

FLORIDA LAND STEWARD



A Quarterly Newsletter for Florida Landowners and Resource Professionals

FALL/WINTER 2024 - VOLUME 13, NO. 4

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Florida Tree Farm Program Announces Mr. Floyd Vanzant as the 2024 Jon Gould Florida Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year

By Ginger Feagle, Vice President, Florida Tree Farm Program; and James Tootle, Nassau County Forester, Florida Forest Service

The Florida Tree Farm Program is proud to recognize Mr. Floyd Vanzant as the 2024 Jon Gould Florida Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. Each year, one certified Tree Farm out of the 1,300 in Florida is selected for demonstrating exceptional forest stewardship to protect and improve our forest resources and promoting forest stewardship within their community.

The Vanzant property has been in the family since the early 1800's and has historically been used for timber and livestock production. The 400-acre property is owned by Mr. Vanzant and his wife (Mary) who now reside on the property where he was raised.

Silvopature: Forage, Livestock, and Timber Combined

Mr. Vanzant has increasingly become more involved and interested in

managing timber on his property, especially the concept of "silvopasture". Mr. Vanzant has experimented with different configurations of pasture and timber to efficiently graze his cattle while providing timber, shade, and forage. Along with the areas he has designated for silvopasture, he thoughtfully considers soil and location to identify areas that he can dedicate to pasture or timber. Enthusiastic to share his experience, in October 2023, Mr. Vanzant partnered with the Florida Forest Service and the Florida Tree Farm Program to host fellow landowners on a tour so they could see first-hand the success of his silviculture practices.

Recently, his son-in-law (Michael Franklin) began assisting Mr. Vanzant by taking an active role with the land management. Along with daily

Continued on next page



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An Equal Opportunity Institution.



Silvopasture is the combination of forage, livestock, and timber. Mr. Vanzant has experimented with different configurations of pasture and timber to efficiently graze his cattle while providing timber, shade, and forage. Photo by Chris Demers.



(Left photo) Florida Forestry Association President, Avery Roberts (left) presenting the 2024 Outstanding Tree Farm of the Year award to Mr. Floyd Vanzant. (Right photo) Family members pictured left to right: Brenton Franklin (grandson), Clay Vanzant (son), Vickie Vanzant Franklin (daughter), Michael Franklin (son-in-law), Floyd Vanzant, Mary Vanzant (wife), and Micah Vanzant (son). Photos provided by Florida Forestry Association.

responsibilities of caring for the cattle and conducting tractor work, Michael encouraged Mr. Vanzant to connect with the Florida Forest Service County Forester so he could develop a written Forest Stewardship Plan to carry Mr. Vanzant's vision forward. Active management of the property and his understanding of forestry practices has led Mr. Vanzant to take advantage of various cost-share programs offered through the Florida Forest Service. These programs provide for healthy forests and carbon sequestration by assisting with thinning, reforesting harvested areas, and afforesting previously unplanted acres on his property.

Community Leader

Mr. Vanzant is a valued contributor to his community and has served as a Nassau County Commissioner (8 years), Hilliard Town Council member (2 years), and the Mayor of Hilliard (4 years). Notably, he is the Vice President of the Nassau County Farm Bureau of which he has been a board member since 1997, including previous participation in its Forestry Committee.

Mr. Vanzant takes his role as a good steward of his property seriously and believes that multiple use land management enhances sustainability of timber, livestock, water quality, wildlife, and recreation.



Mr. Vanzant explains the silvopasture system at a 2023 tour of his farm. Photo by Chris Demers.

Across the U.S., family forest owners like the Vanzants care for the largest portion, more than one-third, of America's forests. Their efforts are crucial to the sustainability of our country's natural resources, such as clean water, wildlife habitat, carbon storage and a wood supply for the products Americans use every day.

