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## Outlook for timber from Mississippi's private nonindustrial forests

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### Repository Citation

Bullard, Steven H. and Weaver, G. H., "Outlook for timber from Mississippi's private nonindustrial forests" (1980). *Faculty Publications*. 100.

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# From Mississippi's Private Non-Industrial Forests...

## Outlook for Pine Timber

By Steve Bullard, Research Assistant and G.H. Weaver, Assistant Forester, Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station

Forestry is the dominant land use in Mississippi. Fifty-five percent of the State's total land base is commercial forest and 73 percent of this is held by private nonindustrial owners. The estimated timber harvest value for 1979 was over \$550 million. Forest products were second only to soybeans in value in Mississippi's agricultural and forestry crops. The 1979 value is the fourth consecutive record harvest and represents increases in both harvest volume and product prices.

**Maintaining the importance of forestry to Mississippi's economy requires large continuous quantities of pine raw materials for manufacturer, especially from private nonindustrial owners. An assessment of Mississippi's commercial forest land on a stand-age basis suggests the future availability of pine raw material may be restricted.**

Stand-age profiles for Mississippi are presented in Figure 1. These acreage summaries are based on 1977 Forest Survey data provided by the U.S. Forest Service. On a particular forest, an ideal situation would be equal acreages in each stand-age class up through the rotation age. Such a distribution would provide a sustained allowable cut based on area control. On a statewide basis, of course, many differences in objectives, ownerships, species, and sites, cause variations in acreage among age classes. By looking at the general statewide pattern, however, one can gain insight into prospective pine availability.

Most of Mississippi's timberland can be classified as even-aged (Figure 1). Even-aged stands are established by  
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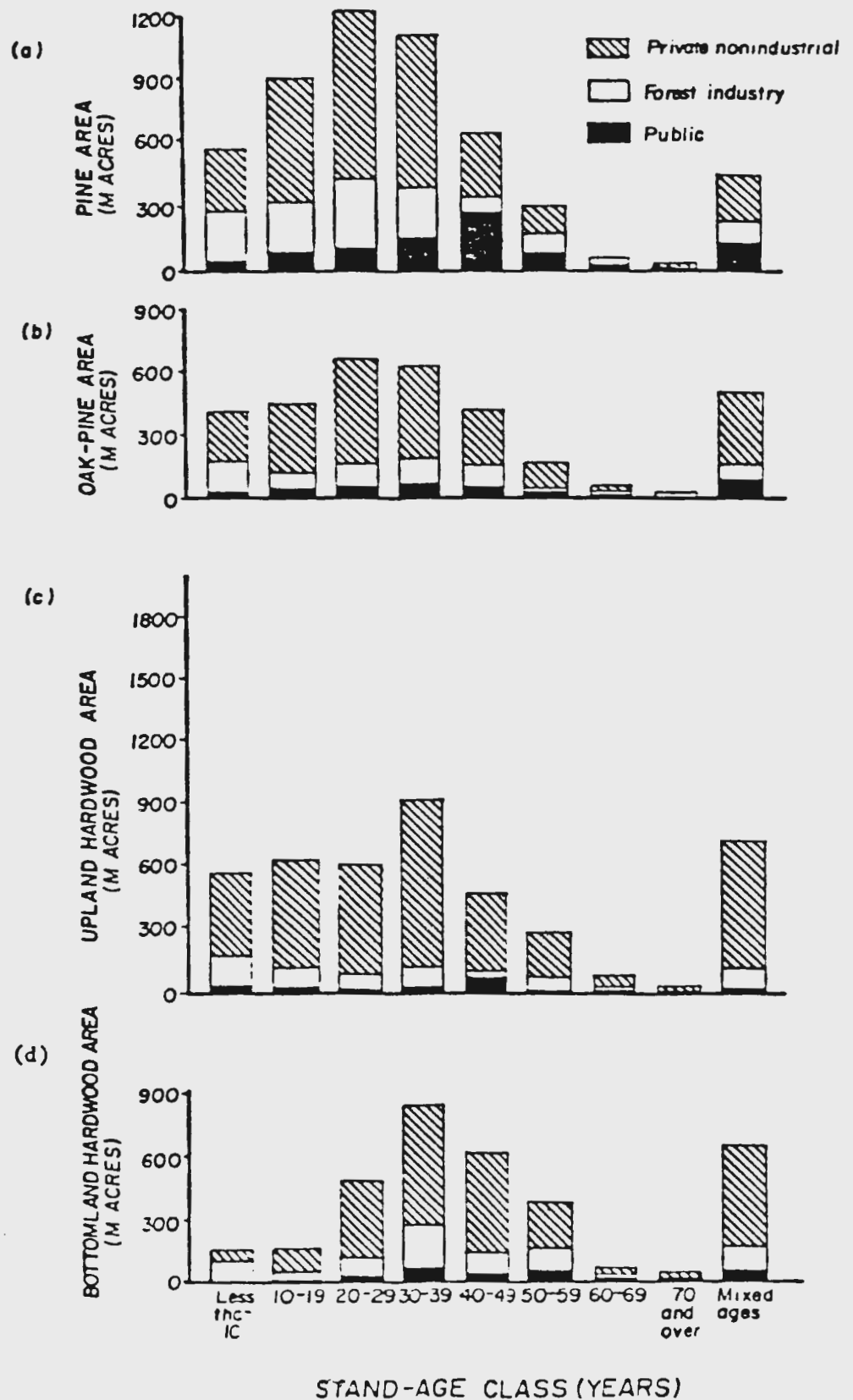


