

SOUTHERN CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

DUKE UNIVERSITY
<http://www.env.duke.edu/scsf/>

NORTH CAROLINA'S DIVISION OF FOREST RESOURCES

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Southern Center for Sustainable Forests: 2003 Status Report

The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests was established in 1997 by a Memorandum of Understanding among North Carolina State University, Duke University, and the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources.

The Center was established to provide leadership for research, education, and extension to promote economically and ecologically sustainable management of forests in the South. Leadership for the Center is shared among the three co-directors from each organizing institution.

The Center sponsors and performs projects that involve research, teaching, and outreach regarding the practice of sustainable forest management in the South.

***Objectives.--The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests* will:**

- X Foster research regarding the productivity and sustainability of forest practices on private forests and evaluate the effects of intensive and extensive forestry at the landscape scale.
- X Improve state, regional, and interdisciplinary cooperation in education and technology transfer of existing and new research efforts to students, forestry professionals, and private landowners.
- X Promote open and balanced discussion among interest groups in achieving sustainable forest management.
- X Assist in the development and use of appropriate guidelines for sustainable forestry that incorporate economic and ecological principles.

To meet these objectives, we have sponsored conferences, performed research on wood chip mill impacts in the state of North Carolina, undertaken a forest certification project on member institution lands, and performed related research and education activities.

Conferences.--The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests has sponsored four primary conferences on enhancing southern forests.

- X An organizing conference was held on July 17, 1997 in High Point, North Carolina with individuals representing government, nongovernment, academic, and private organizations.

- X A follow-up conference on Perspectives on Sustainable Forestry for the South was held on November 12-13, 1998 in Charlotte. Proceedings from that conference are available on the upon request from Southern Center partners.
- X On February 4, 2000, The Southern Center sponsored a conference in Raleigh on forest certification, including presentations from the leaders of all major U.S. certification systems.
- X On June 5-6, 2002, a conference on Implementing Forest Certification in the South was held in Raleigh to summarize the results of joint FSC/SFI forest certification project of Southern Center members.

Wood Chip Mill Study.--The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests served as the unifying organization that performed a major study on the "Economic and Ecologic Effects Associated with Wood Chip Production in North Carolina." The study was completed in August 2000. The current versions of the wood chip mill study reports are available at the above Southern Center web address of: <http://www.env.duke.edu/scsf/>

The wood chip mill study involved researchers and experts at each of the Southern Center founding organizations, and received advice from a formal advisory board. Results from the wood chip study can foster more informed scientific discussion about the issues associated with wood chip production, environmental protection, and forest management in the South.

Forest Certification.--The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests cooperated in a coordinated a study of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) forest certification on its member organization lands in 2001 and 2002. This project led to the joint certification of 55,000 acres of forests managed by the state of North Carolina, DENR Division of Forest Resources, the College of Natural Resources forests at NC State University, and the School of Environment forests at Duke University.

Each Southern Center member institution performed a side-by-side comparison of SFI and FSC certification to assess their application to most of their forests. This project led to certification for all the forests audited, and will serve as a means to examine the extension of certification to nonindustrial private forest lands. Several reports have been published on the process and the costs of the project, which has included continuing education for foresters and landowners about forest certification.

Related Research and Education.--The Southern Center also serves as an integrating role for interdisciplinary research conducted by faculty at NC State and Duke Universities. For example, NC State University recently received a federal special grant to enhance productivity and health in hardwood forests through biotechnology, and Duke University is pursuing various projects on enhanced forest soils protection and productivity through the auspices of the Southern Center. The Division of Forest Resources has been the lead agency responsible for developing Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the state river protection corridors and for monitoring BMP compliance.