The American Tree Farm System

The American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) is the largest and oldest sustainable woodland program in the United States designed specifically for family forest owners. The program provides over 69,000 family forest owners with tools, education, and a community of shared interest to support their conservation goals. Enrolled Tree Farmers, in return, care for their land, meeting rigorous Standards of Sustainability that are internationally endorsed and recognized

to assure the provision of wood supplies, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and clean water. Collectively, there are nearly 18 million forested acres within the ATFS program in the United States. The ATFS is a program of the American Forest Foundation, whose mission is to empower family forest owners to improve forest health and help the planet. For more information about the Florida Tree Farm Program, contact your county forester or visit their website at: www.treefarmssystem.org/florida.

About Jon Gould



Florida's Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award honors the memory of Mr. Jon Gould, a respected member of Florida's Tree Farm Program State Committee and a proud Tree Farmer and advocate for forestry for more than 30 years throughout the Southeast. Mr. Gould was selected as the Florida Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year in 2006 and as the Southern Regional Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year in 2018. Mr. Gould passed in 2019 but his legacy lives on as an ultimate model of the Tree Farm Program for which the Florida award was renamed in 2020. Learn more about Jon, his wife Carol and the Gould Tree Farm at: <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/south-nominee-goulds>

Hurricane Recovery Resources

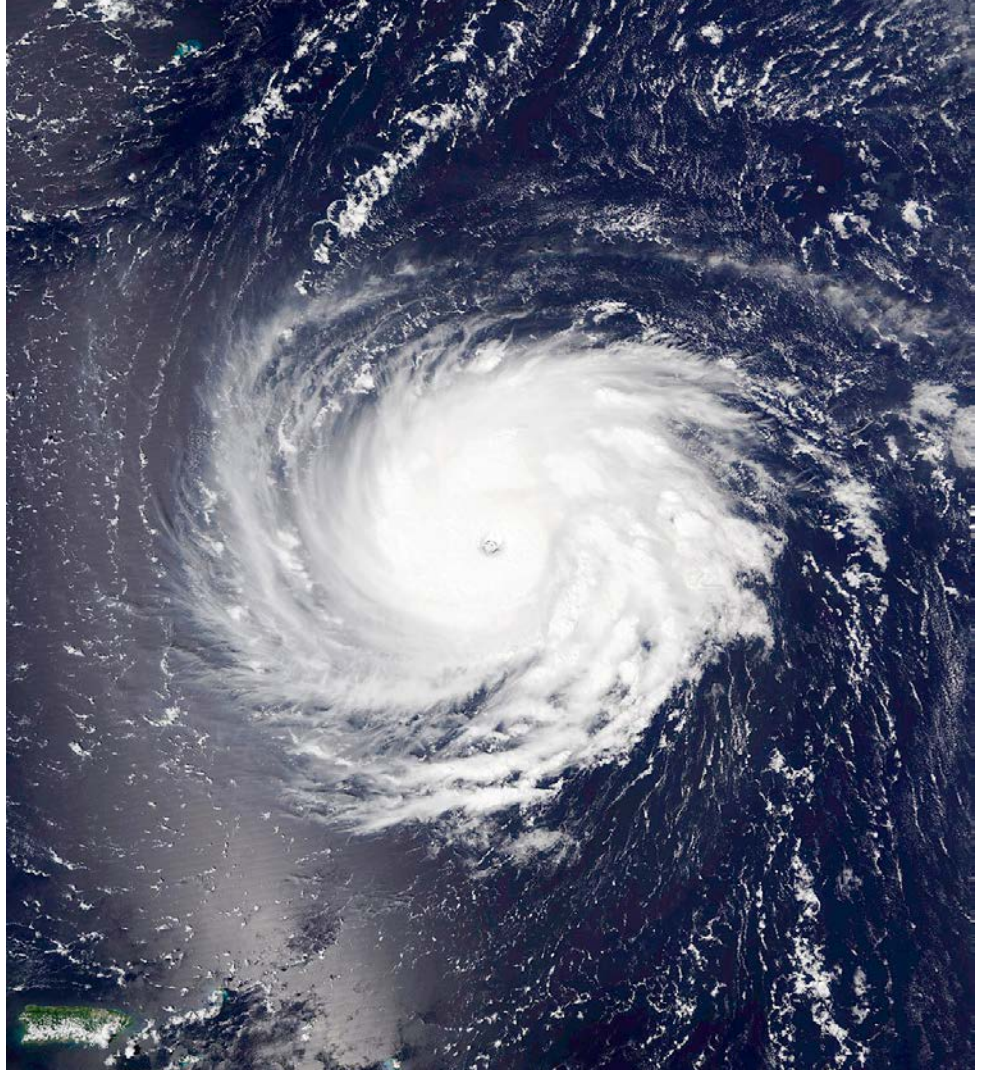
This season Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton ravaged coastal communities, agricultural operations, and forests from the Big Bend region down to South Florida. According to the Florida Forest Service's preliminary timber damage assessment from Hurricane Helene, the storm is estimated to have damaged almost 8.9 million tons of timber at a value of more than \$114 million. We are sharing recovery information as it is available in these updates. Natural disaster recovery assistance resources are listed here:

