



Northeast Texas Forest Landowners Association Newsletter

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How Many Trees Did They Say There Are In Texas???

Results of the state's recent forest inventory and analysis were announced by State Forester and Texas Forest Service Director James Hull.

The survey, conducted approximately every 10 years since 1932, is the most accurate source of scientific information used to address issues such as land use changes, reforestation and availability of the timber supply to meet economic and community development needs. Local tax appraisers also depend on the survey data for property owners claiming forest productivity tax benefits.

East Texas commercial timberland now totals 11.9 million acres, which shows a slight gain of about 105,000 acres since 1992 when the last survey was conducted. "Overall, we are maintaining healthy forests and growing more trees than we are cutting, and that is the good news," said Hull.

While the survey shows a current surplus of timber, particularly hardwood, Hull voiced concern about the long-term future of the timber supply, as it relates to missed economic opportunity, if the state does not intensify tree-planting efforts soon.

"We are now seeing the positive effects of the past 20-25 years of the intensive reforestation efforts of landowners, particularly the forest industry," said Hull.

Approximately 300,000 individual and family forest owners, now comprising 63 percent of the forestland ownership, will greatly influence the sustainability and growth of the state's forests in the future because of the forest industry's divestiture of more than 1.5 million acres over the past several years. "Individual landowners must be given the opportunity and incentives to take up and even expand these tree planting efforts," said Hull.

"Texas forests are one of the state's most valuable natural resources, with unlimited environmental and economic potential for future generations. To grow the forest industry and associated forestry benefits in Texas, and still meet our own state's huge demand, we need to start growing additional trees now," said Hull.

The forest survey, formally known as the Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) is a cooperative program between the Texas Forest Service and the Southern Research Station of the USDA Forest Service. For more information, visit the TFS website at <http://texasforests.service.tamu.edu/shared/article.asp?DocumentID=1020>

Mind the BMPs When Planting Trees

To reduce the potential of polluting streams and other bodies of water on their property, landowners and contractors should keep water and soils in mind when preparing to plant trees. There are Best Management Practices (BMPs) to guide you during these operations.

Remember these points when doing site preparation and planting:

In general —

- Mark boundaries of all streamside management zones (SMZ) clearly before site preparation activities.
- Plan ahead to minimize disturbance by equipment in SMZs.
- Site preparation activities should skirt SMZs and stream channels. Any debris should be placed above the ordinary high water mark of any stream or body of open water.
- Any site preparation practices and planting should be done following the contour of the land.
- Avoid intensive site preparation on steep slopes and on slopes with thin or highly erodible soils.
- Hand plant excessively steep slopes and wet sites.

When using prescribed fire —

- Firebreaks should have water control structures (water bars, wing ditches, etc.) in order to minimize erosion.
- Burning in an SMZ reduces the filtering capacity of the ground covering. Plan burns to minimize impacts on the SMZ.
- Avoid, when possible, site prep burns on steep slopes or highly erodible soils.

When using chemicals —

- Carefully plan applications to avoid direct and indirect entry of chemicals into streams and impoundments.
- Avoid applying chemicals to vegetation protecting eroded slopes, gullies, drainages, and other fragile areas subject to erosion.

Source — *Texas Forest Service*

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My View

Where does our time go? It seemed like only yesterday that I wrote my last article, but since then we had the holidays and even winter for a few days. While the northeast is buried in snow, we are so lucky to enjoy a nice January with very few cold days. I recall my dad talking about growing up in west Texas around 1918 or so. It was colder in those days. He shared a ranch house with nine brothers and sisters and his mom. He and two brothers shared a bed on the porch covered with a wagon sheet to keep the cold off them. He often said they had to shake ice or snow off that sheet in the morning when they got up. For sure, times have changed for us and none of us do much more than adjust a thermostat or add a log to the fire when the temperature drops.

