



Northeast Texas Forest Landowners Association Newsletter

October 2005 Published by the Northeast Texas Forest Landowners Association Vol. 26 Issue 4

Texas Forest Service Assesses Rita Damage

Timber Damage Assessments

TFS's findings show that the total volume of timber "damaged" and "affected" is estimated at 967 million cubic feet which has an approximate value of \$833 million. Based on the 2003 Harvest Trends report **this is approximately 1½ times the normal annual timber harvest in all 43 timber producing counties.** The definition of "damaged" includes trees that are uprooted, snapped off, leaning more than 45 degrees, or expected to die within 12 months. "Affected" includes trees that are leaning less than 45 degrees, have lost only part of their crown, have only a loss of foliage, or otherwise are not likely to die. Breaking this loss down by category the total timber volume "damaged" was 533 million cubic feet (81-percent of the annual harvest) and occurred on over 435,000 acres. The total timber volume "affected" is 435 million cubic feet which occurred on over 335,000 acres.

TFA and TFS are organizing a Rita Response Task Force to address the challenges facing communities, businesses and forest landowners as they begin to rebuild and clean-up following the storm. Markets for sawlogs and salvage material need to be addressed on a timely basis as damaged trees are a perishable product and depending on the condition of the logs much of this material needs to be processed or placed under water within the next 90-days if it is to be of much value. Down trees with roots intact will last for several months and when the fall temperatures finally arrive, that relief in the temperature will also extend the recovery time frame. One can count on the salvage work to go through 2005 and well into 2006.

TFA members are already involved in the removal of debris on the roadways and in our communities allowing Texans to begin returning to their homes. But the clean up does not stop there as forest landowners are assessing the damage to their timber and are in need of logging contractors to begin salvage operations. Important in this effort is being able to move mass amounts of debris and logs to storage yards and to the mills. In a letter to the Chairman of the Texas Transportation Commission, Governor Perry called upon TxDOT and DPS to suspend all size and weight enforcement for motor carriers involved in relief efforts. There are exceptions to this directive to ensure that bridges are not damaged and that operators must have the required liability insurance, drivers must have a commercial driver's license and loads over 14' must be approved by calling TxDOT. Governor Perry's order runs through October 31, 2005 and is subject to an extension or repeal as needed to meet the needs of the recovery efforts.

TFS is also sending out daily information on their web site at

<http://txforestservicetamu.edu>. Another website helpful to forest landowners is a site sponsored by Purdue University that provides tax information regarding the loss of timber from Hurricanes. To access this information go to: <http://www.timbertax.org/>.

While we are still in the process of gathering the data on Rita, damage reports from Hurricane Katrina indicate the following:

- 5 million acres of forestland (federal, state, and private) were affected by Katrina.
- The Forest Service estimates the total timber value (all ownerships) to be over \$5 billion with two-thirds of the damage in Mississippi.
- The initial estimate for total loss of timber is 19 billion board feet.
- It is anticipated that more than 70% of the timber resource is considered either severely or moderately damaged – meaning that trees are either on the ground or tree tops are broken.
- The volume of the down or broken trees is sufficient to produce 800,000 single family homes and 25 million tons of paper and paperboard.
- It is estimated that 60% of the damage was inflicted on the softwood inventory.

The states of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana have web sites for information on the recovery efforts. They are: Mississippi Forestry Association – www.msforestry.blogspot.com, which also has links to the Mississippi Forestry Commission's Katrina Info section and the Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory. Louisiana Forestry Association has established the Hurricane Katrina information site at www.laforestry.com/Default.aspx?tabid=155. Alabama Forestry Association's information is on AFA's Hurricane Ivan site at www.alaforestry.org/ivan/index.htm.

Editor's Note: The Texas Forest Service is once again serving as the lead disaster management agency in the State of Texas, despite being perennially under funded in its basic responsibilities.

These men and women continue to do an exceptional job, and we should all be — and are — very proud of them!

