

## About the Texas Forest Service

Texas Forest Service (TFS) was created in 1915 by the 34th Texas Legislature as a Member of The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) and mandated by law to "assume direction of all forest interests and all matters pertaining to forestry within the jurisdiction of the state." In 1993, the 73rd Legislature expanded TFS responsibility to include "coordination of the response to each major or potentially major wildland fire in the state."

TFS is a service agency involved in conserving and protecting the natural resources, property, and lives of the state. The agency's primary functions are: to provide technical assistance and program delivery; to provide protection against wildland fires and other all-hazard emergencies; to provide accurate, science-based information; to build the capacity of others and engage in cooperative working relationships; and to promote statewide economic development.

TFS headquarters is located in College Station and the agency currently has 60 offices and 385 employees. TFS manages the Folweiler Training Center and Cudlipp Forestry Center in Lufkin, twenty-one district offices throughout East Texas, offices in fifteen urban cities across the state, five state forests, thirteen regional forest resource protection offices in Central Texas, and a tree nursery in West Texas.

With a recent legislative appropriation, TFS is in the process of expanding its Resource Protection Division including opening new offices, hiring 60 full-time employees, and purchasing numerous bulldozers, fire engines and other heavy firefighting equipment.

### For More Information Contact

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## Texas Forest Legacy Program



**T E X A S**  
**FOREST SERVICE**  
The Texas A&M University System

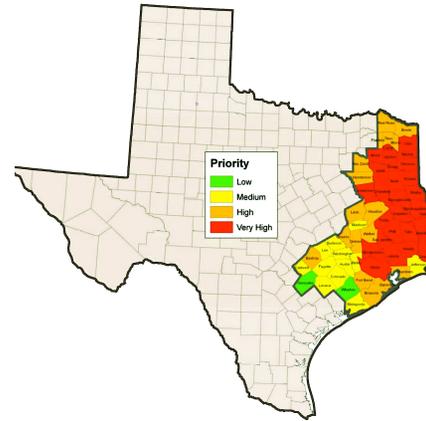


# About Forest Legacy

**THE PROGRAM:** The Forest Legacy Program, a voluntary cooperative effort between the USDA Forest Service and the State of Texas, protects ecologically important forests threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. The program encourages the voluntary protection of privately owned forestland primarily through the acquisition of conservation easements, which are legally binding agreements transferring a negotiated set of property rights (primarily development rights) from one party to another without removing the property from private ownership. Most FLP conservation easements restrict development, require sustainable forestry practices, and protect other values.

**HOW IT WORKS:** The USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry branch administers the program in cooperation with Texas Forest Service. The program allows the State of Texas to purchase conservation easements on forestland with the goal of keeping the land in its forested state. Landowners may continue to own their land and retain all other rights to the property, including the right to sell the property. The conservation easement is recorded with the property deed and transferred with the sale or transfer of the property. USDA Forest Service funds 75 percent of the total program cost and the landowner provides 25 percent. The landowner's share may come from nonfederal sources such as a donation of part of the easement value from the landowner or a non-profit organization interested in the project.

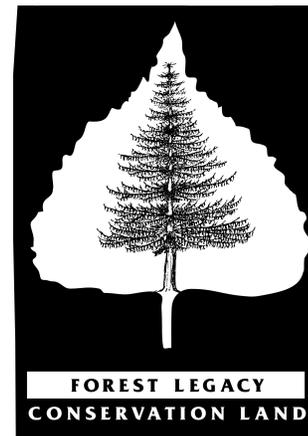
**IMPORTANCE:** Intact forestlands supply timber products, wildlife habitat, soil and watershed protection, aesthetically beautiful scenery, and recreational opportunities. As these areas become fragmented and disappear, so do the myriad benefits they provide. Local governments can guide development away from the most sensitive areas through traditional land use tools such as zoning and performance standards, but sometimes these measures are not sufficient to fully protect the forested component of our state's valuable natural resource base.



- Forest Legacy projects must be within the Forest Legacy Area shown on the map.
- Threat of conversion is highest in the counties with a priority listing of high or very high. TFS will give preference to forest legacy projects in high priority counties.
- More information about threats facing Texas forests can be found in the Texas Statewide Forest Resource Strategy publication.



- The value of a conservation easement is determined by calculating the difference between an appraisal conducted before the easement is established and one after the easement is established.
- Landowners will receive up to 75% of the difference between the two appraisals from the federal government. The other 25% may be donated by the landowner or a non-profit organization.



- As of August 2009, the Forest Legacy Program has protected a total of 1,855,222 acres in 42 states and territories.
- In Texas alone, over 13,000 acres of forestland have been protected by the Forest Legacy Program. When the FY2010 project is completed, almost 5,000 more acres will be protected through Forest Legacy.
- After only five years of participation in the highly competitive program, four Texas Forest Legacy Projects have been approved for funding.