of Alabama became interested in this program expanding to southeast and southwest Alabama. These training sessions helped develop an infrastructure and planning

process needed to facilitate new and existing industrial expansion opportunities in the forest products industry for those regions. Customized research was undertaken to update company information, production, exports, and existing forest resources for all counties involved in UCED training and planning projects. Regional economic impact data has been produced to inform the leaders from these regions to help them understand the significance and potential of forest products and the natural resource base.

Training materials were created specifically for the three individual areas which included a total of 27 Alabama counties. The attendees included selected elected officials, economic developers, Alabama Forestry Commission personnel, and forestry company owners.

#### **Forest Products Industry Strategy for Southwest Alabama**

A series of six training sessions was held in southwest Alabama, which focused on transferring information and ideas to the elected and civic leaders involved in economic development, infrastructure improvement, and industrial recruitment. The project area included Butler, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Escambia, Marengo, Monroe, Washington, and Wilcox counties. Sessions covered the following information:

- Regional Existing Industry Base (companies and product lines; product/sector categories; and economic contribution in terms of sales, employment, volume, and value of product).

- Regional Natural Resource Base (growth/removal/drain; species; volume/value; capacity and availability for diversification; value added and investment).
- Technical Assistance Available to Manufacturers (industrial engineering for shop floor, workforce development and technical skills training, export marketing and trade consulting, and training assistance).
- How to Market the Region (ideas and approaches, marketing opportunities through media, foreign and US-based trade shows, electronic marketing, developing regional marketing coalitions, and how to handle investment prospects).
- Regional Strategy (identification of technologies and product/sector categories that fit existing industry, resource utilization, and available labor force). These southwest counties are in the process of identifying potential industrial sites in the 100 to 200 acre range. UCED will assist them in the organization of appropriate information to support local presentations to prospective investors.

#### **Forest Products Industry Strategy for Southeast Alabama**

A series of four workshops was held for the southeast region of Alabama involving Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Henry, Houston, Geneva, and Pike counties. Sessions covered the following information:

- Existing Forest Products Industry
- Current Forest Resources
- Manufactured and Forest Residue By-Products
- Overview of Alabama's Forest Industry Opportunities
- Assisting Existing Industry
- Targeting Complimentary Industries
- Strategic Plan Implementation.

The ultimate goal was to assist economic developers and community leaders in developing a strategy and implementation plan for identifying opportunities to help sustain the future growth of the forest products industry. These southeast counties are in the process of setting up their regional marketing coalition and need additional assistance in developing their strategy.

A sustaining partner for the southeast region was the Alabama Electric Cooperative, Inc. who provided the venue, equipment, and refreshments, and also assisted with marketing for the training sessions.

This three-region project has been the primary focus in the past year, serving customers based in rural and distressed counties of the state. Forestry is Alabama's number one manufacturing industry, but many rural businesses face challenges to retain jobs, utilize new technology, compete with imports, and secure timber resources. Over 4,000 people have lost jobs since 1997 due to plant closings, and layoffs. Thousands of landowners have lost markets for their timber. New services to aid underserved communities and distressed counties are needed. Both the University of Alabama's International Trade Center and University Center for Economic Development continue to focus activities on helping to expand the forest products industry.

**The Alabama Center for Advanced Woodworking Technology** located at The Northwest Shoals Community College worked with 24 different companies and investors to train over 292 individuals in advanced woodworking skills. The following accomplishments were made according to goals established in their work plan:

*Goal 1 - Organize and conduct at least four woodworker skills training workshops in underserved areas of the state.*

- Taught eight workshops designed for credit for Professional Logging Management and Master Tree Farmers with a total of approximately 110 students.
- Taught three Supervisory classes to a manufacturing firm in our area with approximately 40 students.
- Taught three classes on Professional Touch-up Finishing to approximately 21 students.
- Taught one workshop designed for credit for Professional Logging Management in September with approximately 30 students.

*Goal 2 - Attend at least four local, national, and/or international wood-working seminars to learn the latest advancements in equipment and tooling.*

- Attended a program "Mapping Alabama's Future" in October 2005, held in Montgomery.
- Attended the IWF show in Atlanta and made a presentation at a wood finishing seminar, "Developing a Winning Finishing Team to Maximize Efficiency."
- Attended a program on "Discover O\*Net," the language of occupational intelligence in Montgomery.
- Attended Las Vegas AWFS Show.

*Goal 3 - Provide technical assistance and training to at least ten new and expanding forest industries.*

- Provided HON with assistance on WOODWOP (a woodworking program).
- Provided technical assistance to Richard & Charlie Pugh in starting up a new company in Thomasville, Alabama.
- Provided Mike Madden with drawings to lay out a production flow for building cabinets and wood molding.
- Provided Mike Willis with plan to build wood swings at his company, Oak Swings.
- Assisted the following companies: ROS Tech Zone, Robin Wade, Shodlin Computers (cabinet design), Bob Miller Company (panel lamination) to relocate from Tennessee to Alabama.

