

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

COUNTY WIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR

McCOMB SCHOOL BOARD

PIKE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

INTRODUCTION: McCOMB SCHOOL BOARD has 1 sixteenth section with the School Board overseeing this section. There is a total land area of 642 acres. Of this amount 517 acres is growing timber and 125 acres are non-forested. Based on percentage, 81 percent is timberland and 19 percent is non-forested. The objective of the plan is to outline steps, which if followed, will allow for full timber production on every acre of sixteen section land covered by this plan. This plan was written for a ten (10) year period. This plan will have to be revised in 2022. It should be understood that the plan was prepared to be used as a guide and it can be changed as conditions warrant.

At this point in time, the cut cannot be regulated by the growth completely. This is due to several factors that will be discussed in detail later. This plan provides a starting point to continuously bring this land into full production with regulated annual cut. At the present time, the average stand and stocking is well stocked. Through improvement cuts, tree planting, and timber stand improvement work, growth can be increased to the desired level over the coming years.

HISTORY OF THE FOREST: The forest management agreement between the Mississippi Forestry Commission and the McComb School Board provides for the management of the timberland by the Forestry Commission. The Forestry Commission acts as the Board's technical advisor on all forestry matters. All work will be explained to and approved by the Board of Education prior to its execution. Work such as timber marking, burning, firelanes, tree planting, boundary line painting, and other work will be done on an actual cost basis.

In the past 30 years, a considerable amount of work has been done on these lands in an effort to get all forest acres into full production. These efforts will continue to be noticeable in the near future as more sales are made and the volumes should increase.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: Management objectives consist of four (4) main points. The first being to have the forest managed for sustained yield for pine sawtimber. The second is to build up growing stock. The third objective is to get every acre producing to its full potential. The fourth objective is to continue to provide adequate game habitat while still producing good quality timber. The steps necessary to meet these objectives will be outlined in the remainder of this plan.

FOREST DESCRIPTION: There are three (3) main timber types which dominate the forest of this county. These are hardwood bottomland, pine-hardwood, and pine plantation. The pine-hardwood stands occupy the upland dry sites. The hardwood stands are composed of a variety of oaks, hickory, ash and other assorted hardwood species. The pine-hardwood stands are composed of shortleaf pine, loblolly, and low grade upland hardwoods composed mostly of post oak, hickory, red oak, and other assorted hardwood species. The upland sites are best suited for the production of pine. The site index on bottomland will range from 85 to 95, and the site index on the upland site ranges from 80 to 90 with the average being around 85. At present hardwoods account for 54 acres (18%), mixed pine-hardwood stands account for 44 acres (9%), while pine stands total 419 acres (73%). The forest product distribution is 5% reproduction, 55 % is in pulpwood and 40 % is sawtimber.

PRODUCTION AIMS: The primary goal is producing high quality saw logs in the shortest period of time and providing a sustained yield through the years of production. Pine-hardwood stands will be converted to pine as they mature. Attention will be given to leaving enough hardwood for game food. Leaving hardwood growing in drains and creeks will accomplish this objective. The timber on hardwood sites will be managed for production of high quality hardwood saw logs.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS-SILVICULTURAL GENERAL: The mature stands of pine will be harvested by dates listed in the cutting schedule. These stands will then be chemically site prepared, then artificially regenerated by planting in genetically improved loblolly pine. The pine plantations will also be thinned according to the dates listed in the cutting schedule. Upon maturity, these plantation will also be harvested, site prepared and replanted. The hardwood stands will be harvested by dates set in the cutting schedules. These stands will be converted to pine if considered to be a pine site. All sales, site preparations, and tree planting schedules are listed in the tables of the appendix. All management recommendations will follow Mississippi Best Management Practice guidelines.

FIRE CONTROL: Mississippi Forestry Commission has the responsibility of fire control on all the school sections. The Commission operates two (2) fire suppression units in Pike County. In the event of emergencies, other units may be called in from adjoining counties.

