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**From the Coordinator's Desk**

by James Henderson, Extension Specialist

Each year your MSU Extension Forestry Program faculty and staff review our previous year's activity and your evaluations of our educational programs to help up prepare for the next year. As part of that planning effort we summarize and, as a team, review our recent activity. From that summary you may be interested to know that in 2014 we conducted a substantial volume of forestry educational programming and activity. Here are some of the highlights:

- **50 County Landowner Workshops for 1,817 participants owning 170,893 acres**
- **9 Landowner Short courses for 362 participants owning 95,358 acres**
- **13 Forestry Field Days for 495 participants**
- **15 Core modules for professional loggers conducted, 326 participants**
- **50 4-H and other Youth activities for 8,170 participants**
- **58 General Public Activities, 2,000 participants**
- **146 County Forestry Association presentations and other support activities for 4,235 participants**
- **547 Total presentations for 21,234 landowners, foresters, loggers and others interested in forestry**
- **17 MSU Extension Service Publications on a range of forestry topics**

We hope that you are able to attend forestry education programs and course offerings this year. In an effort to help you know what your MSU Extension Forestry Program is doing, we recently launched a blog web site where we list all of our upcoming events (<https://blogs.msucare.com/forestry>). We encourage you to visit the blog and sign-up for email alerts. This way you will always know about upcoming forestry education events conducted anywhere in the state. We also use the blog to alert you about new publications and the quarterly timber price report. You can even post helpful comments on the blog. In addition to the blog, you can keep up with us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/MississippiStateUniversityExtensionForestry> and Twitter <https://twitter.com/MSUExtForestry>. By using these resources, hopefully you will be able to identify one or more of our short courses, workshops, or field days that are of interest to you. We thank you for your support of the MSU Extension Forestry Program.

**Feature Article**

**Do forest landowners in Mississippi Have to Use BMPs?**

by John B. Auel, Extension Specialist

This question has caused some confusion over the years since the Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Forestry in Mississippi handbook was first published by the Forestry Commission. The handbook illustrates common practices that control erosion and other types of non-point source (NPS) pollution that results from forestry activities. They were developed to comply with section 319 of the Water Quality Act of 1987, an amendment to the Clean Water Act which focused on point sources of pollution. NPS pollution is pollution that is caused by runoff following rain events. Point sources are pollutants that come directly from a single source, like an effluent pipe from a mill.

The intent of the Forestry Commission was to establish voluntary guidelines, specific to our state, which would achieve the same results that a regulated program would. In that sense, landowners are not required by state regulation to use BMPs. However, landowners are still responsible for controlling NPS pollution on their property and are liable for violations of the Clean Water Act, which carries substantial fines for polluting water as a result of forestry activities.

The Commission also monitors statewide BMP compliance rates, which they report to federal agencies in an effort to keep the program voluntary. If compliance rates are too low, then the possibility exists that the federal government would require MS to move to a regulated program to protect water quality. Currently state compliance with BMPs is over 90% proving that the program is a viable alternative to regulations.

In addition to the efforts of the Commission, forest products companies in Mississippi use BMPs. When the companies signed on to certification programs like the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and other landowners signed up for American Tree Farm (ATF), the use of BMPs became mandatory for them to be in compliance with the certification programs. SFI requires companies to use loggers trained in the use of BMPs and encourages loggers and independent timber buyers to use BMPs on properties they harvest. In fact with the new SFI standard that was published this year, it will be difficult for a certified company to justify purchasing wood from any source that does not use BMPs.

Continued on Page 2

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## The Overstory

### Feature Article (continued from Page 1)

BMPs are the best method for protecting water quality during forest operations. All landowners are encouraged to use all applicable BMPs on their property. The requirements of the Clean Water Act, state monitoring programs, forest certification and an insistence from forest products companies to protect water resources, all combine to make the use of BMPs for landowners in Mississippi essentially mandatory if they want to harvest and market their wood products. The actual BMP guidelines are voluntary for the landowner, but foresters and loggers will use BMPs on each tract they harvest. It is the right thing to do and it will hopefully prevent federal regulation of BMPs.