*Goal 4 - Provide a laboratory-working environment to deliver advanced wood-worker training in a classroom setting with teleconferencing media.*

- Hosted a program called MASTER TREE FARMER II, a satellite program transmitted from Clemson and Auburn University to our ACAWT site. The class consisted of seven sessions.

**The Forest Products Development Center (FPDC)**, located on the campus of Auburn University, assists the forest products industry and promotes community development through new and expanding forest products industries. Some major accomplishments in FY'06 included:

- Provided resource analysis, site evaluation work, market surveys, raw material procurement, and technology review to clients considering major capital projects in Alabama. These efforts were instrumental in attracting several companies who are currently evaluating significant business investments in Alabama. These new forest products manufacturing operations could potentially bring hundreds of new jobs to Alabama and create new markets for an estimated 7+ million tons of wood fiber.
- Continued to support the development of major projects announced in FY'05, including the Louisiana Pacific oriented strandboard plant in Clarke County, Alabama, and the Kronospan laminate flooring/fiber-board plant in Calhoun County. The

Figure 8: Forest Products Harvests by Year

| YEAR                         | PINE SAWTIMBER (mbf Scribner) | HARDWOOD SAWTIMBER (mbf Doyle) | PINE PULPWOOD (cords) | HARDWOOD PULPWOOD (cords) |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1996                         | 1,543,241                     | 270,395                        | 5,427,060             | 3,799,505                 |
| 1997                         | 1,672,058                     | 274,883                        | 5,663,781             | 3,596,780                 |
| 1998                         | 1,683,977                     | 305,659                        | 5,845,848             | 3,602,648                 |
| 1999                         | 1,487,871                     | 268,412                        | 4,983,089             | 3,245,549                 |
| 2000                         | 1,671,304                     | 283,098                        | 5,126,587             | 3,752,076                 |
| 2001                         | 1,540,799                     | 300,857                        | 5,497,703             | 2,990,148                 |
| 2002                         | 1,593,112                     | 284,160                        | 6,708,523             | 3,579,703                 |
| 2003                         | 1,044,748                     | 179,492                        | 4,186,756             | 2,106,544                 |
| 2004                         | 1,837,828                     | 312,514                        | 6,753,505             | 3,313,286                 |
| 2005                         | 880,260                       | 133,398                        | 3,395,802             | 1,626,561                 |
| Percent Change 2004 to 2005: | -52.1%                        | -57.3%                         | -49.7%                | -50.9%                    |

FPDC has provided technical information and advice to corporate and project planning officials, which has been instrumental in effecting the wood procurement plans and woodyard design of the plant facility.

- Worked directly with three international companies evaluating opportunities for oriented strandboard (OSB) manufacturing operations in Alabama, by conducting detailed wood resource availability studies and making site recommendations to all three companies. One company visited Alabama on two different occasions to examine sites and meet with economic development officials. This company is still evaluating its business plans, and has expressed a genuine interest in establishing an OSB operation in Alabama at an undetermined future date. The other two companies have indefinitely delayed plans for new OSB operations in the Southern U.S. due to market conditions; however, Alabama has positioned itself well should these projects be reactivated at a future date.
- Worked with site location and resource consultants representing two different international companies considering investments in laminated flooring and fiberboard manufacturing in the Southern U.S. The FPDC provided detailed resource analysis and site location assistance for these projects. Company representatives visited Alabama to review recommended sites and to meet with economic development personnel and pertinent governmental agencies. Both of these value-added manufacturing projects remain under active evaluation, with a site location decision expected for one of these projects before the end of calendar year 2006. The project is expected to result in more than 200



Photo courtesy of Kronospan

*Kronospan's \$500 million facility is nearing completion. This wood products manufacturer will employ over 700 people in the Calhoun and Talladega counties area.*

jobs and will consume in excess of one million tons of wood fiber.

