



# Northeast Texas Forest Landowners Association Newsletter

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## ***Invasive Tallow Tree Spreading Rapidly Across Gulf Coast; Nonnative Tree Species Could Harm Coastal Prairies***

– News Release, *USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station*

“A study by a USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station scientist shows the numbers of nonnative Chinese tallowtree in Louisiana, Mississippi and east Texas grew by about 370 percent over a 16-year period. The spread of the invasive plant may create problems for plants and wildlife along the Gulf coast.

Tallowtree is a deciduous plant with heart-shaped leaves that grows to 60 feet in height. It invades stream banks, riverbanks and wet areas like ditches as well as upland sites. Large seeds containing oil are spread by numerous large bird species. The tree is native to China and was introduced to South Carolina in the 1700s. There are approximately 457,000 acres of tallowtree in nine of the 13 southern states. Experts say tallowtree can change the chemical properties of soil and alter the composition and structure of native plant communities. Additionally, litter from the plant may alter habitat in invaded wetland areas, which could affect some frog and other amphibian species.

“I examined Forest Inventory and Analysis data from plots measured in the 1990s and within the last five years and found the increase in tallowtree to be dramatic across the three states,” said Sonja Oswalt, a research forester with the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program based in Knoxville, TN. “For example, between 1991 and 2005, the number of tallowtree plants in Louisiana increased by more than 500 percent.”

From 1994 to 2006, the number of tallowtree plants increased by 445 percent in Mississippi. In east Texas, the number increased by 174 percent between 1992 and 2007.

The total number for Chinese tallowtree in Louisiana grew from a maximum of

46 million stems (plants that were one inch or greater in diameter) in 1991 to a maximum of 280 million in 2005. In Mississippi, the number grew from a maximum of 9 million in 1994 to a maximum of 49 million in 2006. In east Texas, the number of individual tallowtree plants grew from a maximum of 102 million to 279 million.

The number of tallowtree saplings multiplied by six-and-a-half times in Louisiana, by six times in Mississippi, and by three times in east Texas. Most of the tallowtree seedlings were concentrated in southern Louisiana and Mississippi, and the southeast plots of east Texas – close to the Gulf of Mexico.

The dataset included 2,413 timberland plots from Louisiana in 1991 and 2,250 in 2005; 2,056 timberland plots in east Texas in 1992 and 1,983 in 2007; and 3,185 timberland plots in Mississippi in 1994 and 3,231 in 2006. Data were obtained from the FIA database in September 2009.

Jim Miller, a Forest Service ecologist and leading expert on invasive plants in the South, says the expansion of tallowtree in Louisiana, Mississippi and east Texas could adversely affect flora and fauna along the Gulf of Mexico and beyond.

“This is the first report to show how infestations are composed of thousands of small stems per acre that tightly grip lands in a near monoculture, excluding diversity with little potential for wood resource value,” said Miller. “The crisis is worsened by the plant’s rapid occupation of the highly diverse wetland prairies and marshes in east Texas and Louisiana, which are special habitats for many rare plants and animals and often productive native grasslands.”

Tallowtree is moderately difficult to control, but Miller says there is a new herbicide that targets the species specifically and leaves most other native trees and plants unharmed. He says landowners can help prevent the spread of tallowtree by not purchasing and planting the tree for ornamental or other purposes. Miller encourages landowners who already have tallowtree on their property to remove the tree and replace it with native species. He says landowners can work with a consulting forester to develop a control or prevention program if the species threatens to spread onto a landowner’s property. Miller believes organization of a coordinated tallow tree management program among impacted states is needed to safeguard the biosecurity of southern and eastern forests.

Miller believes the rapid spread of tallow tree poses a serious threat to the diversity and productivity of the South’s forests. He says as temperatures rise because of climate change, the probability of tallowtree moving farther north increases. Miller adds that bird-carried seed and ornamental plantings by unsuspecting homeowners will likely contribute to the northward spread of tallowtree.

More information about Oswalt’s study is available online, <http://treearch.fs.fed.us/pubs/35000>. The research paper is titled “Chinese Tallow Population Expansion in Louisiana, East Texas, and Mississippi.”