For a copy of the Mississippi BMP guidelines, contact the County Forester in your area or MSU Forestry Extension.

### Timber Bid Opening Ethics

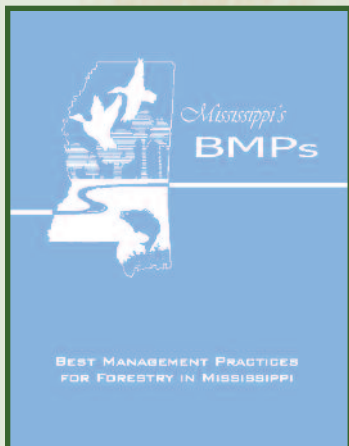
by Stephen Dicke, Extension Specialist

A sealed-bid timber sale is a good way to meet your forest management goals and obtain a fair price for your timber. Landowners should be aware of several things when accepting sealed-bids: (1) Bids will be mailed, faxed, emailed, and even phoned in at the last minute, so be prepared to accept bids by all methods. (2) Seal each bid in an envelope and keep them confidential. (3) Do not accept any late bids. (4) Open the bids at the appointed time in the presence of the bidders. No buyer should know how many other bidders there are until the bid opening. Bid results should be provided to all bidders but otherwise kept private. (5) Send a thank you note to each bidder. (6) Examine the bids and, based on bid price and knowledge about the bidders, select the winning bidder as soon as possible. (7) Communicate promptly with all unsuccessful bidders. (8) Schedule a meeting with the winning bidder to discuss drafting and executing the sales contract. (9) Answer all questions and inquiries, and keep records of discussions to help prevent misunderstandings.

Finally, always conduct the bidding process in a businesslike manner. Do not bargain with bidders before or after the opening. Some landowners violate sale ethics by “bumping bids.” This is a quick way to ruin your reputation in the forestry community. An example would be to accept a bid from Buyer #1, then contact Buyer #2 and use this price to leverage a higher price with Buyer #2 after the bid opening. For more information see MSU-ES Pub. 1620 Marketing Your Timber: The Bidding Process at msucares.com.



Loggers learning the basics of BMPs: [www.tsswcb.texas.gov](http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov)



Download the full pdf at:  
[http://www.mfc.ms.gov/pdf/mgt/wq/entire\\_bmp\\_2008-7-24.pdf](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/pdf/mgt/wq/entire_bmp_2008-7-24.pdf)

*It is the responsibility of the landowner and/or timber owner to ensure that pollution of state waters does not occur from forestry operations. The professional resource manager and the equipment operator working for a landowner also have an ethical responsibility to ensure that practices performed do not cause pollution under the Water Quality Act and state law. It is in the best interest of all parties involved with managing the forest resource to ensure compliance with water quality standards so as to maintain site quality and prohibit mandatory silvicultural practices.*

From Mississippi's BMPs



(Prolific white oak acorn production)



Images from the MSU-ES Publication 1620

### Delta Hardwood Notes

by Brady Self, Extension Specialist

#### Managing Hardwoods for Acorns (Part 2 of 3)

In Part 1 of this series we learned about some of the acorn production differences between the red and white oak groups. Many people reading this article will realize acorn production can vary substantially by year. Typically, most oak species only produce a “good” mast crop of acorns every three to four years. As a whole, some species are more productive compared to others, and within any given species, some individual trees will tend to produce more acorns than others. Research has shown that when an individual tree in the white oak group produces well, other white oaks in the same population will tend to produce similarly. Conversely, acorn production of trees in the red oak group is not as closely synced, and acorn production by individual trees within a stand will often vary drastically. Additionally, only a small percentage of trees in a stand of either oak group are capable of heavy acorn production in any given year. Studies have found that even in years of high acorn production, this proportion only comprises about 30 percent of large, healthy trees in the white oak group. If the intent of your management efforts is centered on enhanced acorn production, these are trees that should be selected for techniques to be discussed in the next article of this series.

Make sure to read Delta Hardwood Notes in the next installment of The Overstory for the conclusion of this series detailing management techniques intended to increase overall mast production of oaks in your forest.



