

The Inventory

Issue 14,
June 2009

An Update Concerning the SRS FIA Program

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SRS FIA Information Update (June 2009)

In past issues of *The Inventory*, I have covered many of the successes of SRS FIA. We are always striving to meet the needs of the numerous users of FIA data. The Users Group Meetings conducted by SRS FIA that have occurred in previous years give you, the partners, cooperators, and users of FIA data an opportunity to provide feedback on how we are doing. In addition, this allows us to update you on changes in the SRS FIA Program. This feedback has allowed us to make changes in the SRS FIA Program to meet your needs.

We are planning this years' Users Group Meetings for later this summer and you will be notified of the particulars for these sessions. To supplement these meetings, I am encouraging all of you to send me an email and/or call to give me feedback to the following questions or let me know whatever is on your mind:

- What are we doing well?
- What do we need to do better?
- What are we doing that we need to stop doing and why?
- What are we doing that we need to change and how?
- If you had an interaction with us, how would you evaluate your experience?

As always, if you have any technical questions regarding FIA, please submit those questions to Charlene Walker (cwalker@fs.fed.us) and we will answer your questions 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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Current Status of FIA Data Posted to Mapmaker

State	Cycle	Periodic/ annual	Date year
Alabama	9	A	2008
Arkansas	9	A	2007
Florida	8	A	2007
Georgia	9	A	2008
Kentucky	6	A	2006
Louisiana	7	A	2005
Mississippi	8	A/P	2006
North Carolina	8	A	2006
Oklahoma (east)	1	P	1993
South Carolina	10	A	2007
Tennessee	8	A	2007
Texas (east)	8	A	2008
Texas (west)	51	A	2007
Virginia	8	A	2008

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News Items from Resource Use

Timber Product Output in the South in 2007

FIA along with State forestry agencies across the South have completed the 2007 forest industry surveys for roundwood harvest and consumption in the South and will update 12 of the 13 Southern States timber product output (TPO) data. The studies revealed that industrial TPO in the South dropped from 8.7 to 8.2 billion cubic feet between 2005 and 2007. Softwood product output was down 5 percent to 6.1 billion cubic feet and accounted for nearly three-quarters of total product output. Hardwood product output declined nearly 7 percent to 2.1 billion cubic feet. At the same time, the total number of primary roundwood using mills in the South dropped from 2,030 in 2005 to 1,841 in 2007. The 2007 TPO data was added to the FIA Web

site in early June. This information will be used not only by the State Forestry organizations, but by forest industry analysts and economist, university personnel, and individuals interested in how the forest resource is being utilized.

Individual State level TPO assessments will be published for 2007 over the next few months. In addition to updating the TPO database, the Resource Use Section will publish the Southern TPO Assessment for 2007 and the annual Southern Pulpwood report for 2007. Harvest and Utilization reports for Texas, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia are in various stages of the publication process.

THE SRS TPO Data Web site Table Generator Has a New LOOK!!

In addition to updating the TPO database retrieval system for 2007 Southern TPO data, Helen Beresford has spent several weeks updating the appearance and functionality of the SRS TPO data Web site table generator, as well. The new and improved version allows users to access the most current Southern TPO data and the most current national level (RPA TPO) data that was previously only available at the TPO Mapmaker site at the Northern Research Station.

Based on user input, several new tables have been added; most notably county level tables for mill residue information. All tables can be easily downloaded to Excel® spreadsheets. Another new feature that will be available only on the southern side of TPO data retrieval site

is the ability to select output tables in million cubic feet, thousand cubic feet, or **green tons**. Factors used to convert the cubic feet to weight are based on the most current inventory data for each State and are provided in a look-up table beside the green tons radial button. The new link for TPO data retrieval site is:
http://srsfia2.fs.fed.us/php/tpo_2009/tpo_rpa_intl.php.

