



Arthur Hitt

Landowner Assistance Forester



Mission Statement

- To protect the forest from harmful agents e.g. wildfire, insects, and disease.
- To help landowners manage their forests in a responsible way, that will benefit themselves, their land, and society.
- To educate the public about the value and importance of our forests to insure a healthy environment and thriving economy.



AFC Offices and Personnel

- 67 County offices
 - With 219 County Managers, Foresters and Forest Rangers
- Four Regional Offices:

Ozark	Brewton
Tuscaloosa	Birmingham
- State Headquarters in Montgomery



Landowner Assistance



Technical Service Provider for Forestry Practices

Provide technical services and advice to
landowners on:

- Selling timber
- Timber management plans
- Multiple-use/Stewardship management plans
- Timber management practices
 - Reforestation
 - Timber Stand Improvement
- Wildlife management practices



Tree Planting

- Softwoods
*emphasis on
longleaf*
- Hardwoods



Hurricane Katrina Impacts on Pine Species: Implications for Landowners

Species	Type of Hurricane Damage (%)			
	None	Snapped	Leaning	Blown over
Loblolly	16.3	75.9	5.7	2
Slash	52.4	38.1	7.8	1.7
Longleaf	64	8.9	16.9	10.2



Site Preparation

Mechanical

- *Clearing, raking and piling*
- *Drum chopping*
- *Mowing, disking, scalping*
- *Subsoiling*

Chemical

Burning



Drum Chopping



Scalping



Subsoiling



PRESCRIBED BURNING



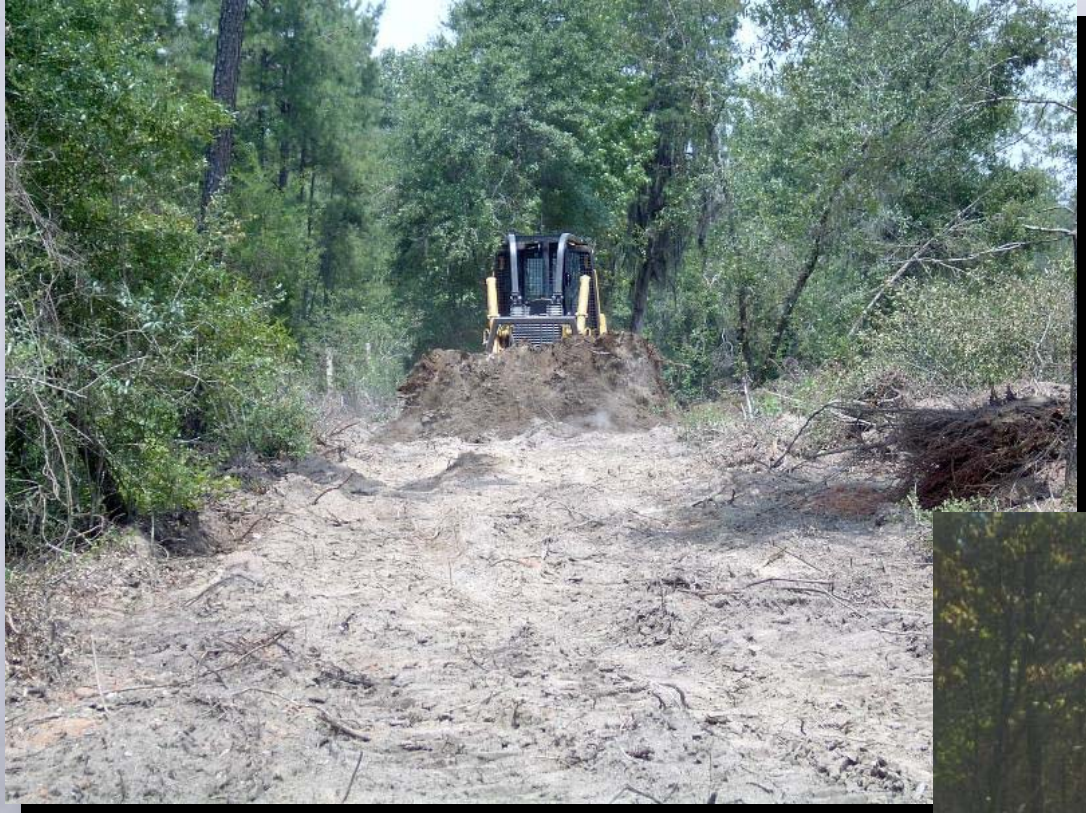
- Site preparation burning
- Understory burning
- Fuel reduction burns



NATURAL REGENERATION



PERMANENT FIRELANES



THINNING

- Pre commercial
- Non commercial
- TSI



OTHER TSI PRACTICES

- Chemical release
- Herbaceous Weed Control (HWC)
- Pruning
- Understory Burning



