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October 16, 2026, MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Following a preliminary aerial survey of damage caused by Hurricane Isaias, the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) estimates the storm damaged more than 2.5 million tons of timber valued at more than \$33.5 million.

The initial assessment focused on the hardest-hit areas, which includes Conecuh, Escambia and Monroe counties.

“While we are thankful the damage was not as extensive as it could have been, these losses are still devastating for Alabama landowners,” said Alabama State Forester Rick Oates. “Growing timber is a long-term investment, requiring decades of hard work, careful management and financial commitment. In a matter of hours, a storm can destroy what landowners have spent much of their lives building.”

AFC pilots conducted an aerial survey on Oct. 13, identifying a damaged area approximately 36 miles long and up to seven miles wide. The assessment identified 154,783 acres within the impacted area, including 64,795 acres classified as forestland and an additional 40,805 acres classified as woody wetlands.

To calculate the estimates, the AFC used data from the most recent Forest Inventory and Analysis report. AFC staff contribute to collecting data and compiling that report annually.

“Forest inventory data gives us a picture of Alabama's timber resources long before a storm ever develops,” said AFC Forest Health Coordinator Drew Metzler. “By combining that information with what we're seeing from the air, we can begin to understand the extent of the damage and put a dollar value on the losses. It's one of the reasons maintaining accurate forest inventory data is so important.”

These estimates are preliminary, and additional ground surveys will be necessary to verify the data.

Hurricane Isaias made landfall near Destin, Florida, the evening of Oct. 9 with maximum sustained winds of 105 miles per hour. By 1 a.m. the following morning, the center of the rapidly moving storm was about 55 miles south-southwest of Montgomery and maximum sustained winds had decreased to 65 miles per hour.

In addition to assessing timber damage, AFC personnel assisted with emergency response efforts in southwest Alabama. They helped deliver water, food and tarps to affected communities, while saw crews helped clear nearly 100 miles of roads.

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Serving Alabama's forest landowners for more than 100 years.

See attachments for aerial photos and ground-level photos of timber damage in the affected counties. For questions or if larger file size photos are needed, please contact AFC Communications and PR Director Mary Wilson at mary.wilson@forestry.alabama.gov or (334) 315-8019.