Jim Miller is co-author of a paper, published last year in the Canadian Journal of Forest Resources, titled “Invasion of tallow tree into southern US forests: Influencing factors and implications for mitigation.” The paper is found online at: <http://treearch.fs.fed.us/>

***Northeast Texas  
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**www.txforest.org**



**FROM THE FOREST**



Our forest industry is entering a new era.

A 50 megawatt power plant that will use woody biomass for fuel to generate electricity which will be sold into the power grid is under construction near Lufkin by Aspen Power. Construction is scheduled to be completed and the facility on line by December 31, 2010. The wood yard which will supply the woody biomass fuel for the plant is located near the power plant at the site of a former Louisiana-Pacific Plywood mill that was closed in 1997.

When fully operational the plant will consume approximately 560,000 tons of wood on an annual basis which equates to 50-60 truckloads delivered every day. The majority of the biomass is expected to come from logging debris with the remainder coming from municipal sources, in woods chipping, and mill waste.

A new piece of equipment, a wood bundler, will be used to gather woody debris in the field and bundle it into 30 inch diameter by 12 foot length bundles for transport to the facility. Bundles will be set aside to dry and can remain in storage for more than year. Other crews will follow harvest operations where logging debris is piled. This material will be chipped for delivery to the power plant.

The company also has working agreements with several municipalities in East Texas where crews will grind woody debris into small chips and deliver the fuel by truck. Delivery by rail for longer hauls is also possible.

I expect that this facility is beyond the economical hauling distance from our counties, so it will not have a large impact on debris or the timber business in our area. It is, however, a beginning, and who knows where the movement for renewable energy and government subsidies to encourage it will lead. A wood burning power plant may be attractive in our area someday.

Thank you for your quick and favorable responses to our Membership Invoice. Most of you elected to renew your membership for the year 2010. Your Association Officers will strive to keep you informed and present meaningful programs that will assist you in managing your timber activities. Let us know if you have a topic that you would like to learn more about, and we will try to incorporate it into a future program.

*Glenn Weiss*

## Program and Meeting Notes

On August 21 we will be touring the Mike Connor Heritage Forest. Touring the Connor Tree Farm will allow landowners to view a first thinning of a 14 year old plantation and a clearcut on 130 acres of mature pine and hardwood, as well as reforestation projects that have occurred in 2003, 2005, and 2007. The purchaser of the timber, Forester Greg Anthony with Watson Wood Company out of Linden, will be on hand to speak with landowners about what he looks for in a tract, when to thin, how to thin, and how the product is sold. If all goes as hoped, the thinning will be taking place during the tour and we'll have a chance to see what one forester has called "one of the best loggers I've ever seen" at work.

For some of us this will be an opportunity to revisit the farm we toured in the mid-nineties. It's quite possible that the stand being thinned is the seedling acreage we saw back then, before the Connors moved to Austin and made their arrangement with Texas A&M and TFS to manage the timber. Information on that program and whether it still exists should be available on the tour.

Following the tour, we will go to Luigi's Italian Café in Mt. Pleasant for lunch. They have an outstanding reputation as well as a private room where we can order off the menu and all eat together. The vans will take us back to Pittsburg and Gilmer from there. ***Please note the differing departure times for the vans, and that going on the tour commits you to lunch as well.***

There are no maps directly to the site because of limited access; parking is limited to only two or three spots so we will have to use the vans. If you have an extreme situation, talk to Glenn when you RSVP.

We need your rsvp on this one because of van space. Your contact is our president, Glenn Weiss, at 903-645-3782, email [gjweiss@windstream.net](mailto:gjweiss@windstream.net). The RSVP form is on the last page. **Vans will leave from the Smith Furniture parking lot in Pittsburg and from the Gilmer Civic Center.**