Best Management Practices (BMP's) for Forestry

1. Streamside Management Zones
2. Stream Crossings
3. Forest Roads
4. Timber Harvesting
5. Reforestation /Stand Management
6. Forested Wetland Mgt.
7. Re-vegetation /Stabilization

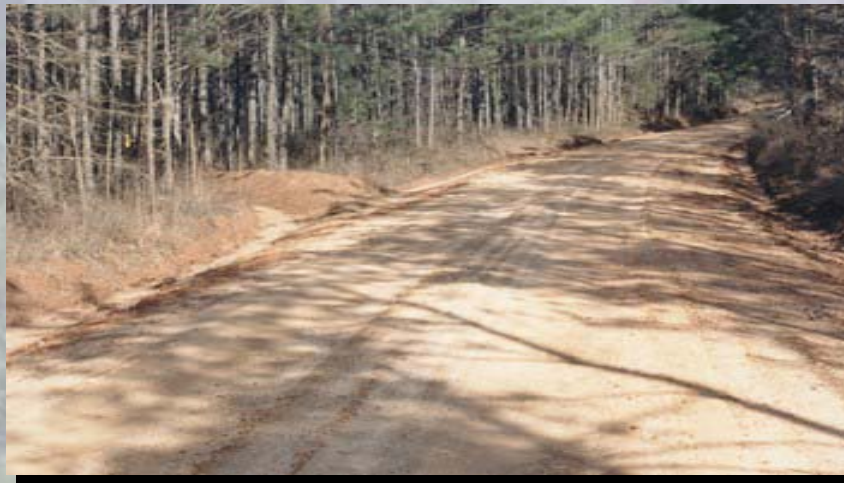




Stream Crossings



SMZ



Crowned Road

WILDLIFE OPENINGS



- Push openings
- Advise on types of foods to plant
- Advise on the size, shape, and maintenance of the openings

Resource Personnel

- AFC Registered Foresters
- Certified Wildlife Biologists on staff
- Forestry Vendors' lists
- Forest Consultant's list



Recent Landowner Assistance Programs

- Invasive Plant Control Program (ICPC)

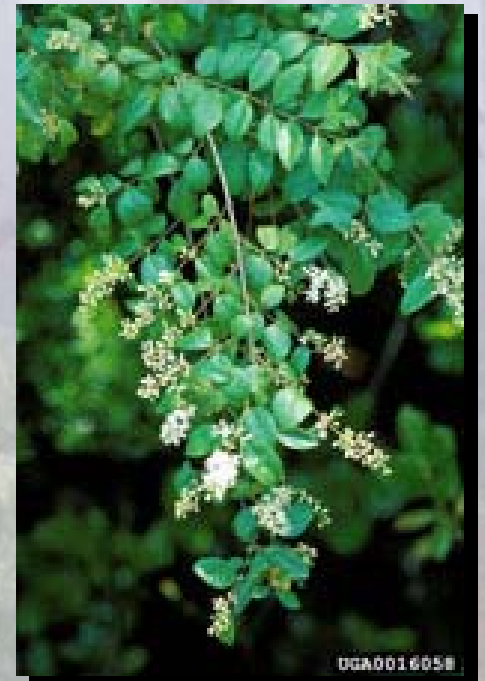
Cogongrass



Tallow tree



Privet



pictures from the Bugwood Website

Hurricane Recovery Programs

- Emergency Firelane Clearing and Prescribed Burning (Hurricane Ivan)

- Forest Land Recovery Program (FLRP)

- Site Clearing & Preparation including herbicide application
- Tree Planting
- Creating Wildlife Openings
- Prescribed Burning/ firelanes
- Noncommercial Thinning
- Invasive species control





Insects and diseases do 43 times more harm and damage to Alabama's forestlands than wildfires.





The most destructive of these insects is the Southern Pine Beetle. When beetles attack, the pine trees will rapidly change color as they begin to die.



This color change makes aerial detection the most effective way to locate beetle-infested timber. Utilizing a Global Positioning System, pilots can pinpoint an infected area no matter how remote it may be.

SPB Prevention and Restoration Program

- AFC will notify landowners with active spots and send location maps
- Advise on control methods
 - Salvage
 - Cut & Leave
 - Pile & Burn
 - Chemical



SPB Prevention Methods



SPB prevention by
thinning high-hazard stands.