My time as your President is fast coming to a close. This fall our association will have officer and director elections. Since this is the time of year many of you sit by the fire and read seed and nursery catalogs and dream of the future, I hope that you also consider doing more than planting a bit of corn or peas this year. Why not consider giving away a bit of yourself. This association continues in large part because of the effort of just a few of its members. They do it not because they have nothing else to do, but because they (1) have a love for timber and natural land ownership and (2) enjoy being with other people and working together to inform and educate each member of the association about timber and land ownership issues that affect us all. These efforts are the foundation of our association. Our association is what is because of people giving back a little of themselves. This association is only as good as its members. It would be great if more of you step in and take on some of the tasks many have handled for so many years.

Each of you has different talents. Some would make great county directors and others officers of the association. Others may be good at handling the computer web site or newsletter. It does not matter what you can do so long as you do it. So, as you enjoy the remaining days of winter when there are less demands on your time, consider how you can be more involved in your association.

Our program February 12 in Pittsburg will be on Best Management Practices with Jake Donellan from the Texas Forest Service. It is a timely subject since many have taken advantage of higher prices and cut timber this year. As you plan on reforestation, it's good to know what is the best approach to take. Be sure and read the newsletter carefully as there are several interesting events that you can participate in. If you send me or Bill Tucker your email address, you will also be informed of those that are not in the newsletter.

As always, I end with a few quotations. The first is from William Butler Yeats and makes very clear the most important purpose of our association. "Education is not the filling of the pail, but the lighting of a fire." What we learn and share we pass on to others. The second is from Plato and relates to my request that you consider serving your association in a larger capacity than just a member. "Carry the Fire. Those having torches will pass them on to others."

See you at the meeting Saturday, February 12 at 10:30 AM in Pittsburg.

Sid Greer

Meeting and Program Notes

The Texas Forest Service has recently completed their revised manual of Best Management Practices, and printed new handbooks. There have been several major changes, and it's a much better book. Jake Donellan, a specialist in this area, will give us an updated presentation and should have the new manuals on hand for distribution.

The directors recommend that we again provide scholarships for teachers to attend the TFA Teachers Conservation Institute this summer. We will have brochures and contact information at the meeting should the members approve this recommendation. The sponsoring cost has increased to \$100 per person, but it's still a heck of a deal for five days with room, meals, and great exposure to modern sustainable forestry.

The Texas Forestry Association is sponsoring a new event, a "Tailgate Party," on 20 acres of its land near Mt. Enterprise. This is for all the County Private Forest Landowners Associations and will feature vendors of forest equipment and related items, consultant foresters, food hot off the grill, door prizes, etc. We will also have a chance to tour part of the site which has been marked for cutting, and may get to see logging in progress or a good site cleanup, depending on the timing. Plans are not set in stone yet, but include shuttles for a short tour of the nearby Hardwood Barn in Mt. Enterprise. This is, of course, a great chance to get acquainted with our southern neighbors and exchange information and ideas. Since this is primarily a landowner association affair, we are welcome to participate in the work during the day as well as the fun (maybe cooking, etc.) but the load should be light. We will have more information at the meeting, and in the next newsletter.

We still plan for our own Field Day on May 14, giving us two outside events this year. We should have details on this one at the meeting, and in the next newsletter.

Finally, there are some important workshops and meetings coming up, including the TFS federal and local property tax workshops, as well as the local black bear town meetings. Further information is in this newsletter.

See you in Pittsburg Feb. 12!