- Identified two major non-structural board projects during FY '06, both involving international corporations. The FPDC made preliminary contact with senior managers of these companies, and followed with detailed wood resource analyses, industrial site location reports, and incentive reports. One company made a preliminary visit for a review of the data and report findings. Several conference call presentations with senior managers of the second company have been made. Alabama is well positioned to compete, should that eventuality develop. Each project would utilize approximately one million tons of wood fiber and employ more than 100 persons.
- Made contact with another international company considering establishment of a very large lumber manufacturing operation in the Southern U.S. The FPDC conducted resource analyses for a large number of potential locations in Alabama in order to determine any viable resource opportunities for this unusual project. A report was prepared identifying three possible Alabama sites for this project and presented to senior officials of the company. It is expected that a visit from the company's location team will result within the next few months. This project has the potential to be a showcase manufacturing operation for Alabama, while employing approximately 200 people and potentially creating markets for more than two million tons of southern pine timber.
- Provided technical information and advice to assist with development of a lumber remanufacturing project in west Alabama involving Canadian-based D & L Double Cut Sawmills. The project was announced in late summer, and will be located in the Black Belt near Reform, Alabama. The operation is expected to employ about 20 people and will buy lumber from local producers, as well as importing certain species.
- Consulted with an integrated sawmill and secondary products manufacturer regarding methodology and procedures for testing product recovery from raw materials within its operations. The mill was interested in measuring current performance and establishing benchmarks for gauging progress in future manufacturing operations.

- Assisted companies with projects in the emerging **Biomass Energy** sector:

- ▶ Worked with an Alabama company in attempting to assist the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding the productive use of woody biomass waste for energy purposes. The project was not successful due to numerous regulatory and contractual barriers.
- ▶ Assisted an Alabama company in the planning and development of a business model to export bulk woody biomass fuels to international utility markets. A European trading partner was located and a joint venture arranged to pursue this opportunity.
- ▶ Assisted a domestic energy company interested in establishing manufacturing facilities that would produce wood pellets for export to industrial fuel markets in Europe. The FPDC conducted resource analyses and made site recommendations to the company, which is considering as many as three separate manufacturing facilities. The FPDC met with a company official, as well as economic development and political officials to visit the recommended sites. The company has been evaluating various aspects of the project and has visited Alabama on several more occasions. An announcement regarding one or more facility investments in Alabama is considered likely in the near future. Each facility would utilize at least 500,000 tons of wood fiber, according to company estimates.
- ▶ Assisted a domestic energy company and a private investment group in evaluating woody biomass feed-

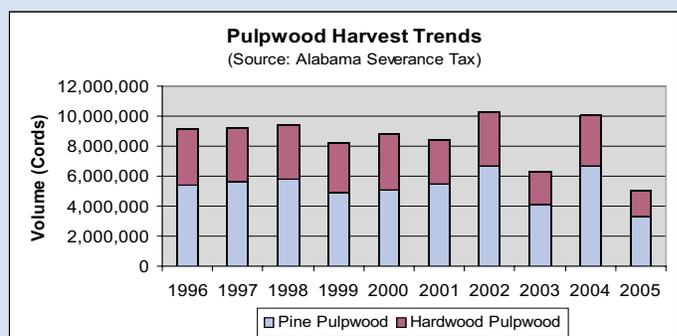
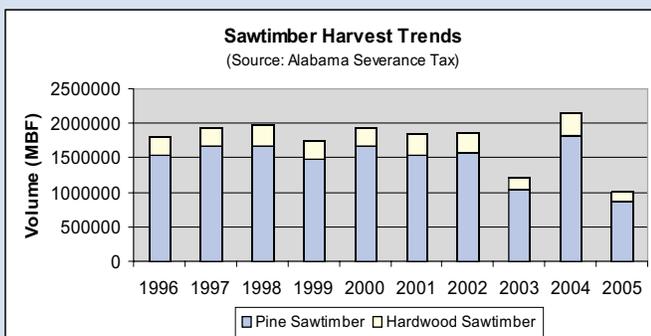
stock availability for two potential cellulosic ethanol manufacturing plants in Alabama. Several sites were identified as appropriate locations for such operations, with the companies evaluating these site opportunities and preliminarily selecting properties for their manufacturing plants. Both projects remain under active development pending evaluation and selection of a technology provider. One of the companies is currently developing a partnership with an existing corn ethanol manufacturer and is studying the feasibility of manufacturing corn-based ethanol and cellulosic ethanol on the same site. In this case, the corn ethanol project would likely be the initial phase, with cellulosic ethanol following when the conversion technology issues for commercial-scale production are resolved. It is expected that the successful development of a cellulosic ethanol operation would rapidly lead to the subsequent establishment of numerous similar projects.

- ▶ Worked with noted Auburn University professor, Dr. David Bransby, and a private engineering firm in the evaluation of current cellulosic ethanol technologies. The FPDC visited with several of the leading technology developers in this field, not only to assess the current status of the technology, but also to form some educated insights about which technology platform appears to have the best chance of success for processing southern woody biomass. The effort has resulted in many valuable contacts, as well as better positioning the FPDC to compete for cellulosic

ethanol projects on behalf of Alabama.