***Northeast Texas
Forest Landowners
Association Officers***



My View

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**NETFLA WEB SITE:
www.txforest.org**

It's once again possible to be outside and not fear the searing Texas heat we experienced this summer. I did not think September would end, but as sure as the days get shorter, out my study door I see change is in the air. Color is starting to appear in the forest and leaves are dropping. Just as the fall comes and our seasons change, our association is in for a change. At our November 12 meeting we will elect new officers and directors. For the first time in many years I will not be on the ballot. As I write my last newsletter article to you I reflect on the changes I have seen in this association over the years. At the first meeting I attended, there were perhaps six or seven in attendance. Now it is not uncommon for us to have 40 or more. The number of counties our association represents has also expanded with the addition of Upshur and Wood counties. For the past several years, we have had the highest membership of any timber landowners association in the Texas Forest Association. I believe that the changes we have experienced are good for the association's membership.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "What lies behind us and what lies before us, are small matters, compared to what lies within us." More than once you have heard me say or have seen me write a wish that you need to step up and be more active in our association. Some of you have and this is wonderful. Within each of you is a talent that if released will make our association stronger. I encourage you to step up and seek out opportunities and serve your association. It is never too late to be what you might have been.

Besides serving this association, I also encourage you to be active in your community, state and nation. The political direction our country takes directly affects your land ownership and the timber you hope to produce. We live in a world that is fragile. You can be the change you wish in the world. While it is often preferred to take the route of a convenient life, you should strive to be on the edge of your possibilities. Be aware of what is going on and respond to issues that matter. Write letters, telephone and fax or email your government representatives. Write letters to the editor of your newspaper. Attend public meetings. Run for public office. Don't limit your realization of tomorrow by doubts today.

My time is now over and my words are coming to an end. You do not know how much I have appreciated serving you as a director and as president of this association. It was an honor to be in this position. I look forward to the changes the new president and board of directors will bring. Heraclitus, who lived over 2,500 years ago, said "Nothing endures but change." As this association changes I will continue to be a member and will continue to serve from the back row.

As has been my custom, I end with yet another favorite quote. Robert Frost was asked how he could sum up what he learned about life. He said, "All I have ever learned about life could be said in three words: It goes on." And so shall I.

Sid Greer

Bits and Pieces

Most of you don't know it, but Sid has other serious volunteer commitments, such as a passionate interest in a growing Northeast Texas Community College, with a seat on the board, board member of his bank, president of his state-wide cattlemen's association, and probably others I don't know about.

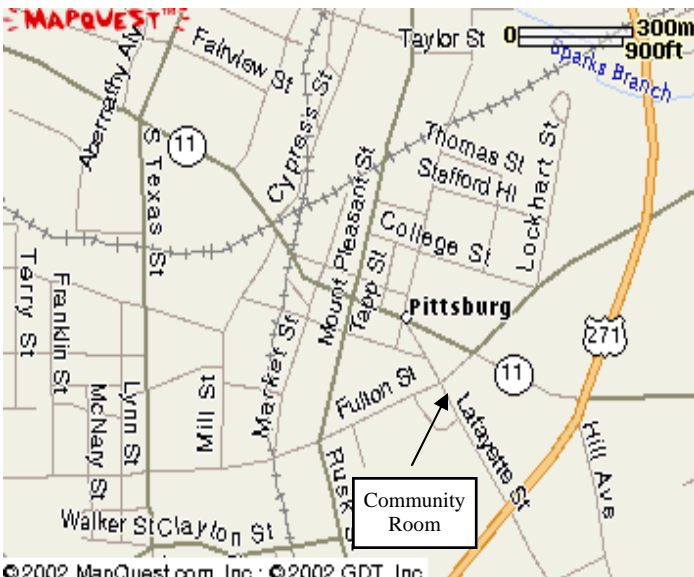
When last I heard, Sid was also going to experiment with containerized seedlings and had other plans and projects on the drawing board. Sometimes it gets hard for even a championship juggler to keep all the balls in the air. Sid told the directors early on in the year that he could not serve again, so it was not as much of a surprise to us as it is to you folks. I doubt we've heard the last from him, and trust that this organization will continue to benefit from his energy and creativity. Sid, as a friend of mine used to say, "Good show!" Thanks for running a very good show, indeed, my friend.