# Mississippi Timber Price Report

**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY**  
EXTENSION SERVICE

**4th Quarter 2014**

The Mississippi Timber Price Report (MTPR) is a quarterly survey of stumpage timber prices in Mississippi. It is developed to provide a picture of timber market activity. The state average prices for common forest products are listed. Values given are offered as a guide to help individuals assess the fair market value of their timber. The average price should not be applied as the exact value for a particular tract. This report is updated quarterly and available at [MSUCares.com/forestry](http://MSUCares.com/forestry), or by contacting your local county Extension office.

**QUARTER'S PRICES: 4th Quarter 2014 Stumpage Prices/Ton (Source: Timber-Mart South)**

Pine Sawtimber - \$24 Pine Chip-N-Saw - \$14, Pine Pulpwood - \$8,  
Mixed Hardwood Sawtimber - \$40, Hardwood Pulpwood - \$11

**NOTE: Prices vary widely across the State; thus, average prices presented here may not reflect your local market.**

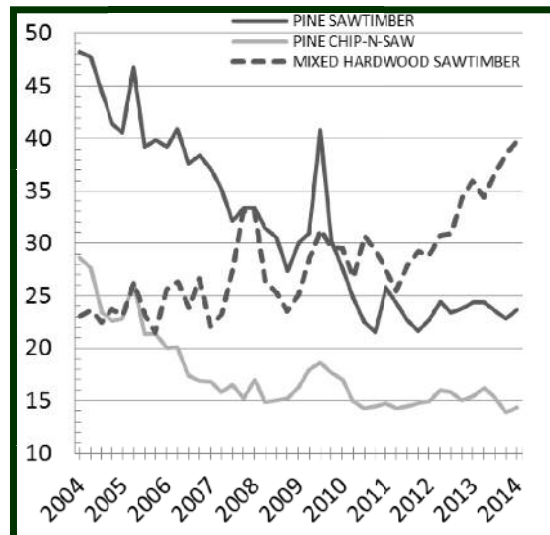
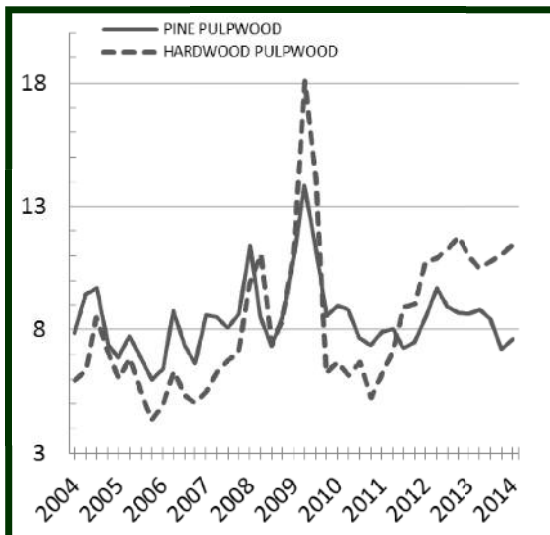
**WHAT'S MOVING PRICES - TRENDS:**

Product prices increased over the 4th quarter for all hardwood and pine product categories.

Pine stumpage prices increased from the previous quarter by 3.5% for pine sawtimber, by 4% for pine chip-n-saw, and by 5.8% for pine pulpwood. Mixed hardwood sawtimber increased 2.9% and hardwood pulpwood increased by 5.8%.

**TIME SERIES:**

**Average Mississippi Pine and Hardwood Stumpage Prices  
1st Quarter 2004 through 4th Quarter 2014  
(All prices in \$/TON)**



Timber-Mart South (TMS), Inc. has more detailed data available by subscription that contains values for other timber products not included in this report. TMS is compiled and produced at the Center for Forest Business, Warnell School of Forest Resources, University of Georgia, under contract with the Frank W. Norris Foundation, a non-profit corporation serving the forest products industry. See <http://WWW.TMART-SOUTH.COM> for information on subscriptions.