- ▶ Worked with a large manufacturing operation in west Alabama, a very large consumer of thermal energy, to evaluate the replacement of fossil fuel sources with woody biomass. The FPDC evaluated the availability and cost of alternative woody biomass feedstocks for energy purposes. Cost comparisons resulting from the study demonstrated both the availability and competitiveness of biomass fuels for this operation; however, the economic incentives are not currently compelling enough to justify the capital cost of conversion.
- ▶ Partnered with a number of private and public entities to undertake a significant study to determine the technical and economic feasibility of co-firing woody biomass at coal-fired electricity generating plants owned by Alabama Power Company. The FPDC will play a major role in determining the availability of woody biomass resources around each of the power plants in question, and will also work to identify appropriate processing technology to convert the woody biomass into the form desired by Alabama Power for entry into their existing fuel systems. In addition, the FPDC will work with other parties involved in the project relative to managing the logistics of fuel delivery for a major test firing of woody biomass at one of the power plants in question. The project has the potential to create a large market for forest residues and other low-valued woody biomass, while providing Alabama Power with an

Figure 9: Timber Harvest Trends



economically competitive and environmentally friendly source of local fuels.

- ▶Cooperated with a consulting firm in the development of a woody biomass availability study for another electricity utility in Alabama, who is considering the possibility of displacing natural gas with biomass at one of its generating plants. The FPDC prepared a detailed report regarding the availability, cost, logistics, and technical issues related to this proposed project and presented its findings to a senior management group at the company's corporate headquarters. The project is undergoing further internal assessment, with the ultimate course of action unknown at this time.
- ▶Collaborated with the University of Alabama's Center for Economic Development in the preparation and delivery of forest-based economic development workshops for local economic developers. Work was done in the northeast, southeast, and southwest regions of Alabama to identify local forest resources and manufacturing assets as well as significant market and technology trends, and assist in developing possible avenues for developing regional economic development strategies.
- ▶Cooperated with the Alabama Development Office, Alabama Power Company, and the Alabama International Trade Center in hosting an exhibition booth at the International Woodworking Fair (IWF) in Atlanta, Georgia. The IWF is a major trade show for the wood industry, and attracts tens of thousands of industry professionals. The FPDC participated in the show in an effort to facilitate trade for existing Alabama companies and to seek information and contacts for possible new capital investment projects. Efforts at IWF were very successful in that numerous trade referrals were made and several major capital projects were identified. Two of those projects are currently being pursued, and will be the subject of continuing efforts in the coming year.

- Prepared and delivered four additional presentations during the period, beyond those project-related presentations previously mentioned. One addressed the business conditions and outlook for Alabama's forest industry and was delivered at the Alabama Farmers Association's Annual Commodity Meeting. A second similar presentation was delivered to the Montgomery Chapter of the Society of American Foresters. A third, more detailed presentation on the subject was prepared and delivered to the Alabama Forestry Association at their 2006 Annual Meeting. A two-part lecture on Alabama's forest resources and forest industry was delivered to a senior wood procurement class at Auburn University's School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences.
- The FPDC continues to develop and maintain industry data and information for the benefit of the general public. This data and information is provided on request to the forest industry, public officials, industry associations, the media, and others.

The Management Division also compiled the publication, "Forest Resource Report 2005", which contains a variety of economic indicators of the forest industry health in Alabama. In this report, forest commodities, wages, employment, payroll, capital investments, and value-added data is gathered and summarized. A portion of this information, a summary of harvest trends, is shown in Figures 8 and 9 on pages 21 and 23.

In other economic news, Louisiana Pacific Corporation (LP) is nearing completion of their new oriented strand board (OSB) plant site near Thomasville, Alabama, and will begin production in mid to late 2007. The plant will manufacture OSB products on approximately 820 acres and utilize approximately 150-175 loads of small

diameter wood daily. LP expects to employ at least 130 people at the plant initially, which will have an annual OSB production capacity of 700 million square feet.

