2011 Annual Report Brief

Our mission is to create and deliver science and technology that sustains forest ecosystems and the benefits these ecosystems provide.

United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Southern Research Station

For Policymakers:

Southern Forest Futures Project (SFFP). The SFFP uses scenarios to forecast the effects on forests of urbanization, increased use of wood for energy production, changing weather patterns, land ownership changes, and invasive plant species over the next half century. SFFP discusses how these factors may affect water, wildlife, fire, and other issues to inform landowners, policymakers, and the American public about future impacts on southern forests.

Southern Forest Futures *www.srs.fs.usda.gov/futures/*

For Forest Landowners:

Landowner-Incentive Conservation Program. InterfaceSouth, the University of Puerto Rico, El Yunque National Forest, and the International Institute of Tropical Forestry conducted a study to better understand key interested parties' knowledge about the ecosystem services—including clean air, water, and recreation—that are essential to the wellbeing of people in communities surrounding the forest and beyond. One of the four study goals was to explore the potential role of landowner-incentive conservation programs for forest conservation around El Yunque, including conservation easements, land donations, and land purchases. The findings will enhance and help implement conservation programs around El Yunque, as well as in other State and National forests and private lands.

InterfaceSouth *www.interfacesouth.org/projects/el-yunque*

For Land Managers, Homeowners, and Fire Chiefs:

Wildland Fire Management. As part of ongoing efforts to reduce human and ecological losses from wildfire, Federal agencies are working with States, tribes, and other interested publics to develop a National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy. Southern Research Station scientists serve on a science team, working with managers to evaluate the consequences of alternative courses of action and to provide information to guide a new national strategy.

Wildland Fire Management Strategy
www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs_other/rmrs_2011_usda_fs001.pdf

For Forest and County Planners:

Southern Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA). FIA is the forest census, which posts the most timely, inclusive set of State data to date on the Nation's forests for decision-makers such as Congress, government agencies, and industry managers. Annual State reports are an important product of FIA. In 2011, FIA staff from the Southern Research Station set a new standard in reporting by issuing the most current set of FIA data ever made available to policy makers.

Spatial Data Services *http://srsfia2.fs.fed.us/sds/index.shtml*

For the Community:

Harvesting Small Trees for Bioenergy. Southern forests are often referred to as the "wood basket of the world." Small diameter trees have the potential to be a significant source of energy, and there is a need to reduce production costs to make wood energy products more affordable. Researchers are working with partners to define production costs and performance functions for conventional forest equipment harvesting for small-diameter pine plantations. They are using the results from benchmarking analysis to develop a new biomass harvesting system designed to address the limitations of conventional energy production operations

Small Trees for Bioenergy
www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/ja/2011/ja_2011_klepac_001.pdf

For Watershed Managers and Scientists:

Forest Watershed Research in the 21st Century—What are the Critical Needs? In the publication entitled *Forest Watershed Research in the 21st Century,* researchers provide a comprehensive assessment and prioritization of research needs to improve the understanding of how forested watersheds are affected by variable weather patterns, land use changes, and loss of native plant species and/or encroachment by nonnative invasive plants.

Forest Wetlands Research *www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/37777*

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