

# The Inventory

Issue 32  
January 2014

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## An Update Concerning the SRS FIA Program

### *SRS FIA Information Update*

Biomass! I am sure that you have been hearing about all of the new facilities that have been planned, and in many cases built and operational, across the South that are focusing on utilizing woody biomass. Many of these facilities are/will be producing pellets. Why the interest in the South? In spite of the economic downturn in the economy in the last 3 or 4 years, the South is still the "woodbasket" of the United States. Yes, production during this time period was down by 20 to 25 percent on average across all products, some more than others. For more details, please see "Economic dynamics of forests and forest industries in the Southern United States" by Brandeis and others at <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/40452>.

What is the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program and specifically the Southern Research Station (SRS) FIA Program doing in the arena of biomass? Nationally we have been working with six university partners, some forest industry organizations, and groups across the Forest Service to develop new biomass equations that can be applied to the FIA database. These new equations will not use cubic foot to weight conversions but will be based on direct relations to height and diameter values to weight. In addition, estimates are being developed for the branches, foliage, etc. in addition to the traditional merchantable portions of trees. This work has been going on for 2 years and will continue into the next few years. Of course this work will also directly relate to the calculation of all of the carbon estimates from FIA data.

Also at the national level, the Timber Products Output (TPO) database and processing system have been modified specifically to identify biomass/bioenergy facilities in the data collection and reporting aspects. The 2013 TPO data collection will include these new data elements. The utilization study data collection (data collected on active logging sites), will also include data elements on utilization rates for bioenergy harvests.

One arena that needs some additional study is the sustainability of woody biomass harvesting. Some work on this has been done, but there are additional questions. In some cases, the raw material is woody biomass that is not used for traditional forest products or under used. In other cases, there may be a direct competition between traditional forest products and woody biomass use. I hope that we in SRS FIA can investigate the growth and removal rates in the next few years.

As always, if you have any technical questions regarding FIA, please submit those questions to Charlene Walker ([cwalker@fs.fed.us](mailto:cwalker@fs.fed.us)) and we will address them in a future issue of "The Inventory". Thank you for your interest in FIA and please let us know how we may serve you in the future.

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***A Forester in Rome****by Sarah Farmer*

Since the 1940s, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has coordinated a global Forest Resource Assessment every 5 to 10 years. The assessments describe the world's forests and how they are changing, and include information about the health and diversity of each country's forests, as well as their productivity, ecological value, and other factors.

In spring 2013, the FAO invited U.S. Forest Service researcher Tom Brandeis to use his specialized knowledge of forest inventory and forests of the Caribbean islands to help prepare the newest assessment, which will be completed in 2015. Brandeis helped prepare the 2005 and 2010 assessments, and is a supervisory research forester at the Forest Service Southern Research Station Forest Inventory and Analysis unit. Brandeis has also worked with the International Institute of Tropical Forestry, where he coordinated the forest inventory in Puerto Rico and the remeasurement of long-term forest monitoring plots in El Yunque National Forest.

This past fall, Brandeis traveled to the Forest Resource Assessment program's offices in Rome, Italy, where he spent 3 weeks preparing reports about the forests of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. He also completed desk studies for 14 countries that did not submit their own reports. Most of these countries are small islands, such as Guam which only covers 830 square miles, but dwarfs other island countries like Nauru, which covers just 8 square miles. Brandeis reviewed the reports for these countries as well as those submitted by Jamaica, New Zealand, and others.

"Working with the FAO on the assessment was a very positive experience," says Brandeis. "I benefitted from learning about forest resources and inventories from other countries, and the image of the Forest Service as a world leader in forest inventory methodology and expertise is enhanced when its personnel can assist with such globally important efforts."

Access the latest publications by SRS scientists at [http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/new\\_pubs-srs.php](http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/new_pubs-srs.php).