## FOREST INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS (FIA) SURVEY PROGRAM

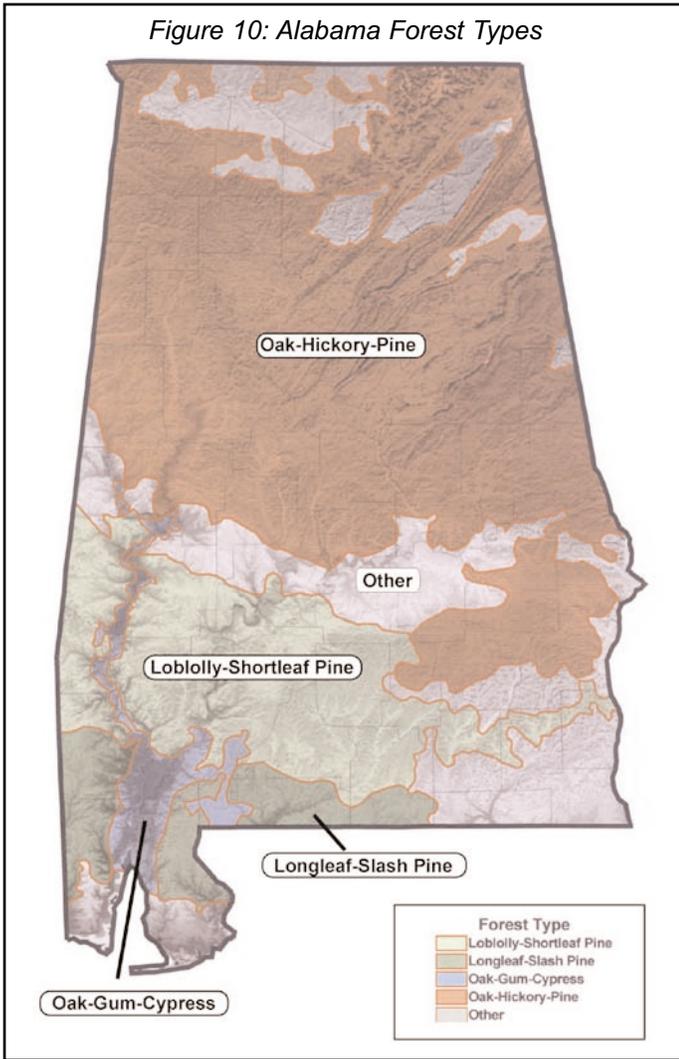
Most of the information on forest resources and its availability for new and expanding markets is obtained from the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) survey data that is being collected nationwide by the USDA Forest Service and state forestry agencies. This data is obtained from permanent inventory plots located primarily on a 3x3-mile grid across the entire United States. There are a total of 5,655 FIA survey plots in Alabama. Each plot is re-surveyed approximately every five to seven years. This is the most extensive and complete data available pertaining to our natural resources.

Forest resource planners use this information when considering new plants or expansion in Alabama. Consultant foresters and other natural resource professionals also use the information to determine areas in Alabama that may require more intensive forest management, reforestation, and/or protection.

For FY 2006, the Commission allotted eight full-time FIA forester positions to conduct the survey. Of these eight, six were crew leaders and two were full-time crew leader assistants. The foresters collect a wide variety of forest resource information from each plot. This data is



Figure 10: Alabama Forest Types



According to the latest 2004 FIA statistics, Alabama forestland is comprised of virtually equal amounts of hardwood and pine stands (Figure 10). Hardwood stands and pine stands each account for 43% of the total amount of forestland in Alabama. The remaining 14% of forestland is comprised of mixed stands of hardwood and pine. For the area comprised of pine stands, 60% consists of planted pine. Alabama has four billion more trees than in 1953, with enough lumber to furnish nearly 4 million homes! As previously mentioned, approximately 60% of harvested volume comes from private landowners.

vesting of some abandoned seed orchards on the remaining 197 acres. Preparation included timber marking, flagging, developing equipment access, timber cruising, and prospectus development. Other forest management activities included maintaining 21 miles of unpaved roads, maintaining 400 acres of forest openings, and prescribed burning 2,148 acres of predominantly longleaf/slash forestland.

Geneva State Forest is part of the Covington Wildlife Management Area. AFC personnel work cooperatively with the Wildlife Division of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to develop habitat for Alabama's native wildlife game species. Hunting is available to the public by season for deer, turkey, squirrel, rabbit, quail, dove, and waterfowl. Also, a youth hunt for both deer and turkey occurs annually at the State Forest.

Other recreational opportunities at Geneva State Forest include camping, hiking, and horseback riding. Extensive repairs were made to Geneva State Forest Lake this year, replacing all plumbing within the dam. Fishing should be available within three years. With these lake repairs occurring, there was only \$909.73 in permit revenue. The first phase of a hiking trail around the lake was completed by Commission personnel and the Alabama Trail Hiking Society.

then transferred to the USDA Forest Service in Knoxville, Tennessee, for compilation and analysis. The resulting information can then be queried through the Internet by researchers and potential forest industry investors.

Beginning in 2006, the goal each year is to survey at least 15% of the total number of plots in Alabama. In FY 2006 a total of 799 plots were surveyed. FIA foresters spent much of the first quarter of FY 2006 working on the forest industry survey and completing ozone damage plot surveys scattered across the state.

Plot data indicates that there are 22.9 million acres of commercial forestland in Alabama. This is an increase of one million acres over the 1990 figures. Over 400,000 private, non-industrial landowners own 82% of this commercial forestland, and the average ownership size is around 58 acres. Ownerships of fewer than 500 acres each comprise nearly 50% of the commercial forestland in Alabama.

Each year, Alabama landowners plant five trees for every one tree harvested.

## STATE LANDS MANAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE

Several state-owned forests are under the Commission's direct control. All of these forestlands are managed under TREASURE Forest guidelines. A complete listing of the tracts managed by the agency is in Figure 11.

