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cc:

Subject: Southern Forest Resource Assessment (SFRA)

While I appreciate the work the U.S. Forest Service has done on its assessment of the Southern Forests, I think the assessment's focus on the effects of urban sprawl on the forests is overstated. Clearly, the forests are adversely impacted by sprawl, but the larger issues as documented in the report are the number of acres being timbered primarily for paper and the transformation of the forests into pine plantations. In the final report, I hope the Forest Service will more fairly reflect the data in stating its conclusions.

As you are no doubt aware, the State of North Carolina recently studied the effects of chip mills on its forests. North Carolina also found that urban sprawl adversely impacted its forests, but it also documented similar problems as you've documented, including removal of some species currently exceed growth. My impression of the North Carolina report is similar to my observation regarding your report---that its authors documented various problems but were clearly wanting to focus on urban sprawl since it doesn't reflect poorly on the forest products industry.

By way of background, I've been a member of the North Carolina Forest Council, as a private landowner, for the past three years. I was appointed by former Speaker Brubaker (R-NC). The views expressed herein reflect my personal views and do not necessarily represent the views of the North Carolina Forestry Council or the State of North Carolina.

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