It's time to officially welcome our new Pittsburg District Forester, Brian Pope. Brian is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin in forestry, and grew up in the country just a little north of Mt. Pleasant, so he knows the area well. He's completing his TFS training under the Linden office, but has been working mostly out of the Pittsburg Office, and can usually be reached there. Check the facing page for the number.

Brian and Galen Logan, the Camp County Extension Agent, will be doing the feral hog program for the November meeting. They've been developing a customized presentation that should be valuable to ranchers as well as timber owners — a good idea, since many of us have pasture and cattle operations as well as timber. If you don't know Brian and Galen, watch out for these good ol' boys — they've been known to tell a tale or two...

On another note, Diane Dalby's switch from Titus County Director to Morris County reflects a change in timber ownership. The nominating committee was unable to recruit a director from Titus County, so the position remains open. We have very few members in Titus, so anyone wishing to volunteer, please contact Glen Weiss or Bill Tucker.

— Bill



2005 PROGRAM CALENDAR

Saturday, Nov. 12, 10:30 AM

NETFLA Biennial Elections Program — Feral Hogs and Other Nuisance Animals
Pilgrim Community Room
Pittsburg, Texas

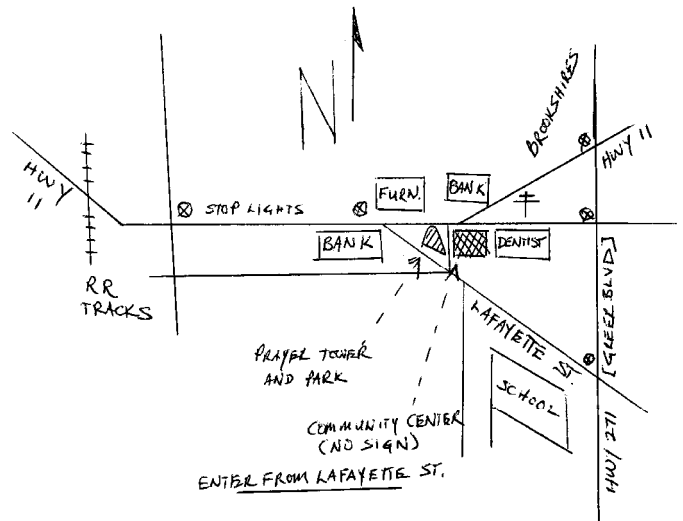
Please note: 2005 dues of \$15 were payable as of Jan. 1, 2005.

If you have a red dot on your newsletter, you owe 2005 dues of \$15. This is tax deductible for most. We have 67 paid members and mail to about 100. Some have not paid for two years. If you have a red dot, make sure you don't get dropped from the mailing list by paying \$15 before Jan. 1. We should not continue to pay postage for inactive members when the money could go to our charitable activities.

Please make checks payable to and remit to:

NETFLA
PO Box 642
Mt. Vernon, TX 75457

If you have questions, contact Harry Earl — contact info is on the facing page.



TFA Landowners Council

— Bill Tucker

Bill Oates gave a detailed presentation on Hurricane Rita damage to start the Oct. 14 meeting. Much of this information is in our lead article. The TFS web site has photos, both aerial and ground, of the damages, and they are awesome.

All delegates finally had power back (some only the day before) except John Bryan from the Jasper/Newton County group. Everyone was generally upbeat, although the facts of Katrina and Rita are very sobering. The joint TFA/TFS Task Force is working well at expediting recovery efforts on all timber-related fronts, but it's a big job and will take a long time.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that many loggers went to Katrina sites, and many of those working the impacted area by Rita are under contract to FEMA for road clearing, which includes cleaning the rights of way of debris on county roads as well as highways. This job may take 90-120 days. Some crews are camping out or using travel trailers, since affordable housing is almost non-existent.