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Please don't forget to check out our Blog at [www.blogs.msucare.com/forestry](http://www.blogs.msucare.com/forestry) and sign up for email notices!

Silviculture and Economics of Even- and Uneven- Aged Management of Bottomland Hardwood Forest in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley

By Sunil Nepal, Graduate Student, Brent Frey, Forestry Faculty, and James Henderson, Extension Specialist

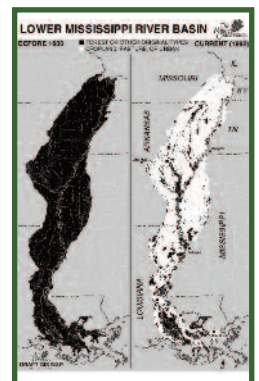
The Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley (LMAV) is rich in natural resources, including a diversity of bottomland hardwood (BLH) forest types. These forests provide a wide-range of ecosystem goods and services, including high value timber and wildlife habitat for species of high conservation value. Traditionally, many BLH forests have been managed to provide quality hardwood timber. In the past, selection cutting was advocated as the best system for producing high quality timber; however, it was later realized that these practices tended to promote less desirable shade-tolerant species, resulting in stands of lower commercial value. Management approaches are changing with time, and current BLH management approaches differ widely depending on manager objectives, whether focused on timber, wildlife or other values. Today, timber-focused management regimes typically apply even-aged forest management aimed at promoting optimal growth of desirable, largely shade-intolerant tree species (e.g. red and white oaks). In contrast, wildlife-focused management approaches tend to prioritize structural diversity. For this purpose, managers often gravitate to uneven-aged forest management, which is considered to produce better habitat for wildlife for some species such as neo-tropical migratory songbirds. Currently there is little published guidance on the economic tradeoffs of favoring one management approach over the other, which can create a dilemma for landowners and managers wanting to evaluate the timber revenue tradeoff that may result. The objective of a study being conducted by researchers in the Department of Forestry at Mississippi State University is to explain the economic tradeoff of even-aged timber-focused management versus uneven-aged wildlife-focused management of BLH forests.

The study will examine timber growth data for a range of different BLH forests conditions using the Forest Vegetation Simulator (FVS) software developed by USDA Forest Service. Stand growth and yield data generated by FVS will be evaluated for future stand conditions under different modeling scenarios using both even- and uneven-aged management approaches. Common forest types that will be evaluated include: elm-sycamore-pecan-sugarberry, sweetgum-red oak, red oak-white oak mixed species, overcup oak-water hickory, and elm-ash-sugarberry stand types. Historical hardwood timber price data will be used to value predicted yields from the different management regimes, and economic returns under the different management scenarios will be evaluated using a number of financial formulas that account for the time value of money. Comparisons will be made across a range of representative site indices, stand compositional types, and required rates of return. Differences in valuation, rotation length, harvestable end products, and stand conditions throughout the rotation will be determined.

Comparative study of these two strategies in terms of the economic return based on timber production value will help managers and landowners to make informed management decisions for their BLH stands and management objectives. Predicted economic returns of BLH forests management will help landowners and managers choose between even- and uneven- aged management on a site by site basis and allow them to understand how much economic gain or loss they may realize by adopting these alternative forms of management. Study findings will be available through the Forest and Wildlife Research Center.



Mississippi River Hardwoods inside the levee in Louisiana: www.wlf.louisiana.gov



Forest Cover in the Lower Mississippi River Basin before 1600 and in 1992. All of the white is agricultural land use.

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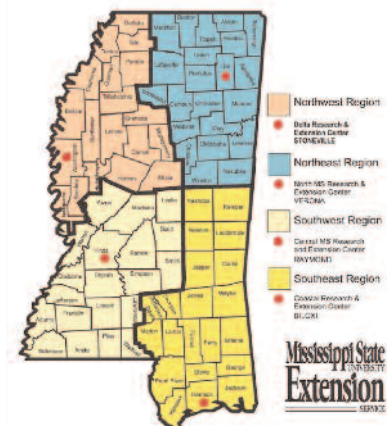
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**MSU-ES Region Map**



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