

South Carolina



Forest Health Highlights

2007

The Resource

South Carolina's forests cover 12.6 million acres, more than 66% of the state's land area. The majority of the state's forested land, some 11.4 million acres, is in non-industrial private ownership, while approximately 560,000 acres are in national forests. Forestry is the third most important industry in South Carolina, providing 50,000 jobs and producing \$5.6 billion in annual revenue. South Carolina's forests are also prized for their scenic beauty, supporting tourism and outdoor recreation and providing wildlife habitat



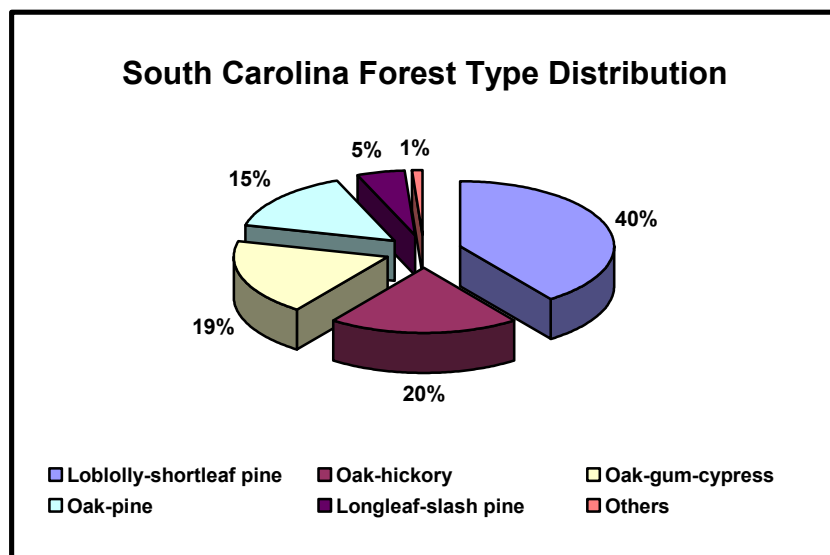
Ricky Layson, Ricky Layson Photography, Bugwood.org

from the Appalachian Mountains in the upstate to the low country of the Atlantic Coastal Plain. Major forest types in the state include

loblolly and shortleaf pine, oak-hickory, oak-gum-cypress and mixed oak-pine. Longleaf and slash pine forests, historically much more wide-ranging, now comprise 5% of the state's forests, while other minor types account for an additional 1%.



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Forest Influences and Programs

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is South Carolina's most significant forest insect pest. In 2007, SPB decreased dramatically from last year with 734 spots being detected in 21 counties. Only 1 of these was considered to be in epidemic status with 1 or more spots per thousand acres of susceptible host type. The largest spot recorded was in Florence county at approximately 2,000 trees in size. Most other spots were small and expanding only slowly. In order to reduce the hazard to future outbreaks, the state has developed a SPB Prevention Program with funding from the USDA Forest Service to encourage thinning and pine restoration. A major feature of the program is landowner cost-share incentive program.

Pine engraver beetle (*Ips spp.*) damage was scattered throughout the Piedmont and upper Coastal Plain in 2007, primarily associated with drought stress and annosum root disease incidence.

Laurel (redbay) wilt, caused by an exotic fungus (*Raffaelea* sp.) vectored by the exotic redbay ambrosia beetle (*Xyleborus glabratus*), was first reported in 2004 near Port Wentworth, Georgia and has spread rapidly into Florida and South Carolina since. Vegetative surveys have been conducted to delineate the range of the wilt and its effects on redbay and other potential hosts. As of 2007, the insect/pathogen complex is known to occur in 10 South Carolina counties as well as in Georgia and Florida. Unfortunately, there is little available to halt the spread. The insect/pathogen complex has also been recorded to affect sassafras and avocado, so the threat to forests and crops is enlarging.

Forest Tent Caterpillar defoliation was detected on 202,000 acres in eight counties in 2007—Berkely, Dillon, Dorchester, Georgetown, Horry, Marion, Orangeburg, and Williamsburg. Affected river basins included the Edisto, the Little Pee Dee, the Santee and the Waccamaw. Many swamps outside river drainages also experience defoliation; the Four-hole swamp in Orangeburg and Dorchester counties was heavily impacted again this year.

Annosum root disease continues to show up in young, recently-thinned pine plantations. Mortality is most evident on high-hazard sandy soils, but growth loss may be occurring in other areas as well.

Hemlock wooly adelgid has spread into most eastern and Carolina hemlock areas of the state in 4 upstate counties—Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg. Coordinated efforts to rear and release natural predatory insects offers some hope for long-term control of this pest. One of the 3 operational rearing facilities for these predators is at Clemson University; the other 2 are in Georgia.



Forest Health Assistance in South Carolina

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