**Geneva State Forest** is Alabama's largest with 7,200 acres of contiguous forestland. Management objectives include Timber, Wildlife, and Recreation. Timber management activities at Geneva State Forest during the year included: Commission personnel prepared 689 acres for timber harvesting. Longleaf shelter wood thinning is planned for 489 acres, with total har-

Figure 11

### State Forests in Alabama

| Name  | Acres         |
|---|---------------|
| Geneva State Forest                                 | 7120          |
| Choccolocco State Forest / Wildlife Management Area | 4536          |
| Little River State Forest                           | 2120          |
| Hauss Demonstration Forest                          | 269           |
| Baldwin State Forest                                | 240           |
| Weogufka State Forest                               | 240           |
| Miller Nursery / Fire Training Center               | 201           |
| Stauffer Nursery / Seed Orchard                     | 196           |
| Macon State Forest                                  | 190           |
| Thorsby Seed Orchard                                | 181           |
| Panther State Forest                                | 40            |
| Washington State Forest                             | 20            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>15,354</b> |

AFC personnel also worked with local saddle clubs to provide an annual fundraising trail ride for St. Jude.

**Choccolocco State Forest** is located near Anniston, Alabama and consists of 4,536 acres of pine and hardwood timber, with a portion included in the Talladega Wildlife Management Area. The site was once leased to Fort McClellan for military training exercises, but was recently returned to the Commission's control. A comprehensive management plan is being contemplated for the forest, which would mirror TREASURE Forest plans with provisions for dealing with metals identified in a recent survey. No management activities were completed on the property in FY 2006.

Little River State Forest consists of 2,019 acres of forests, several scattered wildlife openings, and one 35-acre public lake. During 2004, the AFC acquired management responsibilities for Claude D. Kelley State Park, previously man-

aged by the State Parks Division. Immediately after the transfer, Hurricane Ivan severely damaged the timber, roads, bridges, and recreational facilities at the forest. Debris clearing and salvage operations have been completed, with 50 acres planted in longleaf pine. The drought of 2006 will require that the same area be replanted due to poor survival rates. Forestry activities during FY '06 included tree planting, rebuilding two bridges, road maintenance, prescribed burning, and other general facilities maintenance.

In addition to these state forests, the Commission has cooperative agreements with three other state agencies to help manage their forestlands, which total 17,564 acres:

- Alabama Department of Corrections – 15 facilities (forested) – 7,810 acres
- Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources – 19 state lakes – 4,786 acres

- Alabama Department of Mental Health – 10 tracts – 4,968 acres

Through these three cooperative agreements, AFC personnel were involved in preparing timber sales and overseeing harvest activities; prescribed burning for wildlife habitat improvement, aesthetics, and wildfire hazard reduction; site preparation of 399 acres; reforestation of 165 acres; and monitoring for forest health. Revenue from these management activities is shown in Figure 12. The location of all the tracts managed is shown in Figure 13.

## FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM

Alabama's growing and expanding population is placing tremendous pressure on landowners to convert their forestlands to other uses that are in conflict with important natural resource values and benefits. Forest fragmentation and urbanization is one of the top four priorities of the USDA Forest Service. The Forest Legacy Program earmarks federal dollars to purchase sensitive and threatened properties from being purchased by developers and converted to urban uses. The AFC administers this program in partnership with the Alabama Forest Resources Center and the State Lands Division of the Alabama Department of Conservation of Natural Resources. This marks the sixth year that Alabama has been enrolled in this program. Properties purchased with Forest Legacy funds are included with the Forever Wild Program and are managed by the State Lands Division. Forest Legacy accomplishments that the Commission was involved in during Fiscal Year 2006 include:

- Successfully completed the purchase of two tracts through the Legacy Program totaling 1,504 acres. The tracts purchased are Bayou Sara and Post Oak Flat. The Mobile-Tensaw Delta, Bayou Sara tract provides habitat for black bears, gopher tortoises, green-fly orchids, bald eagles, and over 50 listed and rare species, and will provide protection from residential development that has already been surveyed and planned. This tract will serve as an addition to the W. L. Holland Management Area. The Post-Oak Flat purchase supports the regional conservation effort to protect the biodiversity, karst topography, and