## 2010 PROGRAM CALENDAR

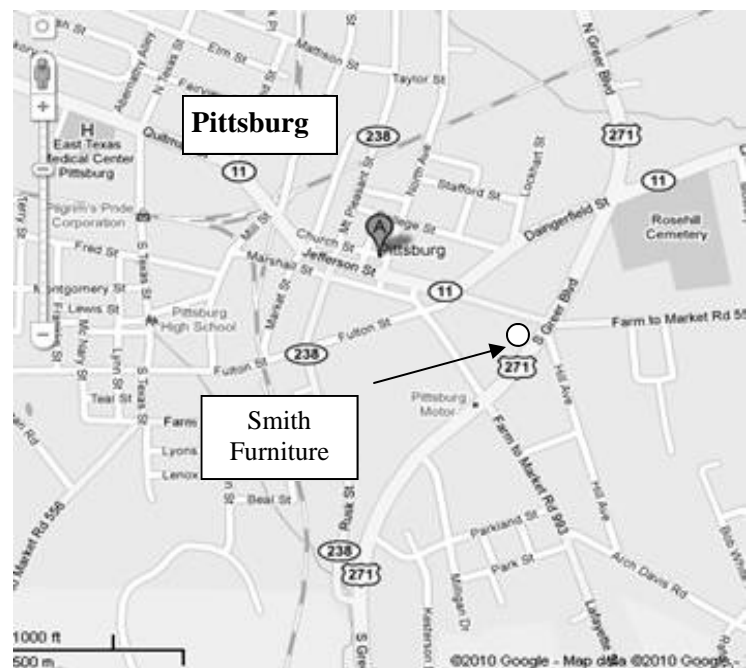
**Saturday, Aug. 21 Tour**  
**Vans leave Gilmer 9:00 AM,**  
**Pittsburg 9:15**  
**Mike Connor Farm**  
**A Texas Heritage Forest**  
**Morris County**

**Saturday, November 13**  
**Pittsburg, Texas**  
**Pine Stand Establishment**  
**10:00 AM**  
**(tentative)**

We still have a few members with unpaid dues. Please make your check and mail your 2010 dues of \$15, if you've not already done so, to:

NETFLA  
PO Box 642  
Mt. Vernon, TX 75457

For questions, contact Blanche Handy-Sparks at:  
(903) 860-2507  
[bhandy@peoplescom.net](mailto:bhandy@peoplescom.net)



# **Texas Land & Mineral Owners Association Addresses Land/Mineral Rights Issues**

*- John Boyette, District Forester III, Texas Forest Service, Nacogdoches, TX*

At the last meeting of the Angelina/Nacogdoches Counties Forest Landowners Association, on 6/26/10, we were treated to a fascinating presentation by the Executive Director of the Texas Land & Mineral Owners Association (TLMA), Dr. Kitty-Sue Quinn, Ph.D. Many of us, including me, were unfamiliar with this group and their good work, but got a quick education. Dr. Quinn is a very engaging and energetic woman, who obviously knows her stuff. She gave us some background on what TLMA is, and what some of the issues are that they are addressing.

The introductory line in their brochure and web site reads as follows: "TLMA was founded in 1999 by 54 founding members who wanted to create an entity which would maintain and strengthen property rights for all Texas and royalty owners while working to protect our land and water resources from the poorly regulated oil exploration industry." Today, they have over 1000 annually renewing members."

TLMA is not anti-oil industry, in fact, just the opposite. Their members, and many other Texans, depend on the revenues that come from their oil and gas leases. Many of their members are farmers and ranchers. Some of the largest ranches in the state, such as the King Ranch, are members. However, their largest group of members is royalty owners. They define the average royalty owner as a widow, over 65 years of age, living on a fixed income. There are over 800,000 royalty owners in Texas, most of which receive less than \$100 per month.

TLMA is very active in lobbying for legislation in Austin that protects land and mineral owners' rights. Dr. Quinn handed out a lengthy list of various bills that they supported, defended, negotiated, sought opinions for, and gave testimony on. Some of these bills passed, some did not.

One of the biggest issues confronting the oil and gas industry today is abandoned wells. Oil production peaked in Texas in the mid 1970's. At that time, the accepted practice was for an oil company to own a well until it ran dry, then plug it. The "oil depression" of the 1980's changed all of that. Many companies ceased to exist, and other companies sold off wells to small operators with very limited resources. The result was that numerous wells were simply abandoned. Today, there are a total of over 356,000 oil and gas wells in Texas. Of these, approximately 116,500 (2003 statistic) need to be plugged. Abandoned wells can contaminate ground water unless they are plugged. In 1998, 77 cases of groundwater contamination were reported to Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (now Texas Commission on Environmental Quality) from 54 counties in Texas. In 2001, there were 217 cases of contamination from 81 different counties. Clearly, this is a growing problem. The Texas Legislature has recognized the problem and has authorized the Railroad Commission to plug abandoned wells. Dr. Quinn was careful to praise the Commission for tackling some of the worst offending wells first. However, the sheer number of wells in need of treatment shows what a monumental challenge this

presents.

