

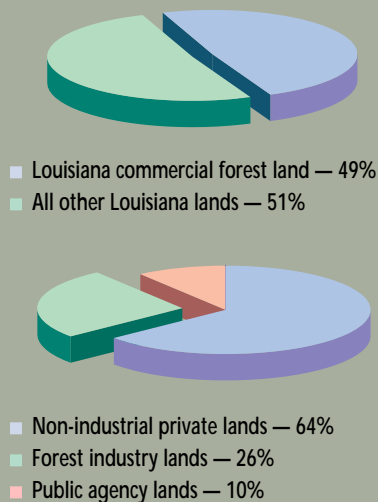
Introduction



COMMERCIAL FORESTS OCCUPY more than 49 percent, or 13.8 million acres, of the land in Louisiana.

Forest ownership here is similar to other southern states. At 64 percent, a majority of the forest land is in nonindustrial private ownership; 26 percent owned by forest industry and the remaining 10 percent held by public agencies.

Status of Louisiana Forests & Lands



Forestry annually contributes more than \$5 billion to the state's economy. If Louisiana is to thrive economically, our forests' ability to produce goods and services must be sustained.

Forest management programs should incorporate adequate measures to provide for proper soil and water conservation. Most streams originating in or flowing

through our timberlands are sources for water supplies, recreation, and other uses.

Section 404 Silvicultural Exemption

*In forested wetlands, the Law provides an exemption from permitting under Section 404 for normal ongoing silvicultural operations, provided that the 15 federally mandated **best management practices**, hereinafter referred to as **BMPS**, are followed.*

The Clean Water Act of 1972 (Public Law 92-500) and its amendments mandate water quality sufficient to provide "fishable" and "swimmable" waters. It requires that all **waters of the United States** will be protected from degradation. This includes, but is not limited to headwater creeks, rich bottomland hardwoods, and permanently flooded cypress-tupelo areas.

The scope of legal jurisdiction was expanded in 1977 by amendments redefining protection to include the **waters of the United States** and their **adjacent wetlands**. This protection, under Section 404, specifies that anyone engaging in activities impacting waters and wetlands is required to secure a permit before proceeding, unless exempted.

Amendments to the Clean Water Act in 1987 required the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to assess the quality of water in the state and report its findings to Congress every two years. Under Section 319 of the amended act, the state was also charged with addressing pollution carried to water bodies by rain-



Private landowners, who own most of Louisiana's forest lands, should recognize that Best Management Practices begin with careful planning.

fall runoff. This type of pollution is called *nonpoint source pollution*. It differs from point source pollution that originates from identifiable locations such as end-of-pipe discharges from an industrial facility or city sewage treatment plant.

Most of the early efforts to clean up water pollution were directed toward point sources. Thus, most of what is left to work on is pollution caused by nonpoint sources. LDEQ's nonpoint section uses a cooperative, non-regulatory approach to address forestry nonpoint pollution statewide; primarily through the use of voluntary forestry practices described in this manual.

With support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Qual-

ity, the Louisiana Forestry Association developed this manual. It is a guide for forest landowners, logging contractors, and forest industry. It sets forth voluntary guidelines and procedures to ensure water quality protection during forestry operations. The goal in meeting state and federal water quality standards is necessary to provide clean water for present and future generations. The forestry community's compliance with this guide is essential for continued freedom and flexibility to practice forestry without further government regulation.