

Southern Research Station Experimental Forests Network Facts

An Overview of the Network



A sign greets visitors and scientists at the Crossett Experimental Forest in Ashley County, Arkansas. USFS Photo.

The Network

The SRS Experimental Forests and Ranges (EFR) Network consists of 19 experimental forests located across the southeastern region. It provides a unique opportunity for SRS scientists to conduct research and collect data due to the unique flexibility for experimentation. The Network also allows for long-term studies and sampling archives across a wide variety of vegetation, land, and ecosystem types. Along with other national forests, university owned land, and private land on which SRS scientists conduct research, the Network provides vital landscapes and ecosystems that contribute to the diverse SRS research outputs and data archives.

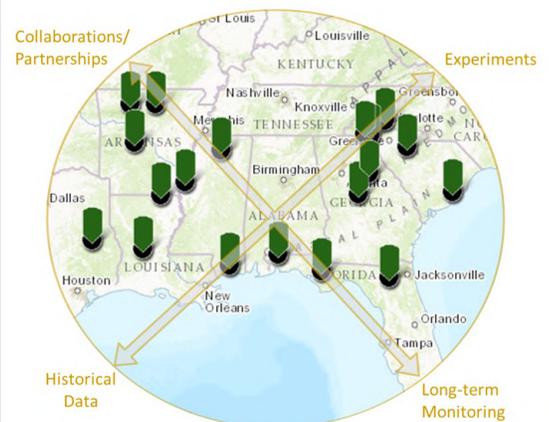
The Range

Because research done on experimental forests has pressing applications to land management, it is paramount that they span the various landscapes of the Southeastern U.S. region. Each experimental forest supports a specific forest or ecosystem type. For example, the Escambia EF in Alabama is an important research site for longleaf pine studies, and the Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory provides critical land and tools for watershed research. From the Alum Creek Experimental Forest in the Ouachita Mountains of Arkansas to the Hitchiti Experimental Forest

Key Messages

- There are 19 experimental forests across the southeastern region
- Experimental forests provide a unique opportunity for long-term research as well as research that manipulates the land
- Experimental forests house a specific forest or ecosystem type
- Experimental forests are spread out across the region and provide a variety of research opportunities to SRS scientists and partners
- In addition to the 19 EFs, there is a new cooperating experimental forest in the Carolina Slate Belt Region
- The Network is currently working to increase communication and connectivity between the experimental sites

Experimental Forest Network in the Southern Research Station



Network in Action: As the Experimental Forests Network strengthens, collaboration and communication are vital. USFS image.



in the lower Piedmont of Georgia, the Network has a diverse set of experimental sites that each present their own research opportunities. Even so, the Network actively seeks to increase their representation by introducing new cooperating experimental forests through partnerships.

A New Experimental Forest

In an effort to expand the Network, SRS and North Carolina State University's College of Natural Resources recently formalized an agreement recognizing the NC State's Hill Demonstration Forest as a Cooperating Experimental Forest. Hill Demonstration Forest, located in the Carolina Slate Belt, has hosted SRS scientists for research on watershed processes in the Piedmont region. This is the first Cooperating Experimental Forest for SRS and will provide an important point of experimentation for SRS scientists.

A Stronger Network

The addition of a new Cooperating Experimental Forest comes during a time of change for the SRS Experimental Forests Network. The Network, under the leadership of SRS scientists Stephanie Laseter and Johnny Boggs, is undergoing a multi-year strategic plan to increase connectivity between the sites and leverage the various assets that the experimental forests provide. The goal is to optimize the Network's ability to answer large-scale questions within the region. This plan involves various facets such as how to use the EF&RN collectively to solve problems and how to streamline the way the Network stores and communicates historical data.



A stream flows in Coweeta. USFS Photo.



Experimental forests are used to host workshops and training sessions. Participants here learn about forest road construction. USFS photo.

References

CompassLive

<https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/compass/2020/01/29/experimental-forest-network-is-expanding/>

EF&R Publication

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/treearch/pubs/7403>

SRS Experimental Forests

<https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/locations/forests/>

Other Resources

FS Experimental Forests

<https://www.fs.fed.us/research/efr/>

Contacts

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