The question arose as to what the small private landowner should do to protect his/her property and rights. Dr. Quinn's response was virtually the same that a timber consultant might give. Number one, do your homework. Find out all that you can about local prices, markets, issues, companies, consultants, etc. Next, don't sign anything without reading it and educating yourself on what the terms of the lease really mean to you. You can negotiate for better terms, both financial and other benefits such as road layouts, creek crossings, access, water well usage, etc. And finally, when in doubt, hire a consultant. TLMA keeps lists of consultants and other companies that can assist landowners with these issues, which they provide to their members.

TLMA has an excellent web site that contains a wealth of information on the oil & gas industry, the issues facing it today, and what the association is doing to help landowners. For anyone with an interest in oil & gas leases, it is worth a look. The address is [www.tlma.org](http://www.tlma.org).



# Real Biomass Plants Come — Finally — to East Texas Timber

Ron Hufford, Executive Vice President, Texas Forestry Association

Two articles edited and condensed from the June and July issues of Texas Forestry, the monthly publication of the TFA

The first Power Plant in East Texas producing power for the grid using woody biomass will be Aspen Power in Lufkin, TX. The Aspen Power plant is located on 67 acres just off loop 287 in North Lufkin. The woodyard which will supply woody biomass for the power plant, and other customers of woody biomass, is located nearby at the site of the former Louisiana-Pacific Corp. Plywood mill that was closed in 1997.

I had a chance to sit down last month with Danny Vines, President of Aspen Power, to discuss the construction progress of the plant and also toured the construction site and woodyard.... the facility is on schedule for production to begin by the end of this year and is definitely a *plus for* TFA members who are seeking new wood markets.

Angelina Fuels is also owned by the Aspen Group. The woodyard, located at the former LP mill site, has been busy for well over the past year storing wood in bundles and grinding bio-mass on site for delivery and use by many of the forest products industries who rely on biomass to generate the steam needed in their mill operations. .

When fully operational, Aspen Power will generate 50 Mega Watts of power which will be placed into the power grid to meet the needs of industrial and commercial power requirements. The Aspen Power Plant will use approximately 560,000 tons of logging debris and municipal wood waste on an annual basis. This equates to 50-60 truck-loads of ground wood that will be delivered to the facility on a daily basis. The majority of biomass, over 50%, is expected to come from logging debris while the remaining material will come from municipal sources and inwoods chipping, as well as mill waste.

Danny is proud to be the first in East Texas to own a "wood bundler"

which is one of the newest pieces of equipment for gathering woody biomass. This machine gathers woody debris in the field and tightly bundles it into 30 inch by 12 foot bundles which are then transported to the woodyard. The tightly compacted bundles allow the woody material to air dry over a longer period of time which increases the BTU efficiency of the biomass. The bundled material can remain in storage in excess of a year without loss or deterioration, while chips have a much shorter shelf- life...

Angelina Fuels will also employ crews to follow harvesting operations where logging debris is pre-piled. This material will be chipped for delivery to the power plant. The company also has several working agreements with municipalities throughout East Texas where Angelina Fuels crews grind woody debris to a screen size of 3-inches and smaller [for delivery].

Aspen Power, and Angelina Fuels, will directly *employ* 165 people with an additional 100 or more who will be employed on wood crews and as truck drivers. When completed, Aspen Power is expected to cost over \$100 million.