For additional information about State TPO assessments, the Southern Pulpwood reports or the TPO database, contact Tony Johnson at 865-862-2042 or tjohnson09@fs.fed.us. For information regarding the Harvest and Utilization reports, contact James Bentley at 865-862-2056 or jbentley@fs.fed.us.

Mexico/U.S. Forest Health Monitoring Workshop

KaDonna Randolph was among 20 scientists and inventory specialists from the U.S. (Forest Service and Oregon State University) and Mexico (CONAFOR and Colegio de Postgraduados) who gathered in Guadalajara, Mexico from April 26 to May 1, 2009 to participate in a workshop on implementing forest health monitoring indicators in Mexico. During the workshop the U.S. team shared their

experiences with implementing forest health indicators in the U.S. and spent 2 days in the field demonstrating FIA's Phase 3 data collection methods and protocols. The group also discussed plans for implementing pilot tests of the indicators in Mexico this summer. KaDonna is one of the national advisors for the Phase 3 crown condition indicator.



KaDonna Randolph (back row, left) and other scientists from the U.S. and Mexico pause for a photo during the Mexico/U.S. Forest Health Monitoring Workshop.



Hector de los Santos-Posados (left to right), Bill Bechtold, Luz de Lourdes Saavedra-Romero, and KaDonna Randolph discuss implementing the crown condition indicator in Mexico. Photo by Borys Tkacz.

For more information, contact KaDonna Randolph at 865-862-2024 or krandolph@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	2005	Oct-08	9-7	63
Arkansas	2005	Oct-08	9-1	49
Florida	2008	Oct-08	9-3	65
Georgia	2004	Jul-08	9-1	71
Kentucky	2005	Oct-08	6-5	43
Louisiana	2009	Feb-09	8-1	18
Mississippi	2008	Oct-08	9-1	67
North Carolina	2008	Dec-08	9-1	48
Oklahoma (west)	2009	Jan-09	2-1	24
Puerto Rico	2006	Apr-07	4-3	92
South Carolina	2006	Jan-09	10-1	35
Tennessee	2005	Jan-09	8-1	47
Texas (east)	2008	Aug-08	9-1	83
Texas (west)	2004	Feb-08	51-5	89
U.S. Virgin Islands	2004	Jul-04	1	100
Virginia	2007	Feb-09	9-1,4	7

Information compiled May 1, 2009.

For more information, contact Dale Trenda at 865-862-2039 or dtrenda@fs.fed.us.

FY2009 Research Publications Published Since March 2009

- Hartsell, Andrew J.; Johnson, Tony G.** 2009. Alabama's forests. 2000. Resour. Bull. SRS-143. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 49 p.
- Hartsell, Andrew J.; Johnson, Tony G.** 2009. Alabama's forests, 2005. Resour. Bull. SRS-146. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 42 p.
- Johnson, Tony G.; Steppleton, Carolyn D.; Bentley, James W.** 2009. Southern pulpwood production, 2007. Resour. Bull. SRS-145. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 44 p.
- Oswalt, Christopher M.; Oswalt, Sonja N.; Johnson, Tony G. [and others].** 2009. Tennessee's forests, 2004. Resour. Bull. SRS-144. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 96 p.
- Oswalt, Sonja N.; Johnson, Tony G.; Coulston, John W.; Oswalt, Christopher M.** 2009. Mississippi's forests, 2006. Resour. Bull. SRS-147. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 78 p.
- Oswalt, Sonja N.; Johnson, Tony G.; Howell, Mike; Bentley, James W.** 2009. Fluctuations in national forest timber harvest and removals: the southern regional perspective. Resour. Bull. SRS-148. Asheville, NC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station. 30 p.
- Woodall, C.W.; Oswalt, C.M.; Westfall, J.A. [and others].** 2009. An indicator of tree migration in forests of the eastern United States. *Forest Ecology and Management*. 257: 1434-1444.