*For more information, contact Tom Brandeis at 865-862-2030 or [tjbrandeis@fs.fed.us](mailto:tjbrandeis@fs.fed.us).*

***Status of Current Field Inventories***

State	Cycle start date	Subcycle start date	Cycle and subcycle of current inventory	Percent of current subcycle collection completed
Alabama	2012	Sept-13	10-2014	21
Arkansas	2010	Dec-12	10-2013	87
Florida	2008	Jan-13	9-2013	82
Georgia	2009	Nov-13	10-2014	6
Kentucky	2010	June-13	7-2013	18
Louisiana	2009	Mar-13	8-2013	84
Mississippi	2009	Aug-13	9-2014	28
North Carolina	2008	Oct-13	9-2014	17
Oklahoma (east)	2010	Feb-13	8-2013	100
Oklahoma (west)	2009	June-13	2-2013	89
Puerto Rico	2011	Jan-13	5-2013	57
South Carolina	2012	Jan-13	11-2013	100
Tennessee	2009	June-13	9-2013	36
Texas (east)	2008	Nov-13	9-2014	6
Texas (west)	2004	Apr-13	1-2013	28
U.S. Virgin Islands	2009	Aug-09	2-2009	100
Virginia	2012	Nov-12	10-2013	64

Information compiled December 6, 2013.

*For more information, contact Dale Trenda at 865-862-2039 or [dtrenda@fs.fed.us](mailto:dtrenda@fs.fed.us).*

***FY2014 Publications  
Published Since  
September 2013***

**Brandeis, T.J.; Turner, J.A.** 2013. U.S. Virgin Islands' Forests, 2009. Resour. Bull. SRS-196. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 56 p.

**Brown, M.J.; New, B.D.** 2013. North Carolina, 2011 forest inventory and analysis factsheet. e-Science Update SRS-080. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 5 p.

**Harper, R.A.; Rominger, B.** 2013. South Carolina, 2012 forest inventory and analysis factsheet. e-Science Update SRS-083. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 5 p.

**Oswalt, S.N.** 2013. Mississippi, 2012, forest inventory and analysis factsheet. e-Science Update SRS-081. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 4 p.

**Rose, A.K.** 2013. Virginia, 2011 forest inventory and analysis factsheet. e-Science Update SRS-078. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 4 p.

**Rose, A.K.** 2013. Virginia's forest, 2011. Resour. Bull. SRS-197. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 92 p.

**Rosson, J.F.** 2013. Arkansas, 2012 forest inventory and analysis factsheet. e-Science Update SRS-079. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 4 p.

***Dr. Christopher Oswalt  
Receives the Southern  
Research Station  
Director's Early Career  
Scientist Award***

The Southern Research Station Director annually awards station employees for noteworthy achievements. The Early Career Scientist Award recognizes scientists who are at the beginning of their research careers and have demonstrated, through personal accomplishments, outstanding capability and exceptional promise for significant future achievement. Those given this award have demonstrated exceptional potential to shape the future through intellectual and inspired leadership, as well as through the integration of research and education in the furthering of the Forest Service mission.

Dr. Christopher M. Oswalt received the Director's Early Career Scientist award during a virtual teleconference on December 11, 2013. Since his employment with the Southern Research Station RWU-4801 in 2006, Dr. Oswalt has maintained a consistently high level of productivity of peer-reviewed journal articles, invited and offered presentations, and Forest Service publications, while at the same time making significant contributions to the unit and the national Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program.

Dr. Oswalt has excelled both in the quantity and quality of accomplishments. His research is highly respected by his colleagues, peers, and those that make use of the results of his work. Examples of his research include studying the ecology and impact of *Microstegium vimineum* invasions, documenting decline and potential recovery of longleaf pine population, and documentation of the decline of flowering dogwood populations in the eastern United States.

In addition, Dr. Oswalt has been particularly adept at making the results of his research available to those that could benefit from it. He is a research forester also assigned forest inventory reporting duties for the States of Tennessee and Kentucky. He regularly makes himself available to State agencies and other groups to address their questions and concerns regarding the FIA Program and the data gathered in their States.

We offer our congratulations to Dr. Oswalt for the excellent work he has done as part of the Forest Service, Southern Research Station, Forest Inventory and Analysis Program.

### ***Forest Resources of the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley***

The Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley is a unique ecosystem in the United States that stretches from Arkansas through the gulf coast. Home to the endangered Louisiana black bear, the extinct ivory-billed woodpecker and an important flyway for migratory waterfowl, this resource receives much attention from researchers and land managers.