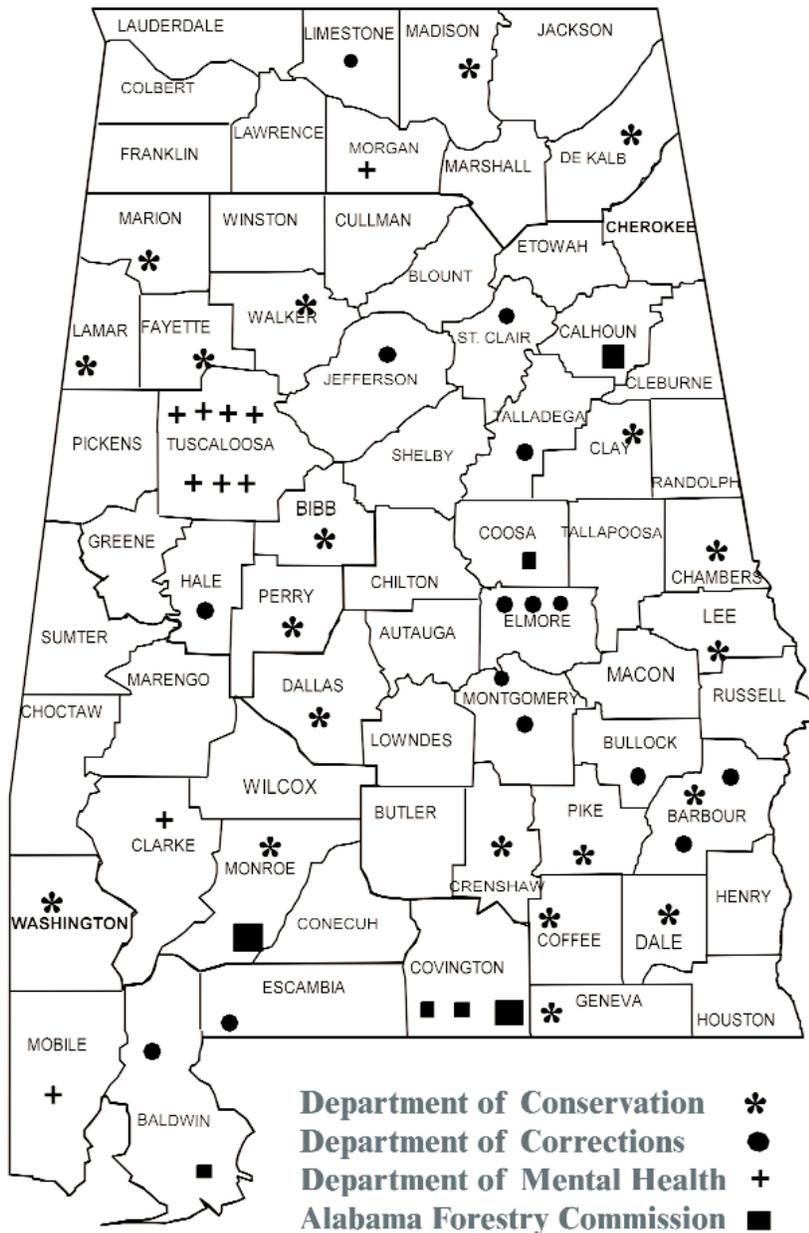
Figure 12

### Revenues from State Lands Management Program

| Timber Sales                                      | Sale Value          | Revenue to AFC     |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Department of Corrections:</i>                 |                     |                    |
| Draper Prison                                     | 27,661.00           | 2766.10            |
| <i>Department of Mental Health:</i>               |                     |                    |
| Dr. Bell Tract                                    | 77,664.00           | 7,766.40           |
| Partlow Camp Tract                                | 84,665.00           | 8466.50            |
| <b>Total Timber Sales</b>                         | <b>\$189,990.00</b> | <b>\$18,999.00</b> |
| <b>Prescribed Burning</b>                         |                     |                    |
|   | <b>Acres</b>        | <b>Revenue</b>     |
| <i>Department of Corrections</i>                  |                     |                    |
| Fountain Correctional Farm                        | 189                 | \$2,620.00         |
| St. Clair Correctional Farm                       | 50                  | 750.00             |
| <i>Department of Conservation</i>                 |                     |                    |
| Pike County Lake                                  | 54                  | 942.00             |
| Clay County Lake                                  | 75                  | 990.00             |
| Lee Lake  | 65                  | 830.00             |
| Walker Lake                                       | 55                  | 980.00             |
| <b>Total Prescribed Burning</b>                   | <b>488</b>          | <b>\$7,112.00</b>  |
| <b>Management &amp; User Fees</b>                 |                     |                    |
|   | <b>Acres</b>        | <b>Revenue</b>     |
| Department of Conservation                        | 4,786               | \$4,786.00         |
| Department of Corrections                         | 7,810               | 7,810.00           |
| Department of Mental Health                       | 4,968               | 4,968.00           |
| Geneva State Forest (day permits for public lake) |                     | 909.73             |
| <b>Total Management &amp; User Fees</b>           | <b>17,564</b>       | <b>\$18,473.73</b> |

Figure 13

## Location of Lands Managed by the Alabama Forestry Commission



cultural resources of the Cumberland Plateau. The area also offers habitat to over 150 listed and rare species including, but not limited to, cerulean warblers, bald eagles, and Morefield's leatherflower.