Figure 1. Area of commercial Forest Land in pine, oak-pine, and hardwood forest types, by stand-age class and ownership class, Mississippi, 1977

## Outlook for Pine Timber

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acts of nature or man. Timber harvesting, cropland retirement, wildfire, wind and ice storms, and insect and disease outbreaks are common acts resulting in even-aged stands. Less frequently, even-aged stands are established by planting seedlings. Pine regeneration is best accomplished immediately following clear cut harvesting.

The statewide stand-age distributions for four major forest types are far from balanced (Figure 1). Private nonindustrial ownerships dominate nearly all age classes and forest types and contribute significantly to the uneven patterns. Cropland retirement which continued in the South to as late as 1965 resulted in the addition of young forest stands to the forest land base each year. This process has resulted in large acreages across the state in the 20-29 and 30-39 year age classes, regardless of forest type.

## Georgia-Pacific Begins Com-Ply Production

Georgia-Pacific Corporation's composite plywood (COM-PLY) manufacturing plant at Dudley, N.C., successfully completed its production start-up this summer. The G-P plant is the first of its type in the South.

The first truckload of "Stable-X" G-P's trademark for this new, second-generation plywood product, was shipped on June 13. Sales have been steadily climbing since that date, G-P says. The plant employs 275 people, and has a rated annual capacity of 200 million square feet of either conventional plywood, Stable-X or a mix of the two products.

"Stable-X" stands for "dimensionally stable, exterior grade" plywood product. COM-PLY is a generic product name used during research development, referring to the composite board nature of the product. COM-PLY is made by sandwiching a solid coreboard of oriented, glued wood flakes between faces and backs of conventional pine veneer.

**The less than 10 year, and the 10-19 year age classes as shown in Figure 1-a provide a measure of pine regeneration. Mississippi's forest industry is producing fairly balanced age class distributions through regeneration efforts on company holdings. Pine regeneration problems have developed on private nonindustrial lands, however.**

In pine forest types, private nonindustrial timberlands include 811 thousand acres in the 20-29 year age class, 575 thousand acres in the 10-19 year age class, and only 293 thousand acres less than 10 years old. The comparatively smaller pine acreages in the younger age classes on private nonindustrial ownerships resulted from the discontinuation of cropland retirement and the invasion of hardwoods onto many of the sites where pine stands were harvested in the last 20 years. The post-harvest hardwood encroachment on these areas resulted in much more even acreage distributions for oak-pine and upland hardwood forest types (Figure 1-b & c).

Private nonindustrial landowners usually do not intentionally provide for pine regeneration on a large scale. Most of the southern timber harvested

## Burkhardt Will Manage MSU's Starr Forest

Mr. Charles Burkhardt, a 1980 graduate of Mississippi State University, has been appointed Forest Manager of the University's John W. Starr Memorial Forest effective August 10, 1980. Mr. Burkhardt will have responsibility for protection and management of the 8,300 acre property located in Oktibbeha and Winston counties.

The Starr Forest serves the University and the State of Mississippi as an outdoor teaching and research laboratory for forest resources. Before joining the staff at Mississippi State, Charles served as a technician with Weyerhaeuser Company, Crown Zellerbach, and Anderson-Tully Company. Charles and his wife Shelby reside in Starkville.

today resulted from earlier natural seeding onto the idle cropland, and is generally a gift of nature. Since the reversion of cropland to forest ceased 15-20 years ago, new areas are not being added to the forest land base.

The acreage currently in pine forest types must be maintained to ensure that Mississippi's current level of harvest can be continued. This acreage is not being maintained however. Only 9 percent of the 3.2 million acres of private nonindustrial pine forests are less than 10 years old. Maintaining Mississippi's important pine resource will require more adequate pine regeneration at time of harvest. The harvesting practices which currently result in establishment of low quality hardwoods must be changed.

**Because smaller pine acreages presently occur in the younger age classes, shortages in pine supplies will result in Mississippi about the year 2000. This situation provides a very favorable incentive for timberland owners investing in forestry today. Private nonindustrial forests, a renewable resource, are vital to Mississippi's economy. Highly competitively markets in the future appear to be assured to individuals with the foresight to invest now in pine regeneration practices.**

## MFC Buys Pine Cones

The Mississippi Forestry Commission has announced plans to purchase over 16,000 bushels of loblolly, slash and lonleaf pine cones this coming fall for use in its tree nurseries at Waynesboro, Mt. Olive and Winona.

Persons interested in selling cones to the Commission are advised to contact their local county forester prior to collection for full information on how seed cones are to be selected, checked for soundness, graded, and other information. The county forester will also have county collection quotas and price information.