The logistics of the cleanup are difficult. The problem of what to do with downed wood and debris is a tough one. Trucking is tight, and construction of pits for burial or burning (needs special air quality dispensation) again takes time.

This area will be an extreme fire risk for a long time because of the downed timber and brush.

On a brighter note, all of the delegates have used private consulting foresters for many years, and that practice is paying off in the salvage operation. These consultants know the loggers, the mills, and the buyers and are working hard — and with success — for their clients. Those without consultants may not recover anything, since the Forest Service is not in the timber marketing business, and the consultants are already overloaded. One consultant stated that much of the damaged forest land may never be replanted, and most agreed. This is especially troubling when you consider that the impacted area is essentially the “bread basket” of the Texas timber industry.

The impact on timber prices, as you would expect, will be severe in this southern area. “Shake” logs — those with hidden interior cracks from wind and impact damage — are a major problem for the mills. These logs look fine on the outside but splinter into useless lengths when sawed. This risk, when coupled with an oversupply, may cause the mills to drive prices down, while the loggers need higher prices on their end to meet higher fuel costs. Net dollars to the landowner decrease, even when he can sal-

vage some of the timber. This situation exists throughout the impacted areas of the South, and may take a year or more to work through the system.

We in northeast Texas are in a much better situation, since Rita brought us needed rain rather than storm damage. My consulting forester expected prices in our area to remain good but flat for sawlogs, with pulpwood down a bit over the next few months, and a good outlook further out. We have generally enjoyed higher prices for all timber types over the last few years compared to our southern neighbors, and our forester saw no real reason for that to change. We'll continue as planned to mark part of our place for thinning and go from there.

Our northeast area has its own problems, such as ice storms and drought. Our place has really suffered — my rainfall total stands at just over 13” for the year. This brings increased fire danger and probably a higher incidence of ips beetles. Good time to get those firebreaks in, if you haven't already, especially for those with young plantations. By the way, a consulting forester can help you with any type of salvage, whether from ice or blow-downs. Best to establish a relationship before you need him.

On a more positive note, at the last meeting Mike Murphrey suggested the TFA Landowners Association create and fund an endowment to eventually provide full funding from interest earnings for future Woodland Clinic scholarships. Thom Karels from the Trinity Valley Forest Landowners presented their check for \$1,000 to kick things off at this meeting. Now that's a tough act to follow. You might think about whether our association would like to contribute to this fund. I'm sure personal donations would also be very welcome.

Dan Barnes reported that there is now one state licensed and insured company to do prescribed burning. It is Acorn Outdoor Services in Lufkin. They offer other services such as chemical treatments and machine site prep. Contact them at 1-877-943-3623.

Ray Stoner stated that every application the EQUIP program for planting got funded last year. Sign up for next year will close in January, and program funding ends with the expiration of the Farm Bill, so those wishing to participate need to contact their NRCS office as soon as possible.

Don't forget the TFA Annual Meeting!

This year it will be close to home in Tyler. Dates are Nov. 15, 16, and 17 at the Holiday Inn Select in Tyler. For more information, or to join, contact TFA at 1-936-632-8733

NORTH TEXAS RIPE FOR WILDFIRES

By Traci Weaver, tweaver@tfs.tamu.edu 10/19/2005

A dry summer has turned into a dry fall in North Texas, and with no rainfall in the forecast for the next 10 days, state and local fire officials are concerned about wildfires.

"We are expecting critical fire weather to move into North Texas behind a dry cold front Thursday," said Tom Spencer, fire risk assessment coordinator for the Texas Forest Service. "This front is bringing low relative humidities and strong wind. Couple that with the dry vegetation we have in the area, and it is the perfect set up for large fires."