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)

has established the FDACS Agriculture and Aquaculture Producers Natural Disaster Recovery Loan Program to provide low-interest or interest-free loans to producers impacted by a declared natural disaster. Assistance is available to those impacted by Hurricanes Debby and Helene. For details and an application see the FDACS Natural Disaster Recovery Loan Program web page at <https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Agriculture-and-Aquaculture-Producers-Natural-Disaster-Recovery-Loan-Program>.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers a variety of programs to help farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, communities, and businesses that have been impacted by natural disaster events. Visit [farmers.gov](https://www.farmers.gov) for all available USDA disaster recovery programs. Also see the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's Emergency Assistance Updates for Florida. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-environmental-quality-incentives/florida/hurricane-emergency-assistance>.

See our on-demand webinar about USDA Disaster Recovery Programs at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apE7eHV08dM>.



The 2024 storm season has been an active one, especially for the Big Bend and south-central regions of Florida.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recovery assistance websites dedicated to Hurricanes Debby (<https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4806>), Helene (<https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current/hurricane-helene>), and Milton (<https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current/hurricane-milton>).

UF/IFAS Resources

Find hurricane preparation and recovery tips and resources in our publication: "Prepare your Forest Property for Hurricane Season", <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/FR436>. Review

key assistance contacts and strategies to recover value and minimize economic losses to timber within a week and months after a hurricane. See our on-demand series of webinars on Hurricane Preparation and Recovery available on our events calendar at <https://programs.ifas.ufl.edu/florida-land-steward/bulletin-board/events-calendar>.

Hurricane season continues through November 30. Keep an eye on the tropics at the NOAA Hurricane Center at <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov>.

Gulf Coastal Plain Ecosystem Partnership (GCPEP) Longleaf Pine Assistance Program

The GCPEP Longleaf Assistance Program includes **incentives for longleaf establishment, stand improvement, and prescribed fire**. It is available to landowners within the GCPEP project area. This includes **Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, and Holmes Counties west of the**

Choctawhatchee River in Florida; and Baldwin, Escambia, Covington, Conecuh, Coffee, Geneva, and Dale Counties west of the Choctawhatchee River in Alabama.

Habitat improvements must be within existing longleaf stands, mixed stands, or to establish new longleaf forests.

Incentives can cover up to \$100/acre for establishment, up to \$50/acre for stand improvement, or \$15/acre for prescribed fire, not to exceed 50% of landowner costs. For more information contact the Program Coordinator: Jacob Barrett, jacob@longleafalliance.org, (478) 230-4761.



Don't miss out on news and events!

A LOT happens between quarterly issues of this newsletter!

Sign up for the regular Florida Land Steward email updates so you don't miss out on assistance and educational opportunities. Send an email to cdemers@ufl.edu to be added to the listserv. Email updates are sent once a week or every other week and include the latest calendar of workshops, tours, webinars, and other events; a link to the current issue of this quarterly newsletter; updates on cost-share and other assistance programs, opportunities, and resources; and other stewardship related news and information.