Danny Vines also intends to construct a covered pavilion on a rise that overlooks the facility. From this strategic location he will be able to visit with groups and educators about the plant's operations and the benefits of using woody biomass for energy production. **Aspen Power Plant will be part of this year's TFA Annual Meeting events. TFA members will have the opportunity to register for a tour of the facility that is planned on the opening day, October 20th, of the TFA Annual Meeting.**

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[Another] biomass plant has been announced for East Texas in Tyler County, and is on schedule to

be operational by early 2014. The power plant, Woodville Renewable, is being developed by East Texas Electric Cooperative (ETEC). ETEC will own and operate the plant and North American Procurement Company (NAPCO) will be its fuel supplier. The power plant will be located adjacent to NAPCO's existing operations off of Highway 69 South, in Woodville, TX.

The plant will have the capacity of producing 50 megawatts of power from woody biomass and will consume over 500,000 tons of woody biomass annually. ETEC has signed a long term contract with NAPCO to provide wood chips to fuel the plant. The fuel supply will come primarily from logging residue.

ETEC is currently working with TCEQ to secure the air permit for the plant. The timeline is to have a final approval of the permit by the end of 2010 and to start site construction by the Second Quarter of 2011, becoming fully operational in the first Quarter of 2014.

The 50 megawatts of power generated by the Woodville plant is local power generated by ETEC and will be distributed to its members across East Texas. The Woodville plant will supply future electric needs of the approximately 300,000 members who are served by the 10 electric co-operatives. **[including Bowie-Cass Electric Cooperative, Upshur Rural Electric Cooperative and Wood County Electric Cooperative in NE Texas.]** For more information on the project and ETEC, visit: [www.etc.coop](http://www.etc.coop).

*[Editor's Note: This is the only time we have reprinted any articles from the TFA monthly; it would not be fair to the half of our members that pay for the publication. I did so to give our non-TFA members a one-time peek.*

*Our old friends at Duke Energy continue to dither on Texas biomass. Will try to have some concrete info for you at the August meeting.] — Bill*

# SPECIAL AUGUST TFA MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT

— Bill Tucker

Here's the deal: a few of us can get half off the regular price during the month of August. Old TFA members whose membership has lapsed and new members submitting payment in August pay the full price for 2010 but only half price for 2011. Those 2011 statements will arrive at the end of December and will reflect the discount. This is not publicized; I only know because I asked.

Just a few of TFA's real "Dollars and Sense" benefits for forest land-owners:

- Local property tax authorities are increasingly hungry for revenue. TFA membership, along with a simple management plan, helps maintain your deeply discounted local silvicultural tax status.
- The feds are also increasingly hungry. TFA membership is a big block in the wall that defends your right to deduct your property taxes, carrying costs (including interest) and other farm expenses on your 1040.
- TFA's friendly relations with Austin, and nationwide, provide access to key legislators and laws as they are written. Ongoing information weekly and monthly during legislative sessions lets you contact legislators directly — when it counts most.
- **Timely and unique information** — early and often unpublicized elsewhere — via the monthly newspaper, web site, and various programs — **is worth real money.** One of the best articles I've seen was "***Should I Cut My Timber Before I Sell My Property?***" You'll have to be a member to read it this one...

Please check out the TFA web site at [www.txforestry.org](http://www.txforestry.org) and then clip and mail the application at the right in August!

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### JOIN THE TEXAS FORESTRY ASSOCIATION!

Texas Forestry Association (TFA) is a private, non-profit trade organization whose members grow, manage, harvest and process forest resources.

Founded in 1914, TFA brings together a diverse membership that advocates both a healthy natural environment and a strong business environment for the benefit of all Texans.

Through its many programs, TFA promotes the understanding and acceptance of forestry conservation practices throughout the State of Texas.

#### ***I want to join.***

Please check the category and annual dues amount representing your interest in forestry. Memberships are based on a calendar year.

