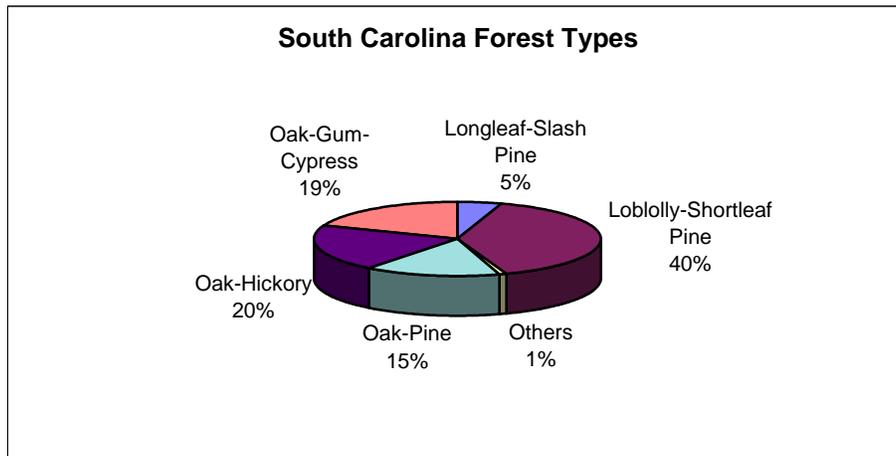


The Resource

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 nonindustrial 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 from the Appalachian Mountains in the upstate to the lowcountry of the Atlantic Coastal Plain. Major forest types in the state include oak-hickory, loblolly and shortleaf pine, mixed oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress. 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%.



Forest health monitoring (FHM) activities are cooperative efforts between the USDA Forest Service and the SC Forestry Commission. The FHM program in South Carolina includes periodic measurement of fixed plots as well as regular aerial and ground surveys to detect forest damage.

Special Issues

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

- Urban area expansion and related impacts on forest land acreage and forest health
- Water quality protection through greater use of best management practices
- Sustaining forest resources through wise private landowner stewardship

Forest Influences

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is South Carolina's most significant forest insect pest. In 2005, SPB activity continued, although at lower levels than in the previous five years. Two counties remained in outbreak status and 2,387 spots were reported statewide.

Pine engraver beetles (*Ips spp.*) displayed continued moderate activity in the Piedmont in 2005. Because *Ips* infestations tend to be relatively small and scattered, they usually cannot be effectively controlled or salvaged, but their economic costs may approach those caused by SPB.

Hemlock wooly adelgid (HWA) was first detected in Oconee County in 2001. It has since spread in the upstate, infesting both of the native hemlock species. Current suppression activities involve a cooperative effort to rear and release predators in hope of achieving biological control of the adelgid, but the prognosis for hemlocks is not good. Except on individual trees in landscape settings, chemical control of HWA is not practical, and major losses of these ecologically valuable trees are probable within a few years.

Fusiform rust is the state's most destructive forest disease. The fungus causes serious infections on an estimated 1.4 million acres of pine forest.

Annosum root rot affected an estimated 51,820 acres of timber in 29 South Carolina counties in 2005. Losses from this disease continue to be significant, and were estimated at \$1.86 million.

Dogwood anthracnose is a disease of cool, moist areas in the higher elevation forests of 6 northwestern S.C. counties. It is currently causing significant mortality to native dogwoods. No new areas of infection were reported in 2005.

Beavers are an increasingly serious problem in the states riparian forests. Beaver activity killed 13,950 acres of timber, valued at \$5 million. New mortality due to beaver impoundments continued to increase, due largely to increased precipitation.

Fire mortality was reported on 8,325 acres in 2005.

Weather damage from a late December ice storm produced an estimated \$1.08 million in damage to pulpwood stands in six counties.

Sudden Oak Death surveys were continued in 2005. The surveys focused on the perimeters of horticultural nurseries that had received potentially infected stock from shippers in California and Oregon, but also sampled general forest areas considered to be at high risk. No infected sites were found.

Red bay mortality caused by a fungus vectored by an exotic ambrosia beetle was first reported in 2004 and continued to spread in 2005. Effects on red bay and other potential host species are being studied.

Forest Health Assistance in South Carolina

For further information or assistance, contact:

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