All the latest news and events are online at the new UF/IFAS Florida Land Steward Program web site: <https://programs.ifas.ufl.edu/florida-land-steward/>.

Recovering from a Hurricane

Dr. Tamara Cushing, UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences



Hurricanes impacted many acres of timberlands this season. Photo by David Conser.

It has been quite the year for hurricanes in Florida. As of this writing, we are a few weeks removed from the last one and some of you are probably thinking about how to handle damage to your timber. First, I would tell you to reach out to a forester to assess the damage to your trees and determine whether a salvage sale is possible. The forester will be familiar with reputable loggers and will know who may be taking wood at a reasonable price. If you do a salvage sale, it is possible that you will have a taxable gain on the sale.

Some of you may realize that it won't make sense to salvage and are curious

about tax provisions. Two pieces of information are critical. First: do you own the land for personal use (no profit motive), an investment (profit motive) or a business purpose (profit motive)?

Second: was there a major disaster declaration by the President? The disaster declaration is only important for those who own the land for personal use. A loss on personal use property only gets a deduction if in disaster declaration area (check your county for the specific hurricane). There are also special limits to the deduction if it is personal use. If you own with a profit motive the loss is limited to

the lesser of your adjusted basis or the decline in fair market value.

The loss deduction may not be much and may be less than what you would get through a salvage sale. Do some homework, contact a forester, and weigh your options. For more information on this topic, including what adjusted basis is, check out our webinar on casualty loss: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Eirpv7fpAw>.

Questions can be directed to Dr. Cushing, tcushing@ufl.edu, (352) 294-9117.

TIMBER PRICE UPDATE

The timber price information below is useful for observing trends over time, but does not reflect current conditions at a particular location. Landowners considering a timber sale are advised to solicit the services of a consulting forester to obtain current local market conditions.

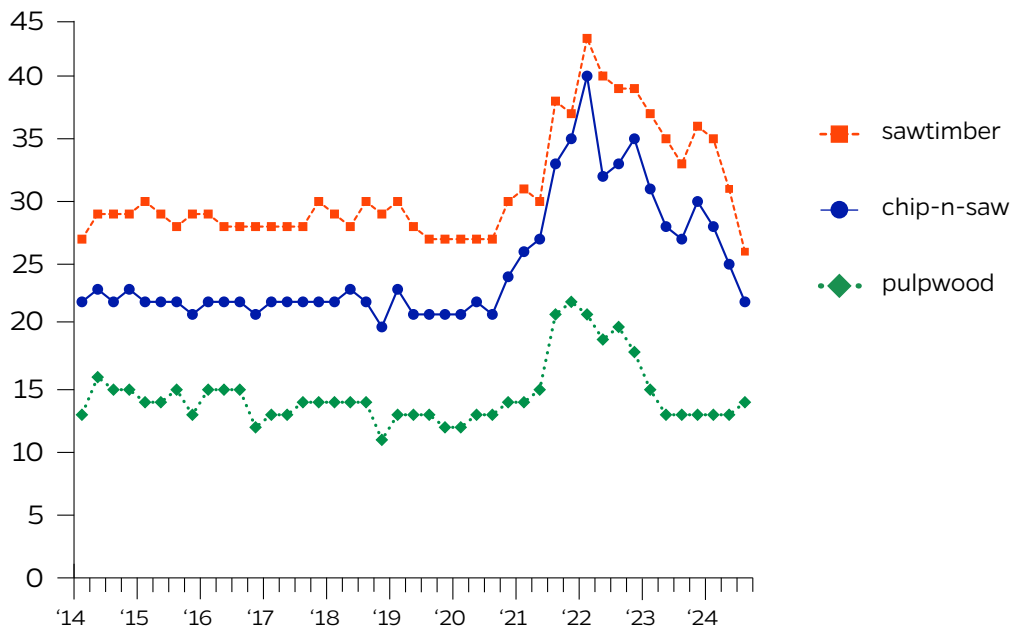
Average stumpage prices for the three major products in Florida, as reported in the **3rd Quarter 2024** Timber Mart-South report were:

Florida Stumpage Prices	
Pine pulpwood:	\$14/ton, ↑ slightly from 2 nd Qtr. 2024
Pine C-N-S:	\$22/ton, ↓
Pine sawtimber:	\$26/ton, ↓

Trend Report

Average stumpage price trends were generally mixed this quarter. Wet conditions and access constraints were counterbalanced by weakened market conditions for some products. Marketing challenges continue for timber producers in areas now without the paper and/or lumber mills that have closed over the last few years. The region was impacted by three major hurricanes this season; Debby in early August, Helene in late September, and Milton in early October. Damage from and market implications of these storms is being assessed. If your property was impacted by one or more of these storms take advantage of the available assistance programs covered in this issue.

Average Pine Stumpage Prices for Florida (\$/Ton)
1st Qtr 2014 through 3rd Qtr 2024



Timber Mart-South 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.

CONGRATULATIONS CERTIFIED LANDOWNERS

More information about certification in these programs is available at:

<https://www.fdacs.gov/Forest-Wildfire/For-Landowners/Programs-for-Landowners/Forest-Stewardship-Program>

<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/florida>

<https://myfwc.com/lap>

These landowners have achieved certification in the Tree Farm, Forest Stewardship, and/or Wildlife Habitat Recognition Programs and demonstrate excellent stewardship of their land resources.



Corey Young, 25-year Tree Farm (center) with Brian Cobble, FFS (L) and Barry Jackson, Putnam County



Christine and Reed Lorber, Creed Farms, Marion County



Veronica and David Walls with Pierce Tolar, FFS (L), Columbia County



Bill Baker, Putnam County



Dr. Jerry Kandzer, Jackson County



Gaye Lowman, Marion County



Manny and Rebecca Mendoza, Lake County



L-R: Miles, Parker, Cynthia, and Judge Don Hall, Tiger Bay Ranch, Desoto County



Marguerite Wood with Jason Ballard, FWC, Putnam County

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Upcoming Events

Date	Event, Location, Contact
Dec. 3-5	<p>Prescribed Fire for Wildlife, Highlands County. FFA Leadership Training Center, 5000 Firetower Road, Haines City, FL 33844. Provided by the Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Society and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Learn about prescribed fire as a management tool to manage wildlife habitat. The training will include classroom presentations, panel discussions, and field exercises covering a variety of wildlife and habitats. <i>For details and registration see https://fltws.org/shop/prescribed-fire-for-wildlife-registration-chj5y Contact Jim Schortemeyer, (239) 455-5847, Schortfire@aol.com</i></p>
Jan. 9, 2025	<p>Private Landowner Workshop, DeSoto County. 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 pm ET, 8134 SE Hall Rd., Arcadia, FL 34266. Provided by FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Join us to learn about land management programs and the benefits of enhancing and protecting wildlife habitat. The agenda covers an overview of various land management assistance programs, including USDA Farm Bill programs. Lunch provided by Hall's Tiger Bay Ranch. <i>RSVP to Peter Diamond – FWC Landowner Assistance Program, peter.diamond@myfwc.com or (941) 661-3619.</i></p>
Feb. 1	<p>2025 Flatwoods Fire & Nature Festival. UF Austin Cary Forest Campus. Mark your calendar and plan to join us for live prescribed fire demonstrations, tours, food, exhibits, live animals, live music, and more. This event is free, fun, and educational for whole family. <i>See the event Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/share/SWTeknyghUTZfTvs/ for details and indicate interest.</i></p>

More events, webinars, webinar recordings, news, and information can be found at programs.ifas.ufl.edu/florida-land-steward

The Florida Land Steward Newsletter is joint project of the UF/IFAS Extension, Florida Forest Service, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Florida Tree Farm Program:

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