- Timberland owners: \$50 plus 2 cents per acre over 500 acres.**
- Individuals: \$50 active; \$15 student; \$1,000 life.
- Sawmills: \$0.01/M board feet produced annually. \$600 minimum.
- Treating plants: \$0.01/M board feet produced annually. \$600 minimum.
- Hunting Clubs: \$50.
- Consulting foresters: \$100 per individual.
- Equipment suppliers: \$100 minimum.
- Other manufacturers-distributors: \$100 minimum.
- Financial institutions: \$100 minimum.
- Insurance suppliers: \$100 minimum.
- Utilities: \$100 minimum.
- Logging contractors: Request Texas Logging Council application for dues.
- Logging Council Associate \$200

#### ***I am interested in:***

- Texas Tree Farm Program**
- Texas Logging Council
- Texas Forest Landowners Council**
- Hunting Club Insurance

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company/Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Your county \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Recommended by **Northeast Texas Forest Landowners Association**

Payment enclosed  Bill me  Send Texas Logging application

Mail to: Texas Forestry Assoc. • P.O. Box 1488 • Lufkin, TX 75902-1488  
Phone: 936-632-1877

## *Market Report – March/April, 2010*

Product	Statewide Ave. Price		Previous Ave. Price		Weight Difference
	Weight	Volume	Weight	Volume	
Pine-Sawlogs	\$28.14/ton	\$225.40/ mbf	\$28.06/ton	\$224.17/ mbf	0%
Pine-Pulpwood	\$8.47/ton	\$22.82/cord	\$7.97/ton	\$21.49/cord	+6%
Pine-Chip'n'Saw	\$15.67/ton	\$42.30/cord	\$14.45/ton	\$39.01/cord	+8%
Mixed Hardwood-Sawlogs	\$25.68/ton	\$235.67/ mbf	\$25.05/ton	\$225.42/ mbf	+3%
Hardwood-Pulpwood	\$14.91/ton	\$41.97/cord	\$13.51/ton	\$38.10/cord	+10%

*Texas Timber Price Trends* is a bimonthly publication reporting average prices paid for standing timber in Texas. *This report is intended only as a guide to general price levels.* It should not be used to judge the fair market value of a specific timber sale, which may vary considerably due to many factors. 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 or is buying the timber, and contract requirements by the landowner. Hard copies of this publication can be purchased by contacting Monica Jadowski at (979)458-6630. The complete Texas Timber Price Trends can be viewed at <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=145>.

Conversion factors between volume and weight vary from sale to sale, so the differences in volume prices above may not equal differences in weight prices.

Stumpage price statistics include gateway sales (estimated by subtracting cut-and-haul costs, other expenses and profits provided by reporter).

Statewide data excludes U.S. Forest Service sales.

Price calculated from specific conversion factor reported for each sale if available; otherwise, average conversion factors listed on page 4 of *Texas Timber Price Trends* (<http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=145>) are used. MBF = thousand board feet. Doyle Scale used for board foot measurements.

**RSVP FOR CONNOR TREE FARM TOUR**  
**Saturday, August 21      Morris County**  
**Vans leave at 9:00 Gilmer — 9:15 Pittsburg**  
**Lunch afterward (Dutch treat) at Luigi's in Mt. Pleasant**  
***Please RSVP by Tuesday, Aug 17***

**Contact Glenn Weiss at 903-645-3782 (email: [gjweiss@windstream.net](mailto:gjweiss@windstream.net)) or fill out, tear off and mail this strip to:**

Glenn Weiss

PO Box 573

Dangerfield, TX 75638

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Number in your party \_\_\_\_\_

Number riding in TFS van from Pittsburg \_\_\_\_\_

Number riding in TFS van from Gilmer \_\_\_\_\_

**Northeast Texas Forest Landowners Association**  
**P.O. Box 642**  
**Mt. Vernon, TX 75457**



### ***Websites of Interest -***

***Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and Federal Water Ways*** – Pamela Baldwin,  
CRS (Congressional Research Service),  
Report for National Library for the Environment – National Council for Science & Environment – A summary of what this act entails: <http://ncseonline.org/NLE/CRSreports/Public/pub-16.cfm?&CFID=7246664&CFTOKEN=65919120>

***Setting up the Books Using a Tree Farm Journal*** –  
<http://msucares.com/pubs/publications/p2306.pdf>

***Fertilizing Pine Plantations - A County Agents' Guide for Making Fertilization Recommendations*** - Dr. David J. Moorhead , Dr. E. David Dickens - <http://www.bugwood.org/fertilization/csoillab.html>

***Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests; a Field Guide for Identification and Control*** -  
<http://www.invasive.org/eastern/srs/>

***Galveston art (sculptures created from trees killed by Hurricane Ike flood):***  
<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/life/main/6971482.html>