Many counties remain under an outdoor burn ban, but regardless of whether or not an outdoor burn ban is in place, this weekend is not the time to burn trash or brush piles.

"We realize during the fall people like to get outdoors for recreation or to work around their property," said Mark Stanford, Texas Forest Service chief of operations. "We just ask that people postpone any outdoor burning until the area has seen significant rainfall, which is not in the forecast."

Most of North Texas has gone three weeks without rain and has had above normal temperatures, which means grasses have cured and trees and brush are stressed from the drought.

"Despite the critical conditions, a fire still needs a spark to get started," Stanford said. "People cause more than 90 percent of Texas wildfires, primarily by careless debris burning. Texans can do their part by using good judgment and fire safe practices."

The Texas Forest Service offers the following fire safety tips:

- Avoid burning trash or brush piles until significant rainfall occurs and burn bans have been lifted;
- When welding, have water and a shovel handy, and keep someone with you to watch for sparks;
- When operating agricultural equipment, keep mufflers and spark arresters maintained, and avoid rocks and metal when using a blade or mower.
- Hot catalytic converters and exhaust systems can cause wildfires, so avoid parking and driving on dry grass. Dragging tow chains or driving on flat tires can also spark wildfires.
- Check to see if restrictions are in place before building campfires. If there are no restrictions, only build campfires in open, level spots away from trees, and completely extinguish the fire with water and dirt before leaving;

Home safety:

- Establish a safety zone at least 30 wide around your home and outbuildings in which grass and weeds are kept mowed.
- Mow pastures and fields to create a fuel break around your property and minimize the chances of a wildfire spreading to your pasture or buildings.
- Burn household trash in burn barrels or burn pits covered with a metal screen or grid to prevent burning debris from surrounding vegetation.

Market Report – July/August, 2005

	Statewide Ave. Price		Previous Ave. Price		Volume Difference (*)
	Weight	Volume	Weight	Volume	
Pine-Sawlogs	\$41.47/ton	\$307.50/mbf	\$42.75/ton	\$323.50/mbf	-4.9%
Pine-Pulpwood	\$4.19/ton	\$11.02/cord	\$10.53/ton	\$28.37/cord	-61.2%
Pine-Chip'n'Saw	\$14.63/ton	\$38.63/cord	\$17.10/ton	\$44.91/cord	-13.9%
Mixed Hardwood-Sawlogs	\$19.12/ton	\$168.81/mbf	\$17.59/ton	\$161.33/mbf	+4.6%
Hardwood-Pulpwood	\$5.57/ton	\$15.59/cord	\$7.73/ton	\$21.96/cord	-29%

See [Timber Price Trends](http://texasforests.tamu.edu) at <http://texasforests.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.

This report is not as detailed as we usually put in the newsletter. You will note that this is lagging data, and does not reflect north/south prices. With the damage from Katrina and Rita, these lagging indicators are probably not truly meaningful except as a reference. Next issue will have the full Sept/Oct report, and we may be able to begin to see some significant data for the beginning of new trend tracking. Best information is from your consultant forester.

— Bill

Websites of Interest – Hurricane Rita Response/Recovery

Texas Forest Service - Hurricane Rita Forest Recovery -

<http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/shared/article.asp?DocumentID=1154> –

Texas Forest Service heads hurricane forest recovery efforts: Task force created to address issues; [Results of Hurricane Rita Timber Damage Assessment](#); [Hurricane Rita Timber Damage Assessment](#) (timeline and actions taken to produce results); [Use caution with storm damaged trees: Trees may be saved, qualify for tax deductions](#); [Hurricane Rita Landscape Tree Loss](#); [Best Management Practices Need To Be Applied When Salvaging Timber Damaged By Hurricane Rita](#); [Ambrosia Beetles and Wood Borers Likely to Infest Storm-Damaged Pine Timber](#); [Landowner Request for Assistance](#); [Directory of the Forest Products Industries in Texas](#); [Professional Management Service Referral List](#); [Motor Carrier Waiver Letter from Governor Perry](#) (Note - According to the Department of Public Safety, a copy of this letter must be carried in all logging trucks operating under the waiver.)

