

USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station report to SFTIC (June 2006)

SRS Reorganization

Southern Institute of Forest Genetics (Saucier, MS) and Biological Foundations of Forest Productivity and Sustainability (RTP, NC) have merged. Dana Nelson is the Project Leader for the new unit. Kurt Johnsen is the Team Leader for the Biological Foundations component. The new title will be something like “Genetics and Biological Foundations of Forest Ecosystems”.

SRS will have five Science Areas (SA) each with an Assistant Director and each containing fewer, larger projects. The working title of our new SA is Forest Ecosystem Restoration and Management. The other projects include Pine Ecology & Management (Jim Guldin, PL), Upland Hardwood Ecology & Management (Dave Loftis, PL), and Restoration and Management of Longleaf Pine Ecosystems (Kris Connor, PL).

The other four SAs are Threats to Forest Health (insects, diseases, invasives, disturbance ecology, threat assessment), Watershed Science (Coweeta & Charleston, Bottomland Hardwoods, Agroforestry), Natural Resource Technology & Social Sciences (wood utilization, economics & policy, urban interface, recreation), and Natural Resource Inventory & Monitoring (FIA). The overall realignment will be sorting itself out over the next few months. Public input is welcome and will be facilitated in time.

SIFG

Jen Myszewski has moved to College Station, TX and will be working out of office/lab space that we share with the Western Gulf Forest Tree Improvement Program. Nurul Faridi is our other scientist located there.

Ron Schmidting is Emeritus Scientist and he continues to contribute to our program.

Our Clone Bank survived Katrina, but it was heavily damaged. We are in the process of restoring it.

We have obtained and begun to archive the IFG/Weyerhaeuser loblolly pine reference mapping pedigrees. In addition we are distributing DNA samples to interested researchers. Is there interest in doing the same for a population of slash, longleaf, and/or shortleaf?

The Founder Population (loblolly pine) has been archived as frozen needle samples. Is there any interest in archiving as grafted trees at a location such SIFG? It contains about 800 genotypes.

We continue to develop SSR markers and now SNPs for loblolly and related pines. We have had some interest from people wanting samples genotyped for various operational

purposes. We're willing to do some of this if it has research or development purposes in addition to operations.