





SCSL Digital Collections

The state of South Carolina's forests




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FOREST AREA

-  South Carolina has 13.1 million acres of forestland. This is 68% of the state's total land area.
-  Hardwood timber types occupy over 54% of the state's forestland. Softwoods occupy 46%.
-  South Carolina's forestland acreage remains stable, averaging 12.7 million acres since 1968.
-  The 2009 forest inventory found that there are 2.4 million more acres of forestland than there were in the first inventory in 1936.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

-  Forestry is **#1** among manufacturing industries in jobs (90,624) and payroll (\$4.1 billion).
-  The total economic impact of South Carolina's forest industry is around \$ 17 billion annually.
-  South Carolina exports \$1.1 billion in forest products each year.
-  Timber is the state's **#1** commodity at \$784 million annually.





FOREST OWNERSHIP

-  88% of South Carolina's forests are privately owned.
-  64% of private forests are family-owned.
-  The average "family forest" is 66 acres. 74% of these owners live on the land.
-  In 2009, forest industries owned 759,500 acres, down 62% since 2001 and continuing to decrease.
-  Public agencies control 12% of South Carolina's forests.




Sources: SC Forestry Commission and USDA Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA)



FOREST INVENTORY

-  South Carolina's forests now contain 23.3 billion cubic feet of wood, more than at any time in the past century.
-  The state's forests, both hardwood and softwood, are growing significantly more wood than is being harvested.
-  Net annual softwood growth is double pre-hurricane Hugo growth rates. The present annual growth of 866 million cubic feet per year is the highest ever recorded.
-  Net annual hardwood growth rates have steadily increased since Hurricane Hugo. The present annual growth of 412 million cubic feet per year is approaching the highest ever recorded.

FOREST ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

-  The state's forested watersheds fulfill a critical resource role as the primary supplier of clean public water.
-  South Carolina's forested watersheds are well managed as documented by a 98.6% compliance rating with state water quality guidelines.
-  The state's forests produce timber and jobs and serve as a backdrop for a desirable quality of life. In addition to beautiful landscapes, forests provide clean water and air, wildlife habitat, recreation, carbon storage, and soil protection.

For more information about South Carolina's forest resource, contact the SC Forestry Commission at 803-896-8800.

www.trees.sc.gov

The South Carolina Forestry Commission and the USDA Forest Service are equal opportunity employers and providers.