



"Joe Scardo"
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To: <jgreis@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Comments on Southern Forest Resource Assessment

01/29/02 08:38 PM
Please respond to "Joe Scardo"

Dear Mr. Greis,

I would like to make some comments on your 2-year study called the Southern forest Resource Assessment.

The findings are misleading. The impacts of the timber industry and industrial forestry practices are understated in the summary. One in every four acres of the South's forest will be a pine plantation by 2040. The chemicals, herbicides used will degrade the water, and devastate the habitats of many birds and much wildlife.

The SFRA did not address the ecological implications of intensive plantation management and increased logging. Why did the SFRA not set high standards in addressing this issue? SFRA repeatedly included the intensively managed pine plantations in its discussion of southern "forests" which leads to the minimization of the actual loss of southern forests. This evades some of the rationale for the study in the first place.

The conclusion that most of the gain in pine plantations will come from abandoned agricultural fields is more likely an assumption than ground in fact. The ground level facts tend to point the other way, that the lost forest lands are being replaced in monoculture pine plantations.

The conclusion that wood products industry provides stability to the region's economy does not fit the historic picture of feast and famine in the timber industry. The region has attracted so many industries that depend upon wood, wood fibers that the forests will not be able to sustain. The Northwest was so cut over that they left for the South. Northwest probably held the one of the world's greatest timber supplies. The impact of some of the world's largest chipmills--the one at Kingsport, Tenn and the one at Hawesville, Ky will draw on the Southern forests unlike anything we have seen before. Most importantly, the report fails to acknowledge the economic tradeoffs of a continued expansion in the wood products industry.

The conclusion that the Southern Forests are "sustainable" wastes any of the findings that could be helpful... The words tell people that there are no concerns, no worries. In face of just the growing human population and the demands for wood and fibers, there are many problems ahead. There are plenty of endangered species, water issues, and other concerns. The USFS by using the term "sustainable" lost a chance to better address some issues that are extremely important to the public and our future.

Gerry Scardo
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