— Bill

2005 PROGRAM CALENDAR

Saturday, Feb 12, 10:30 AM

Best Management Practices
Jake Donnellan, TFS
Pilgrim Community Room
Pittsburg, Texas

Saturday, April 23

Forest Landowners
Tailgate Party
Mt. Enterprise, Texas

Saturday, May 14

NETFLA Field Day

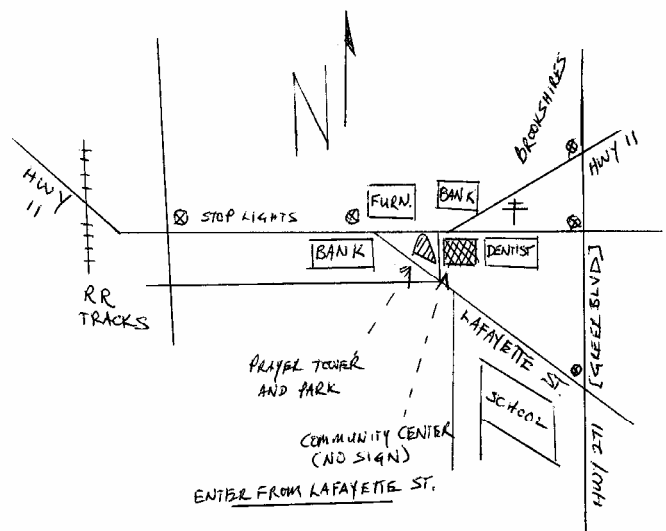
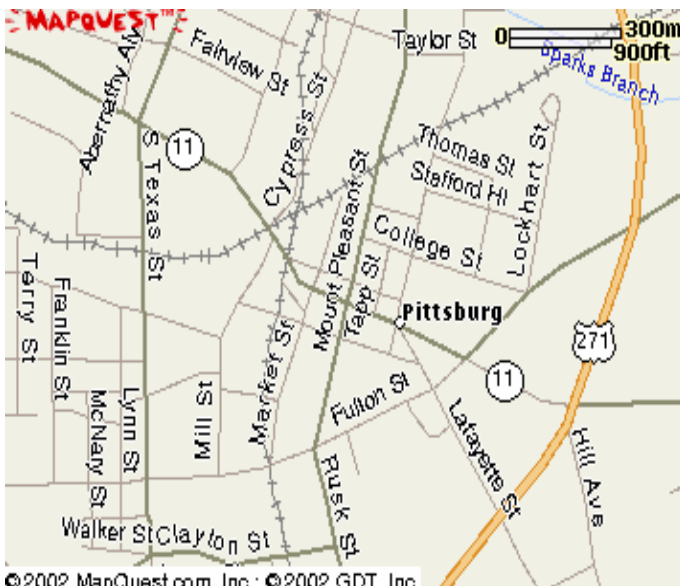
2005 dues of \$15 were payable as of Jan. 1, 2005.

The red dot program continues. If you have a red dot on your newsletter, you owe 2004 dues of \$15. If 2004 dues are not paid before or at the Feb 12 meeting, this will be your last newsletter. Be sure to note on your check if your dues are for 2004, 2005, or both.

This is tax deductible for most of us.

Please make checks and send to:

NETFLA
PO Box 642
Mt. Vernon, TX 75457



The British Are Coming! The British Are Coming! Well, Not Really — Just A Few Black Bears...

Bill Tucker

Yep, that's right, they're on their way back to where they used to live

I hadn't thought much about this subject until this past December, when I found out, through TFS and TFA, about the draft *East Texas Black Bear Conservation and Management Plan 2005 - 20015*. Mr. Nathan Garner, Region 3 (East Texas) Wildlife Director for Texas Parks and Wildlife, spent almost an hour on the phone with me and provided a copy of the plan for study.

After studying the plan and attending the town hall meeting in Mt. Pleasant Monday, I thought I'd share some background on the subject, as well as a few thoughts and possible concerns.

Arkansas has done a great job of re-establishing the predominant black bear species in North America, *Ursus americanus americanus*, in it's State, with the aid of some imported bears from Minnesota. The population is doing so well that it has overflowed into southeastern Oklahoma and, in a few instances, northeast Texas. *Americanus* once ranged over almost all of North America.