Louisiana Progress to Date

SRS FIA began the next Louisiana inventory this March on a simultaneous two phase front. Many QA/QC employees are coming into the State to assist in the Louisiana Cycle 7 study where we are going back to check on suspected plots that may not have been completed correctly on the past inventory. Out of the 293 plots chosen to be checked, we have completed 152 or roughly 61 percent. The ratio of plots without issues to plots with issues is running about 55 to 45 percent. A number of the plots that we are not remeasuring were called lost in Cycle 7 and during this study we have found the past pins, witness trees, and tally trees and the new plot may be on top of the old location or as far off as 70 feet from the newly installed plot and still be within tolerance. The progress for the Cycle 7 study has been good considering the weather, high water, and the time of year we are going into the southern part of Louisiana.

For more information, contact Kathy Tillman at 936-569-7981 or kmtillman@fs.fed.us.

The Cycle 8 inventory is about 18 percent complete and has been hampered by the high

water, time of year, and the recent addition of the Phase 3 plots. The additional training and added plot measurement components always reduce production until this part of the inventory is completed. The morale of the crew is good and they are excited to see progress being made. The Cycle 8 work has shown that we are not able to identify all the problematic plots and the crews working on the new inventory have found some additional data discrepancies.

To date, the inventory is being completed by the Federal FIA employees with help coming from the State of Louisiana in the form of landowner contacts and possible help with boat access plots. Wade Dubea, State Forester, has voiced his support of the new inventory and the cleanup of the past data. Wade met with Bill Burkman, Program Manager; Dale Trenda, Data Acquisition Section Head; and Kathy Tillman, Zone Supervisory Forester, responsible for Louisiana earlier this year and all were positive about the plans for the inventory.

Data Acquisition Notes

In 2007, the Southern Research Station's Data Acquisition section began classifying the land use of each plot prior to field visitation and "office-generating" land-use information for plots that are clearly nonforest. As part of the "prefield" system, this process incorporates Geographic Information System software and the latest National Agriculture Imagery Program data to allow photointerpreters to stratify plots into two categories; field visit and nonvisit plots. Prefield staff then classify the land use of nonvisit plots into classes such as water, urban, and agriculture. The land use for nonvisit plots is then "office-generated" prior to starting a new inventory year in each State, saving time and resources in the field. For quality assessment, about 10 percent of the office-generated plots are randomly selected from each State and sent to the field to continually evaluate our ability to relate what's on the imagery to what's on the ground.

As of May 15, 2009, 207 quality assessment plots had been returned from the field from all States in the Southern Region, for their current inventory year. Only two of those quality assessment plots were transmitted with a forested condition, which is a very good indication that quality control measures,

image interpretation techniques, current age of imagery, and imagery resolution are working to accurately stratify plots during the prefield process. This process will continue to be used to eliminate unnecessary field visits, and contribute to the overall efficiency of the FIA program.

The Mobile Integrated Data Acquisition System (MIDAS) was introduced in October 2008. When combined with MIDAS, Bluetooth-enabled Global Positioning System (GPS) technology has resulted in measurable improvements to the plot coordinate database. Field crews using the "MIDAS + Bluetooth" system have achieved accuracy comparable to other GPS receivers, with the added convenience of minimal user input. As of April 2009, the MIDAS data collection program had been implemented in all 13 Southern States. Bluetooth-enabled GPS use has been steadily increasing by State field crews in the region but 49 percent of plot locations were collected using the MIDAS + Bluetooth system in April 2009, up from only 5 percent in February. However, the quality and consistency of the plot coordinate database is dependent on the use of Bluetooth GPS technology by all MIDAS users. The current status of GPS type usage and plot tracking maps can be found here: http://srsfia2.fs.fed.us/data_center/plot_tracking.shtml.

For more information, contact Doug Shipley at 865-862-2049 or dshipley@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.

National and Southern FIA Web sites of Interest

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

National FIA database available at: <http://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/>