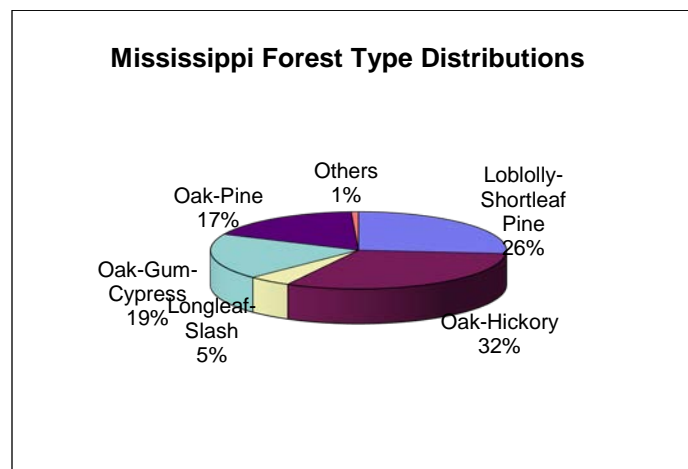


The Resource

Mississippi's forests cover 19.9 million acres, more than 65% of the state's land area. Some 13.1 million acres of the state's forested land is in nonindustrial private ownership, while approximately 1.1 million acres are in national forests. Mississippi's forests are prized for their scenic beauty, supporting tourism and outdoor recreation and providing wildlife habitat throughout the state. Major forest types in the state include oak-hickory, loblolly and shortleaf pine, longleaf and slash pine, mixed oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress.



Forest health monitoring (FHM) activities are cooperative efforts between the USDA Forest Service and the Mississippi Forestry Commission. The FHM program in Mississippi includes regular aerial and ground surveys to detect forest damage.

Special Issues

Key issues which State and federal programs are addressing cooperatively include:

- Sustainable management of private forest lands
- Protection and development of urban and community forest resources
- Increasing participation by underserved citizens in forestry programs

Forest Influences

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is Mississippi's most significant forest insect pest. Only low activity was reported in 2006, with only 11 spots identified in 5 counties. The state has developed a comprehensive SPB prevention education program to help teach landowners about the benefits of thinning in reducing SPB hazard.

Pine engraver beetles (*Ips spp.*) displayed fairly heavy activity in 2006, especially in areas affected by 2005 storms. Because *Ips* infestations tend to be relatively small and scattered, they usually cannot be effectively controlled or salvaged, but their economic

costs may equal those caused by SPB. Engraver beetle activity is expected to increase in forest areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

Gypsy moth surveying continues throughout the state. No moths were captured in the state in 2006.

Pitch canker caused shoot dieback and top kill in young loblolly pine plantations, a phenomenon not commonly detected in the state. During 2006, pitch canker was widespread, particularly in central and southern parts of the state.

Weather damage resulting from drought and latent effects of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and associated tornados was prominent in 2006. Pine mortality increased significantly, especially in southern parts of the state, and was often associated with *Ips* and black turpentine beetle attack. Mortality in hardwoods was abundant but widely scattered.

Sudden Oak Death surveys were conducted by pathologists from Mississippi State University. The surveys focused on the perimeters of horticultural nurseries that had received potentially infected stock from shippers in California. No sites infected with the *Phytophthora ramorum* pathogen were identified.

Forest Health Assistance in Mississippi

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