Louisiana, in cooperation with the national Fish and Wildlife Service, has also re-established breeding populations of another sub-species in the eastern part of the state bordering the Mississippi River. This species is *Ursus americanus luteolus*, commonly called the Louisiana black bear. The eastern range of this bear was once the eastern edge of East Texas, primarily further south, although none have been found in Texas in more than fifty years.

The two species are so visually indistinguishable — even by experts — that DNA analysis is often required to define which is which. Weights for adult males range from 275 - 400 pounds. The Louisiana bear, *luteolus*, is on the federal endangered species list as threatened,

while the common black bear, *americanus*, is not. Both bears are listed and protected by the State of Texas, however, as threatened. *Garner stated that for practical purposes, any bear in E. Texas would be treated as the Louisiana bear.*

It is currently illegal for an individual to kill a black bear anywhere in Texas, with penalty of heavy fine and possible imprisonment. His understanding is that any endangered species may be killed in defense of life, limb, or property, but any such case would have to be tried by a local court and jury.

Favored habitat for both species is hardwood bottoms or mixed stands for mast, berries, and other vegetation and thick cover for escape. Both species are normally shy — unlike the grizzly. Given the chance, they will normally try to escape, even climbing trees to do so, and they can all climb. *Mothers with cubs are another story.* The natural routes of expansion follow water courses and drainage areas. A few roaming young males have crossed the Red River into North Texas, and there have been some instances around Texarkana. Bears and wild hogs favor similar habitat, and are similar in their diet. Both are omnivores, feeding primarily on plants and insects, but won't pass up meat if given a chance. Mr. Garner said that bears might take a young hog or two, but since the hogs outnumber the bears by two million to one, didn't hold much hope for balance...

Ranchers and goat raisers at the meeting raised questions about livestock losses, and Mr. Garner admitted there might be some. He also stated there was no such thing as a bear-proof fence. Wonder what Bo Pilgrim plans to do...

Think of a 300 pound coon, and you begin to get some idea of the potential human-bear conflicts. Compost heaps,

garbage dumps, your trash can, bird feeder, deer feeder, and yes, your garden and bbq grill. Omnivores, remember?

One good thing — as forest landowners who manage our timber for economic return — we are exempted by the federal Clean Water Act and by the State of Texas from some of the possibly restrictive provisions of the law on others. So far, we are allowed to follow all normally recognized silvicultural practices, including spraying, thinning, and final clear cuts. I don't know what will happen in future years and wars between the cities and the country folks, but we'd best plan for the long term, as timber growers always do.

On an ironic note, Dallas wants to inundate 80,000 acres of prime bear habitat for their area's water supply. Wonder what will happen when the greens meet the yuppies?

Looking at the list of "Participating Agencies and Organizations" in the draft plan, I find: 18 government agencies; 7 environmental groups; 5 private industry groups; 1 non-industrial timber association (not ours); and 1 Indian tribe. Do we need to change this balance?

I commend Mr. Garner for his efforts to bring an objective message to East Texas and his work on the Plan. TPWD is trying to plan for an acknowledged future reality. These town hall meetings can be hostile, but in the one I saw, he maintained balance and answered questions truthfully, without sugar coating or selling a "done deal." *Garner is also bringing the message to East Texas first, rather than the cities, for our comment.*

Future town hall meetings are listed below. Allow two hours for the presentation and Q & A. Copies of the Bear Plan can be had by calling Tom Harvey at 512-389-4453. We should also have copies available for the Feb. 12 meeting.

All meetings begin at 7 PM

Jan. 31 – Marshall, Harrison County, Harrison County Courthouse, 200 W. Houston, 71st. District Courtroom, 2nd Floor

Feb. 1 – Texarkana, Bowie County, Texarkana City Hall Council Room, 220 Texas Boulevard

Feb. 2 – Clarksville, Red River County, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Service Center, 900 East Main

Feb. 3 – Paris, Lamar County, Lamar County Courthouse Annex, 231 Lamar Avenue, County Court Room

Timber Harvesting Tips

Rich Dottellis, District Forester, Texas Forest Service, Olive, TX

A timber harvest marks the completion of many years of growth and should be carefully considered. If done properly, the landowner will profit from the sale, and the site will be protected for the next reforestation.

