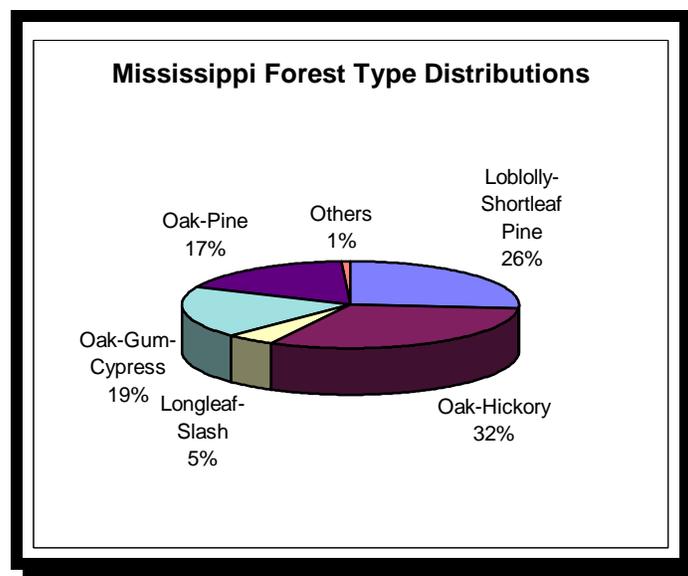


The Resource

Mississippi's forests cover 18.5 million acres, more than 60% of the state's land area. Some 4.9 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. Rapidly expanding populations were reported on the Homochitto and Bienville National Forests, but relatively limited activity (100 spots) were reported on private lands in 2002.

Pine engraver beetles (*Ips spp.*) displayed moderate activity in 2003. 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. Pine sawflies caused minor defoliation on two sites in Marshall County in 2003. Gypsy moth surveying continues throughout the state. No moths were captured in the state in 2003.

Forest Health Assistance in Mississippi

For further information or assistance, contact:

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