- Developed and submitted project plan for an additional property in the Mobile-Tensaw Delta Wetlands Conservation Area (MTD). This property, totaling 1,579 acres, supports the state's conservation emphasis on

threatened old growth wetlands, possesses river frontage, and lies on the banks of the Alabama River at its confluence with the Mobile and the Tombigbee Rivers. This tract is entirely wetlands and supports 57 greatest conservation concern (GCN) species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, and amphibians recognized under Alabama's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

## URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM

The Year 2006 continued to be a year of storm recovery for urban communities. They were hit hard by Hurricane Ivan in the latter part of 2004, followed by Hurricanes Dennis, Rita, and then Katrina in 2005. Congress, from a nation-wide perspective, saw the devastation and gave the President specifically-identified urban forestry funds through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These funds were managed through the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) funding apparatus established at Auburn University. The Commission had little to do with the expenditure of U&CF funds since it was deeply committed to the loss of timber throughout the south Alabama region. AFC staff throughout the affected region acted as a resource to urban and communities tree boards and governmental entities, giving them professional expertise where desired. The hurricane recovery is established for three years. Currently the damage to urban trees is just now showing up in coniferous and hardwood species. Additionally, more counties are being affected to the north up through Birmingham, due to the drought experienced this summer. Actual losses will not be evident until spring leaf occurs. This will result in an abbreviated spring planting season and the necessity to encourage supplemental watering.

The Urban Forestry Section has been active in support of the Alabama Urban Forestry Association (AUFA) by encouraging participation in numerous training sessions and the annual convention.

The U&CF program has been active in the Partnership through the development of its third five-year strategic goal setting process.

Through the cooperation of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) foresters, a display was developed and presented at the League of Municipalities Annual Conference which garnered a lot of interest.

The Urban Forestry Section has supported the establishment of professional urban foresters and certified arborists throughout the state by promoting the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certified arborist's examination.

# ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION ASSOCIATES

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| <p><b>Butler County</b><br/>59 Firetower Road<br/>Greenville, AL 36037<br/>334-376-9114</p>           | <p><b>Crenshaw County</b><br/>1535 Glenwood Road<br/>Luverne, AL 36049<br/>334-335-5712</p>           | <p><b>Houston County</b><br/>4855 Hodgesville Road<br/>Dothan, AL 36301<br/>334-677-5454</p>            | <p><b>Mobile County</b><br/>3572 Fire Tower Road<br/>Semmes, AL 36575<br/>251-649-1380</p>         | <p><b>Tuscaloosa County</b><br/>8115 McFarland Boulevard<br/>Northport, AL 35476<br/>205-333-1490</p> |
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| <p><b>Cherokee County</b><br/>1420 East Main Street<br/>Centre, AL 35960<br/>256-927-3163</p>         | <p><b>Dallas County</b><br/>7577 AL Highway 22<br/>Selma, AL 36701<br/>334-875-7131</p>               | <p><b>Lamar County</b><br/>48878 Highway 17<br/>Sulligent, AL 35586<br/>205-695-7530</p>                | <p><b>Morgan County</b><br/>4208 Highway 31 South<br/>Decatur, AL 35603<br/>256-308-0093</p>       | <p><b>Wilcox County</b><br/>231 Camden Bypass<br/>Camden, AL 36726<br/>334-682-4421</p>               |
| <p><b>Chilton County</b><br/>221 County Road 423<br/>Clanton, AL 35045<br/>205-755-3042</p>           | <p><b>DeKalb County</b><br/>1001 Lebanon Road SW<br/>Ft. Payne, AL 35967-8432<br/>256-845-1331</p>    | <p><b>Lauderdale County</b><br/>1212 Waterloo Road<br/>Florence, AL 35631<br/>256-764-4382</p>          | <p><b>Perry County</b><br/>Route 2 Box 6-S<br/>Marion, AL 36756<br/>334-683-8537</p>               | <p><b>Winston County</b><br/>P.O. Box 595<br/>Double Springs, AL 35553<br/>205-489-5014</p>           |
| <p><b>Choctaw County</b><br/>1715 East Pushmataha Street<br/>Butler, AL 36904<br/>251-459-2928</p>    | <p><b>Elmore County</b><br/>P.O. Box 1058<br/>Wetumpka, AL 36092<br/>334-567-5486</p>                 | <p><b>Lawrence County</b><br/>12001 AL Highway 157, Suite 2<br/>Moulton, AL 35650<br/>256-974-8168</p>  | <p><b>Pickens County</b><br/>12481 Highway 86 W<br/>Carrollton, AL 35447<br/>205-367-8232</p>      |   |
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