Most landowners sell timber only once or twice in their lifetime and are unaware of problems that arise from poor harvesting operations. Getting the most money from the timber sale shouldn't be the only objective. Future productivity of the land and protection of streams, young timber stands and eroding soils should be equally important to the landowner.

Each year many forest landowners receive a large sum for their timber, but are angry about the condition of their property after the harvest and may face a major investment to reclaim it into productive, healthy forestland.

Often, a poor harvesting job will affect adjacent landowners as well. Downed fences, opened gates, road damage and litter are the most common complaints of neighboring landowners when the harvesting operation is not carefully planned. Environmental complaints as well as civil court complaints may also be a result of a poorly planned timber sale.

The forest landowner not only has an ethical responsibility to be a good steward of the land, but also bears a legal

responsibility to protect the environment. At present, the landowner shares the liability of protecting water quality and endangered species with the logging contractor, the consultant forester, and other involved parties.

The best practice for all parties is to put the timber sale agreement in writing. A simple contract includes identification of the seller and buyer, location and description of the timber being harvested, purchase price and method of payment.

Forest landowners should always consider seeking professional assistance when preparing to harvest timber. A list of consulting foresters for Texas can be obtained from the Texas Forest Service website at http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/pdf/forest/landowner_assistance/referral.pdf. A consultant forester can determine the amount and actual value of the timber.

Also, the planning and supervising of any logging operation requires experience and expertise of a consultant forester. A tax accountant familiar with forestry taxes can direct timber sale income and reforestation expenditures to reduce the tax burden. An attorney experienced in timber sale contracts can ensure that the best interest of both parties is represented. Additional income or reduced costs usually outweigh the cost of these professional services.

With a successful timber sale, the landowner receives the financial and environmental rewards of responsible forest management, and the land is protected and sustained for future generations.

Texas Forest Service Calendar of Events

Income Tax on Timber Seminars - (Registration form can be found at <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu>):

- Feb. 2, 2005 Longview, Holiday Inn Express. 8:30 – 4:30. Lunch provided. Must pre-register, cost - \$40.00. For information contact Susie Shockley, Texas Forest Service – (936) 639-8180 or access <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu>.
- Feb. 3, 2005 Lufkin, Pitzer Garrison Civic Center. 8:30 - 4:30. Lunch provided. Must pre-register, cost - \$40.00. For information contact Susie Shockley, Texas Forest Service – (936) 639-8180 or access <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu>.

Texas Timberland Property Tax Seminars - (Registration form can be found at <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu>):

- Feb. 9, 2005 Longview, Holiday Inn Express, 9-12. Must pre-register, cost \$40.00. For information contact Monica Jadowski, Texas Forest Service – (979) 458-6630 or access <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu>.
- Feb. 10, 2005 Livingston, Lake Livingston Inn, 9-12. Must pre-register, cost \$40.00. For information contact Monica Jadowski, Texas Forest Service – (979) 458-6630 or access <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu>.
- Feb. 18, 2005 Lufkin, Pitzer Garrison Civic Center, 9-12. Must pre-register, cost \$40.00. For information contact Monica Jadowski, Texas Forest Service – (979) 458-6630 or access <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu>.

Wood Biomass: The Fuel of the Future?

With the closing of some major wood production facilities in East Texas recently, forest landowners are seeking new avenues for markets for the trees they are growing. The accelerating cost of gas and electricity is creating a demand for cheaper sources of fuel for those utilities. Using wood biomass for energy is becoming a real possibility.

Mr. Richard Bergman, Chemical Engineer with the U.S. Forest Service, Forest Products Lab in Madison, Wisconsin, offers the following observations:

What is biomass? Biomass is any organic matter available on a renewable basis. Biomass includes forest and mill residues, agricultural crops and wastes, wood and wood wastes, animal wastes, livestock operation residues, aquatic plants, fast-growing trees and plants, and municipal and industrial wastes.

