

CURRENT POLICY DISCUSSIONS AND PARTNERSHIP EFFORTS IN BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FORESTS

Tim Foley, Policy Director - Southern Group of State Foresters
Bottomland and Swamp Forest Symposium – October 31, 2017



Who we are

SOUTHERN
GROUP OF STATE
FORESTERS

Southern Group of State Foresters

Represent the State Foresters from across a 13-state area, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands

Provide leadership in sustaining the economic, environmental and social benefits of the South's forests, and work to identify and address existing and emerging issues and challenges that are important to southern forests and citizens.





Outline

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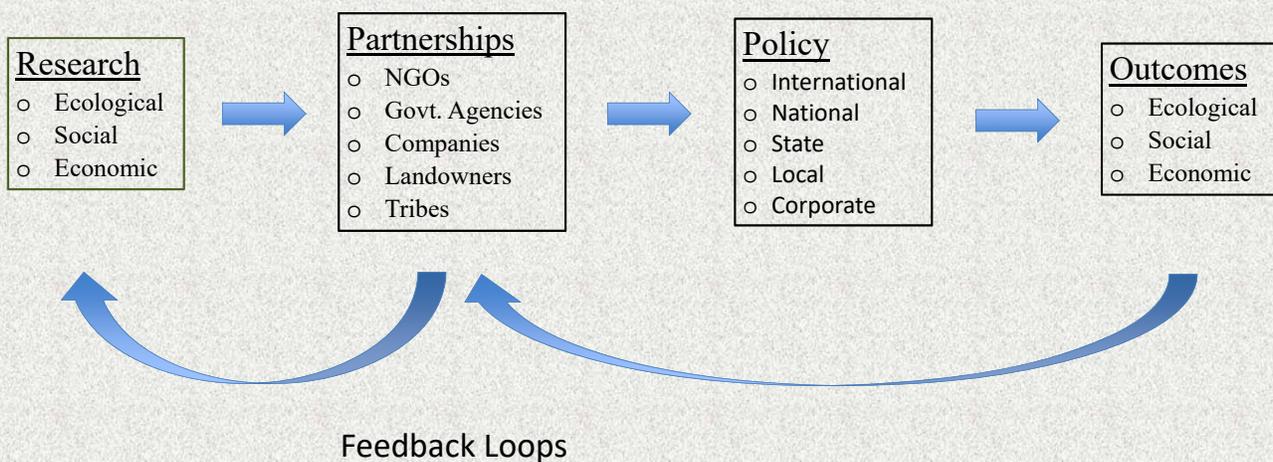
Policy Discussions and Partnership Efforts

1. How do research, policy, and partnerships connect?
2. Where is policy being made that impacts our bottomland hardwood forests?
3. What partnerships are working to ensure this policy makes sense and supports healthy bottomland hardwood ecosystems?
4. Questions and Discussion



How this all fits together

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What research questions are relevant to current discussions?

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How do we sustainably manage the resource?

Policy Questions/Objectives

- Ecological: Extent, species diversity, age class distribution, effects of management, etc
- Social: Management decisions, harvest decisions, role of changing landowner demographics, etc
- Economic: Role of markets, valuation of non-timber ecosystem services, etc



Photo Credit: Mac Stone



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Research Efforts

- Ecological: FIA Data, Geographically Specific Studies, Management Studies/BMP reports
- Social: National Woodland Owner Survey, Landowner focus groups
- Economic: Modeling projections (SOFAC), Ecosystem services valuation studies



Where is policy being developed?

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International

Southern Fiber for Wood Pellets to Europe

- European Union Renewable Energy Directive (RED 2) and Biomass Sustainability Guidelines
- Policy Question: Forest-level sustainability tracking vs. regional risk-based assessments
- Emergence of the Sustainable Biomass Partnership (SBP)



Where is policy being developed?

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International

(Sec. 26.5 of EU ENVI Committee Draft (10/23))...Information of legality and forest management practices are provided at the supply base level to ensure that:

- i) harvesting is carried out in accordance with the conditions of the harvesting permit procedure or equivalent national or regional proof of the legal right to harvest;
- ii) forest regeneration of harvested areas takes place;
- iii) areas designated to promote the maintenance of biodiversity or for nature conservation purposes, including in wetlands and peatlands, are protected;
- iv) harvesting is carried out considering maintenance of soil quality and biodiversity;
- v) harvesting maintains or improves long-term production capacity of the forest at country or regional level, and
- vi) environmental and nature regulations or measures are in place and in line with the relevant Unions environmental and nature standards.





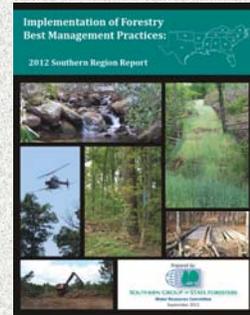
Where is policy being developed?



National

Waters of the United States

- Defines the scope of Clean Water Act jurisdiction
- Trump administration repeal of Obama-era-WOTUS which called for case-by-case analysis of Pocosins, Carolina bays, and Delmarva bays
- Recognition of success of State silvicultural BMPs and highlight ongoing collaborative refinement
- Retention of Section 404 (f) exemption for normal silviculture



Regional Partnerships Engaging in State and Local Policy



- Wetland Forest Initiative

Mission - to conserve, restore, and improve Southern wetland forests to strengthen our communities through science-backed actions, diverse partnerships, and citizen and landowner engagement.



- Keeping Forests as Forests

Draft Vision - a world where southern forests are valued as critical infrastructure that support the health, prosperity, security, and well-being of the American people.



- Landowner Engagement Partnerships

- SGSF – Southern Family Forest Initiative
- Southern Woods for At-risk Wildlife Partnership (AFF and NFWF)
- Carolinas Working Forest Conservation Collaborative
 - AFF, International Paper, The Procter & Gamble Company and 3M Company
 - Columbus, Bladen, Robeson, Cumberland, Pender, Johnston counties in NC



Fiber Procurement Policy Informed by Stakeholder Engagement











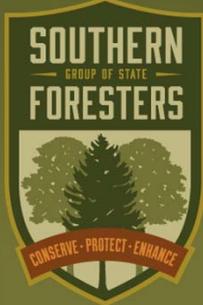








- Corporate Policies
 - Wood Pellets
 - Pulp and Paper
 - Other sectors
- Certification Standards
 - American Tree Farm System
 - Forest Stewardship Council
 - Sustainable Forestry Initiative
- Logger Training



QUESTIONS ... DISCUSSION

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