Cut buffer strips around infestations



UGA4178042

SPB Prevention Methods



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Current Cost-Share Programs

Administered by:

- Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS)
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC)



FSA Programs

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

- Intended to take highly erodible cropland out of production
- General signup 33rd CRP
 - Ended April 28, 2006
 - Qualify based on the erodability index (EI) and the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI)
- Re-enrollment and Extensions (REX) of the 29th CRP
 - Qualify based on original EBI and current compliance
- Emergency Forestry CRP
 - $\geq 35\%$ merchantable timber losses from 2005 storms
 - Cannot be enrolled in CRP program
 - Yet to be announced, short on details of the program



•Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)

- Merchantable timber losses \geq 35% from 2005 storms
- Cost share payments on reforestation and rehabilitation limited to 75% NTE \$150/acre



NRCS Programs

- Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
- Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)
- Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)
- Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP)

- EQIP is targeted at improving:
 - forest health
 - wildlife habitat
 - declining T&E species



Forest Health Practices

- **FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT**
 - Hardwood Crop Tree Release
 - Precommercial thinning in stagnant young pine stands with little commercial value
 - » Leave ~300 trees/acre
 - » Linked with prescribed burning
 - Understory release in mid-rotation pine stands
 - » Herbicides
 - » Mechanical
 - » Linked to prescribed burning regime



- Chemical release of longleaf seedlings
- Prescribed burning in open canopy pine
 - » i.e. 70% canopy cover

EQIP – Forest Health

Tree and Shrub Establishment

- For forest diversity
 - Native hardwoods
 - Longleaf pine (must be linked to burning program)
 - Shortleaf pine
 - Extra points for recovery from natural disasters
- Silvopasture for agroforestry
- Low density pine planting
 - » Shortleaf, loblolly and longleaf
 - » 403 trees per acre (9X12 spacing)
 - » Firebreaks required
 - » 10% wildlife openings required



EQIP – Wildlife/Declining Species

- Aquatic habitats
 - Fencing along streams to keep out cattle
- Early Successional Habitats
 - Heavy pine thinning back to 40 sq.ft. of basal area per acre (linked to a burning regime). Three incentive payments of \$20 per acre plus cost-share for burning.
 - Two moderate thinnings down to 60 sq.ft. of basal area per acre (linked to a burning regime). Three incentive payments of \$15 per acre plus cost-share for burning.
 - Fallow cropland for quail
 - \$40/ac for whole fields
 - \$60/ac for field edges



WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM (WHIP)



WHIP Priorities

- **Species Priorities**
 - Threatened, endangered, or declining species
 - Bobwhite quail and other species dependent upon grassland/shrub/open canopy pine habitats
 - Waterfowl
 - Wild turkey
 - Neo-tropical migratory birds



WHIP Priorities (cont)

- **Habitat Priorities**

- Rare, endangered or unique ecosystems/communities which are declining

- Longleaf pine
 - Wetland savannah
 - Bald cypress swamps
 - Limestone/sandstone glades
 - Blackland prairie
 - Sandhill habitats

- **Habitat Priorities (continued)**
- Lack of early succession vegetative habitat (native grasses and/or shrub cover) i.e. lack of nesting and brood rearing habitat
 - This can consist of open canopy forestland understory where stands are thinned back to 70% crown cover
- Waterfowl and wading bird habitat
- Quality upland and bottomland stands
- Riparian forest buffers

- Types of practices cost-shared under WHIP
 - Prescribed burning to encourage native plant growth
 - Pre-commercial thinning (linked to burning)
 - Mechanical or chemical control of midstory hardwoods in mid-rotation pine stands (linked to burning)
 - Longleaf pine establishment (linked to burning)



Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)

- Have to have $\geq 35\%$ storm damage from 2005 storms
- 1st batching period ended April 28, but NRCS is still taking applications
- Cost share on site prep and tree planting up to 75% NTE \$150/acre



Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

Purpose: to restore wet cropland back to bottomland hardwoods

Requirements: must be open land and must have wetland soils

Options:

1. Restoration Agreement – pays 75% of cost of planting hardwoods and plugging ditches
2. 30 Year Easement
3. Permanent Easement – Pays 100% of the cost of planting hardwoods and plugging ditches

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Programs

Programs are targeted at restoration of T&E species and their habitats

- Glade Restoration
- Wetland Restoration
- Pitcher Plant Bog Restoration
- Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Restoration
- Native Grassland or Prairie Restoration
- Riparian Restoration



USFWS Programs

Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)

- Private Stewardship Grants Program
- Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Eligibility Requirements

- submit project proposals listing the benefits to the target species



Alabama Forestry Commission Prescribed Burning Program

Purpose

- to encourage landowners to start a prescribed burning program on their property
- to reduce heavy fuel build-up areas from storm damage and lack of burning
- to improve wildlife habitat
- to restore native species of Alabama's unique ecosystems
- targeting longleaf stands



- The practices that are cost shared are:
 - Prescribed burning
 - Permanent firebreak establishment
- The AFC Prescribed Burning Program will be announced in May, 2006



WEBSITES

- AFC www.forestry.state.al.us
- FSA www.fsa.usda.gov
- NRCS www.nrcs.usda.gov
- USFWS www.fws.gov

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