Will this technology make use of softwoods and hardwoods?

Yes, either softwoods or hardwoods can be combusted (green or dry) for heat and power or gasified (primarily air-dried) for heat and power. Typically softwoods have a lower density and higher moisture content than hardwoods so any combustion technology requires more softwood fuel on a volume basis than hardwood fuel although the resin content in softwoods can balance out the total volume needed somewhat. Also, one can process the wood residue into wood pellets for a higher-value product than just wood chips.

What are the Pro's and Con's of such usage of the wood supply?

Environmental Pro's- renewable, low net carbon emission, minimal sulfur (no acid rain threat) and heavy metals (no mercury poisoning of lakes), and minimal ash (less than 1% by weight)

Economic Pro's - low fuel costs (on dollar per million Btu basis), high percentage money generated for wood fuel stays in the local economy versus fossil fuels where the money spent on fuel ends outside of local economy, less energy dependence on foreign countries, reduce fire danger by removing the wood for fuel due to either broadcasting of wood chips on the forest floor or not thinning overstocked forests of small diameter material.

Technology Pro's - wood fuel can be used from a variety of sources (urban wood waste, mechanical thinning, selective harvesting, etc.) that would not have other uses like producing heat and power, wood consumption for a biomass power plant is approximately one oven dried ton per hour per megawatt (~50 oven dried tons per hour for a 50 MW wood power plant at 25% efficiency).

Con's - Wood fuel transportation costs are typically limited by a 50-mile radius due to the low energy density of wood (~5,000 Btus per pound) versus coal (~13,000 Btus per pound) and other liquid fuels. However, there is newer technology being tested that converts solid wood fuel to liquid wood fuel that

would reduce transportation costs significantly. Wood fuel storage and handling may double the initial capital costs versus fossil fuels. The long-term wood supply needs to be guaranteed for financing of the project (just like other projects). This is harder on federal land versus state and private forests although long-term forest stewardship contracts are becoming available.

What are the costs involved? The following systems are the ones I am most familiar with and fall within the needs of institutions, schools, and hospitals. In general, wood combustion system costs are \$50,000 to \$150,000 for a 0.6 MW (2 million Btu/h) system, \$100,000 to \$350,000 for a 0.6 to 1.5 MW (2 to 5 million Btu/h) system, and \$250,000 to \$500,000 for a 1.5 to 3 MW (5 to 10 million Btu/h) system. Cost of installation is extremely variable because of the different types and capacities of equipment as well as whether equipment is new, used, or in-place and can be converted to burn wood.

If you are interested in determining actual costs for a wood energy system, one of our extension people here at the University of Wisconsin has developed a rigorous boiler spreadsheet analysis program that people can use to develop realistic numbers in comparing wood chip-fired boilers and wood pellet boilers to other fossil fuel boilers. The Excel program is available and very soon an operator's manual will be as well. Contact "Govett, Bob" <rgovett@uwsp.edu> @ 715.346.4212 for more information on this program.

What are the projected profits? Each site must first conduct a pre-feasibility study that can prevent someone from spending too much time on a project with little profit potential. If a positive result is achieved, a second, more thorough study would be done demonstrating the financial viability of a wood-fired boiler heating system to potential financial backers. One can show a reasonable profit with the numbers from a feasibility study, then, unfortunately, certain utilities in the past have lowered a facility's electrical and fuel costs, resulting in the wood energy project not being financially feasible at that time.

Can East Texas tree farmers expect to have a market for their trees for such use? I would think that would depend on what the tree farmers need for a reasonable profit because most wood fuel is from what's left over after all the higher-value products take their cut. Would the tree farmers sell their culled trees for energy use as well as their wood residue from any processing? Or are there competing local markets that may pay a higher price like mulch, post and poles, compost, animal bedding, or composite boards or not? A wood fuel provider can be offered a low price of \$8 per green ton up to \$30 per green ton depending on the wood energy system size and application.

