



"Judith Embry"
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>

To: <jgreis@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: SFRA Comments

01/28/02 06:57 PM
Please respond to
"Judith Embry"

Dear Mr. Greis:

I do not believe that the Southern Forest Resource Assessment has done an adequate job of analyzing the overharvesting of Southern forests. I agree that "sprawl" has a devastating effect on all lands, but you have grossly understated the impacts of the timber industry and industrial forestry practices. At the present logging rate (by your own estimate), the removals of the South's hardwood forests will exceed growth by 2025. Approximately one in every four acres of the South's forests will be a single-species pine plantation by 2040. I think that timber companies, not sprawl, will be the main cause of forest destruction in the next 50 years.

The ecological implications of intensive plantation management and increased logging are not addressed. A plantation is not a forest. The SFRA fails to acknowledge the role that forestry has played in the loss of wetlands. Logging, ditching, draining, and conversion to plantations across the south have definitely had negative effects.

The conclusion that most of the gain in pine plantations will come from abandoned agricultural fields is not strongly supported. Your own data documents that 75% of the increases in plantations have come at the expense of natural forests.

The report fails to acknowledge the economic trade-offs of a continued expansion in the wood products industry.

When you discuss sustainability, I think you need a definition. My understanding of your definition of sustainability is that there will be a sustainable wood fiber supply. I think of sustainability in an ecological framework. Southern forests offer far more to mankind than wood and paper products. Plantations may provide raw material for the continued production of paper, but what about the diversity of wildlife habitat? Genetically modified trees intensively managed with herbicides and fertilizers are not the Southern Forest.

Sincerely,

Judith E. Embry
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