*For more information, contact Sonja Oswalt at 865-862-2058 or [soswalt@fs.fed.us](mailto:soswalt@fs.fed.us).*

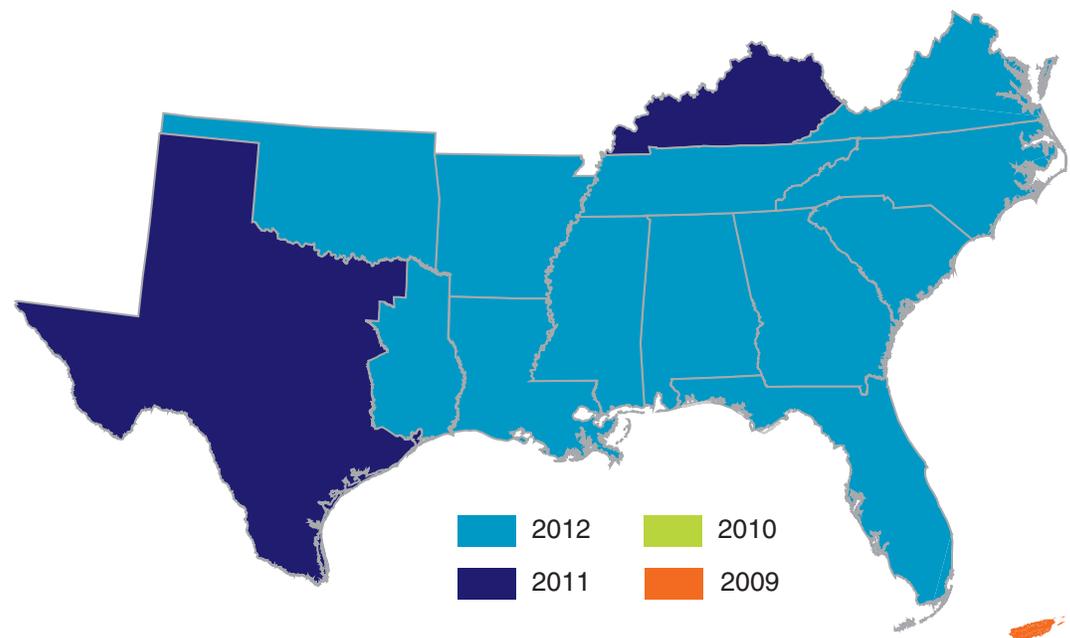
The last comprehensive assessment of forests along the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley

was completed in 1986 by the late Vic Rudis and coauthors. Recently, Southern Research Station Forest Inventory and Analysis forester Sonja Oswalt published an update to the 1986 report entitled “Forest Resources of the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley”. The publication reports current area, volume, biomass, and changes in relative stocking since 1986, and offers a new look at this important resource.

The publication is available on Treesearch at <http://treesearch.fs.fed.us/pubs/43960>.

### ***Current Status of FIA Data Posted***

#### **Most Recent FIA Data by State and Collection Year**



*For more information, contact Ali Conner at 865-862-2228 or [aconner@fs.fed.us](mailto:aconner@fs.fed.us).*

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FIA is a USDA Forest Service research work unit which collects, analyzes, and reports on data pertaining to our forest land in the Southern region. This region includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Virginia.

FIA conducts this program of research to improve the understanding of the Southern forest ecosystem.

Government and private agencies utilize this data to monitor forest resources, forest use, and forest health. The collection of data is done on private and public land.

Our system development success is a direct result of our partners, our talented scientists, analysts, computer specialists, and other staff members who have continually contributed to the mission of this complex project.

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The Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is dedicated to the principle of multiple use management of the Nation's forest resources for sustained yields of wood, water, forage, wildlife, and recreation. Through forestry research, cooperation with the States and private forest owners, and management of the National Forests and National Grasslands, it strives—as directed by Congress—to provide increasingly greater service to a growing Nation.

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### *National and Southern FIA Web sites of Interest*

National FIA Web site: <http://www.fia.fs.fed.us>

National FIA database available at: <http://www.fia.fs.fed.us/tools-data/other/default.asp>

National Timber Product Output (TPO) database available at: <http://srsfia2.fs.fed.us/>

National Woodland Owner Survey Web site: <http://www.fia.fs.fed.us/nwos/>

Information specific to Southern States: <http://srsfia2.fs.fed.us/>

Electronic copies of SRS FIA publications at: <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/>