Here is a link to a publication that will answer "wood biomass as energy" questions in greater detail.

"Wood Biomass for Energy" – http://www.fpl.fs.fed.us/documnts/techline/wood_biomass_for_energy.pdf

Market Report – September/October, 2004

Product	Statewide* Ave. Price		Previous Ave. Price		Volume Difference
	Volume	Weight	Volume	Weight	
Pine-Sawlogs	\$41.74/ton	\$304.45/mbf	\$38.48/ton	\$304.32/mbf	+8.5%
Pine-Pulpwood	\$6.94/ton	\$18.67/cord	\$7.08/ton	\$18.88/cord	-2%
Pine-Chip'n'Saw	\$15.87/ton	\$42.83/cord	\$14.43/ton	\$37.45/cord	+10%
Mixed Hardwood-Sawlogs	\$18.20/ton	\$163.05/mbf	\$18.38/ton	\$178.06/mbf	-1%
Hardwood-Pulpwood	\$5.52/ton	\$15.44/cord	\$5.48/ton	\$15.34/cord	+1%

See Timber Price Trends at <http://texasforests-service.tamu.edu> for more detailed information. Copies can be purchased from the Texas Forest Service, Office of the Director, John B. Connally Building, 301 Tarrow, Suite 364, College Station, TX 77840-7896. It is recommended that you use the services of a professional consulting forester in managing any timber sale. Important factors affecting timber prices include the type, quality and volume of timber for sale, accessibility, distance to mills/markets, weather conditions, economy/market conditions, who is handling the sale, who is buying the timber, and contract requirements by the landowner.

1. Stumpage price statistics included gateway sales. Stumpage prices from the gateway sales were estimated by subtracting cut and haul costs, other expenses and profits, if any, provided by the reporters.

2. Price is calculated from a *specific* conversion factor reported for each sale if available; otherwise, the average conversion factors listed on page 8 of the full text are used (see <http://texasforests-service.tamu.edu>). The DOYLE LOG SCALE is used for board foot measurements.

*Statewide data excludes U.S. Forest Service sales.

COMMENTS FROM TFS

Wet Weather and Low Mill Inventory Holding Prices Firm

Stumpage prices for pine and hardwood timber increased or stayed firm as market moved into the wet winter season. Increased rainfall limited access to timber, therefore dry tracts with winter logging capability received premium bids. Mills with low inventories raised prices to boost timber deliveries.

Loggers were in short supply during this period. In addition, according to a pulpwood mill forester, “intense competition” existed between pine and hardwood logging. Hardwood logging was kept at strong pace “until bottoms got too wet”, when the sellers switched gears to pine logging.

Statewide average prices of hardwood sawtimber increased \$1.23/ton, or 7.21%, from the same period last year, to \$18.2/ton (\$163.05/MBF). It was slightly off by \$0.21/ton from the previous two-month period. Hardwood pulpwood prices remained almost the same as the previous two-month period, averaging \$6.52/ton (\$15.44/cord).

Statewide average prices of pine sawtimber moved higher by \$2.47/ton from the last two-month period, to \$41.74/ton (\$304.45/MBF). Overall, northeastern region had a sharp rise in the average price for pine sawtimber during this period, jumping to \$39.27/ton from \$34.31/ton in the previous two months. Three industry foresters from the northeastern region confirmed that low mill inventories were one of the main driving forces for this price appreciation.

The stumpage prices of pine pulpwood remained almost the same as in the summer, averaging \$6.94/ton statewide during this period, compared to \$7.08/ton during the summer. The average stumpage prices of pine chip-n-saw rose by \$1.44/ton from the previous twomonth period, to \$15.87/ton (\$42.83/cord).

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