Dispatching of fires is done by Central Dispatch located at the Southwest District Office in Brookhaven, Mississippi at 1-888-823-3473. Most fires are reported by adjoining landowners or by MFC air patrol.

INSECTS AND DISEASE: At the present time there are no real problems in the area. The best prevention of insects and disease is a healthy vigorous stand of trees. A close watch must be kept to detect an outbreak of insects and disease. If an outbreak occurs, the area will be controlled by the use of emergency timber sales.

UTILIZATION AND MARKETING: All marketing will be in accordance with the schedule in the appendix except for emergency sales caused by storms, or insects and disease. These cutting schedules may be amended due to market conditions. In cases of regeneration harvests, timber may be cruised by Mississippi Forestry Commission employees. All timber will be sold on a lump sum basis except for thinnings. Pine plantation thinnings will be sold on a per ton basis. After cruising, the forester in charge will compute the volume of all products. Volumes will be computed using Doyle scale with appropriate form classes. The Assistant District Forester in charge of public lands will prepare the prospectus for the sale with the District Forester's approval. The McComb School Board of Education will advertise the sale. Period of advertisement will be a minimum of 21 days as required by law. The Forestry Commission will send sample contracts to buyers in the area of the sale. All bids must be marked "Bid" and sent to the McComb School Board, McComb, Mississippi. The successful bidder will be bound by the terms of the contract. The Forester in charge will make periodic checks of the cutting operations to ensure compliance with the terms of the contract.

The Board of Education will be billed for the work at the completion of the timber sale. A minimum of 15% will be placed in an escrow fund for forestry work of any approved type. When more funds are needed, the Forestry Commission may request the Board of Education to place additional funds in the escrow account, which is not anticipated. These additional funds may come from timber sales or the general fund.

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS: Boundary lines that are established have just been re-painted and will be maintained on a 5-6 year cycle. Some sections may require surveying to establish property lines that are in question. Some sections have old fences for boundary lines and these may not be correct. Firelanes will be installed and maintained on some of the school sections that have young pine plantations where a history of wildfire problems occur. This work will be approved by the School Board and performed by the Mississippi Forestry Commission employees. Contract work will be limited to site preparation spraying, tree planting, and TSI work. Firelanes, road work, and repainting boundary lines will be done on an as needed basis.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: The term "Best Management Practice" refers to a practice or combination of practices that is determined to be the most effective, practical means of preventing or reducing the amount of pollution generated by non-point sources to a level compatible with water quality goals.

Public land management can generally be divided into three categories as follows:

- (1) General Forest Management consists of hardwood brush control with chemicals, prescribed burning, firelane construction, boundary line painting, and woods road maintenance.
- (2) Timber Harvesting – This is the cutting and removing of forest products. Basically, we will be having regeneration harvests and pine plantation thinnings as listed in the cutting schedule found in the appendix.
- (3) Post Harvesting – This is an activity carried out as a result of harvesting and conducted after the harvesting has been completed. These activities

will include but not be limited to site preparation (chemical or mechanical), regeneration work, quality vegetation management and road or firelane construction.

All work on public lands will address all pollution matters on upland, bottomland and wetland sites. All work will be planned and carried out according to Mississippi's Best Management Practice Handbook.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES: All public lands will be managed in accordance with the current laws and regulations governing both plants and animals that are considered threatened and/or endangered. Prior to any management activity, the area will be surveyed for any known threatened or endangered species. If any species is found, the area will be managed in accordance with the guidelines published for that particular species.

HISTORICAL, CULTURAL OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL ITEMS: Any historical, cultural, or archaeological item that is found on public lands will be identified, located, marked and preserved. No silvicultural practice that will damage or destroy these items will be conducted on the site. Sufficient area around the site may be excluded to insure that the site will not be damaged. Items will generally consist of old monuments, grave sites, Indian mounds, etc.