Texas Forestry Association – Hurricane Rita Forest Recovery –

<http://www.texasforestry.org/> featuring webpages on:

Timber Damage Assessment, Governor Issues Waiver of Motor Carriers, Tips for Landowners Attempting to Salvage Hurricane Damaged Timber, Texas Dept. of Agriculture Offers Assistance to Producers Under Linked Deposit Program; Treasury Department, IRS Extend Dyed Diesel Fuel Penalty Relief through Oct. 25.

Hurricane Rita Relief – U.S. Department of Agriculture

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.1OB?contentidonly=true&contentid=rita.xml>

US Forest Service – “Forest Supervisor Warns of Extreme Danger in Forests”

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/texas/>

*Forest Calendar**

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tree Planting												
Fire Season												
Timber Sales												
Herbicide												
Understory Burning												
Site Prep. Burning												
Apply for Cost Share												
Buy Seedlings												
Southern Pine Beetle												
Pruning												
Transplanting												
Management Plan												

*The forest calendar is a general tool for forest landowners to use in proper planning of forestry related activities on their land.

Forestry Calendar of Events

Nov. 15-17 Texas Forestry Association Annual Meeting, Holiday Inn Select, Tyler, Texas
For more information, call (936) 632-8733 or see <http://www.texasforestry.org/>.

Dec. 6, 7 Forest Herbicides: Research & Demonstration IV. For forest managers and landowners interested in the latest techniques and programs in forest vegetation management. Pesticide recertification credits for Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma available. Society of American Foresters CEU credits also available. For more information contact SFASU, College of Forestry & Agriculture at (936) 468-3301 or see <http://www.sfasu.edu/forestry/services/herbicide/Forest%20Herbicides.htm>

SFA Arboretum Les Reeves Lecture Series (below) – 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., Room 110, SFASU Agriculture Building on Wilson Drive in Nacogdoches. Free. Refreshments served before the talk and a rare plants raffle is held afterwards.

Nov. 17 Norman Winters, Mississippi State – “I’m Colorful; You’re Not”. normanw@ext.msstate.edu

Dec. 15 Dave Creech – “Attention to Detail Around Here Is Not Just a Wish; It’s a Policy”. dcreech@sfasu.edu

**NORTHEAST TEXAS FOREST LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION
BALLOT FOR OFFICERS FOR 2004 AND 2005**

If you are unable to attend the meeting but would like to vote (full members only), use this ballot and return to the PO Box on the back of this form. Those attending will vote at the meeting.
Please check or X the box next to the candidate for whom you are voting.

PRESIDENT

- BILL TUCKER**
 WRITE-IN _____

VICE PRESIDENT

- GLEN WEISS**
 WRITE-IN _____

SECRETARY/TREASURER

- HARRY EARL**
 WRITE-IN _____

DIRECTOR FROM CAMP COUNTY

- BOB TURNER**
 WRITE-IN _____

DIRECTOR FROM FRANKLIN COUNTY

- BLANCHE HANDY**
 WRITE-IN _____

DIRECTOR FROM MORRIS COUNTY

- DIANE DALBY**
 WRITE-IN _____

DIRECTOR FROM TITUS COUNTY

- WRITE-IN** _____

DIRECTOR FROM UPSHUR COUNTY

- BILL VOSS**
 WRITE-IN _____

DIRECTOR FROM WOOD COUNTY

- LARRY HOFFMAN**
 WRITE-IN _____

According to the Bylaws, only FULL members *whose dues are current* may vote in this election, and the person submitting an absentee ballot must sign and date the ballot so their dues status may be verified. If you wish to get current, enclose a check for \$15 with your ballot.

Signature _____

Date:

Printed Signature _____
