



Forest Inventory and Analysis Southern FIA Program



FIA Factsheet Series

FIA Mission: The Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program of the USDA Forest Service has been in continuous operation since 1930 with a mission to:

"... make and keep current a comprehensive inventory and analysis of the present and prospective conditions of and requirements for the renewable resources of the forest and rangelands of the U.S."

The FIA program collects, analyzes, and reports information on the status and trends of America's forests. FIA information answers questions such as how much forest exists, where it exists, who owns it, and how it is changing. In addition, FIA data is used to determine how the trees and other forest vegetation are growing and how much has died or has been removed in recent years.

This information can be used in many ways, such as in evaluating wildlife habitat conditions, assessing the sustainability of ecosystem management practices, and supporting planning and decision-making activities by public and private enterprises. FIA combines this information with related data on insects, diseases, and other types of forest damages and stressors to assess the health, condition, and potential future risks to forests.

Southern States: Because of the importance of wood-using industries and forest values to the Southern U.S. economy, resource sustainability must be continually addressed. The Southern Research Station (SRS) FIA program provides important data about southern forests through annual inventories as a component of the National FIA Program. The SRS FIA program conducts the continuous forest census for the 13 Southern States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This inventory activity is accomplished in a collaborative manner with the Southern

State foresters and their respective forestry organizations.

In addition, the SRS FIA program works collaboratively with forest industry groups, universities, and other governmental agencies to develop new procedures to improve the inventory process. Data and information are available through traditional sources such as reports and publications and the FIA interactive Web site which allow users to query the FIA database to answer their own questions.

History: In the past, permanent plots were established in each State and then revisited on roughly a 10-year schedule. This periodic inventory allowed each area to be assessed for current status as well as changes in forest area, growth, removals, and mortality.

State	Last Periodic Survey
Alabama	2000
Arkansas	1995
Florida	1995
Georgia	1997
Kentucky	1988
Louisiana	1991
Mississippi	1994
North Carolina	2002
Oklahoma	1993
South Carolina	1993
Tennessee	1999
Texas	1992
Virginia	1992
Puerto Rico	1990
U.S. Virgin Islands	None

The Forest Health Monitoring program was implemented in 1991 in the Southern U.S. to monitor annual and long-term changes in forest health. In 1998, the Farm Bill required FIA to institute dramatic changes to the inventory program. The 1998 Farm Bill mandated an annual inventory across all land ownerships including National Forest System lands in every State every year, nationally consistent data

collection, and 5-year reports that included assessments of forest health. In collaboration with its State partners, SRS FIA initiated the transition from periodic to annual inventories in 1997. Within the Eastern U.S., FIA is funded on a 7-year cycle (except western TX which is on a 10-year cycle). Most Southern States have provided additional funds to collect inventory data on a 5-year cycle.

Currently, 11 States are in annual implementation in cooperation with the respective State forestry organization. Mississippi and Oklahoma have not been implemented due to budget limitations. Inventories in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are still periodic due to the reduced numbers of plots and are completed in cooperation with the International Institute of Tropical Forestry.

SRS FIA Organization: The SRS FIA program is managed at unit headquarters in Knoxville, TN with additional personnel currently in Asheville, NC and Starkville, MS. Staffing and activities are focused in the following areas: data collection, information management, resource analysis, timber product output, and monitoring techniques research.

Core and Regional Measurements: National core measurements must be collected on all ground plots following standard data collection protocols (see *Phase 2 and Phase 3: Ground Measurements Fact Sheet*). These core measurements have been the focus of SRS FIA data collection since the passage of the 1998 Farm Bill. The national core measurements are augmented with a small number of regionally-specific measurements on inventory plots to address specific regional issues. Most regional noncore measurements are limited to those used for plot monumentation, reconciliation with past inventories, and tree quality

(tree grade, tree class, damage, etc.). SRS FIA also collects data to determine the distribution of selected nonnative invasive plants, and other nontimber related information.

Timber Products Output (TPO): A component of the SRS FIA program is TPO information which provides estimates of timber product output by State for all products. This includes saw logs, pulpwood, veneer logs, composite panels, other industrial products, and plant by-products. The SRS FIA program also conducts utilization studies by visiting active logging operations to determine the amount of wood being sent to the mill.

National Woodland Owner Survey (NWOS): NWOS results are used to address what services landowners intend to derive, manage, or provide from their forested acreage.

Partners and Clients: SRS FIA primary partners in implementing the

FIA program are State foresters and their respective organizations. These groups are primarily involved in the data collection aspects of the annual inventory system. Other partners and clients include other Forest Service research programs; National Forest System and Forest Health Protection programs in the Southern region; other federal agencies such as the National Park Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service; universities; environmental organizations; forest industry companies; and private landowners.

The needs of these groups help determine regional data needs, various resource analysis needs, and the kind of report or output produced. Input and collaboration from partners and clients are obtained in a variety of ways including annual client meetings, data requests, special working sessions, and cooperative agreements.

Factsheet Author: William Burkman

For more information about the SRS FIA program visit the following Web sites:

- Information specific to SRS FIA: <http://srsfia2.fs.fed.us/>
- Electronic copies of SRS FIA publications available at: <http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/pubs/>
- The National FIA database at: <http://www.ncrs2.fs.fed.us/4801/FIADB/>
- The National TPO database at: http://ncrs2.fs.fed.us/4801/fiadb/rpa_tpo/wc_rpa_tpo.ASP
- National Woodland Owner Survey: <http://www.fs.fed.us/woodlandowners/>

Or contact us at:
 SRS FIA
 USDA Forest Service
 4700 Old Kinston Pike
 Knoxville, TN 37919
 (865) 862-2073

