

# Tuskegee national forest history 10308



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## Tuskegee National Forest History

The 11, 000 acres now known as the Tuskegee National Forest was originally a vast cotton field, home to sharecroppers. These sharecroppers planted cotton each year until the soil was no longer fit for yielding crops. This incidence caused the sharecroppers to relocate to Shorter, Alabama. This also allowed those same 11, 000 acres to be established as the Tuskegee National Forest. Much of the forest is a lone leaf pine ecosystem that contains plants such as blue stem grass, blueberries, yucca, and L. bicolor, which is a rampantly growing weed that is a popular food source for deer. This weed, however, has proven to be a problem for rangers because it grows so uncontrollably.

## Tuskegee National Forest Management

Forest management covers the following: hunting, fishing, lumber, water resources, and water quality. The Tuskegee National Forest executes the finest management practices regarding the treatment of water within the forest. Water bars are set up to redirect the water so that excessive speed doesn't increase and cause further erosion to the forest. Turnouts divert water off of roadways to decrease flooding and hazards for motorists. Another aspect of water management involves the Tallapoosa River drainage, which receives water from the Chawktafalla and Eufapi Rivers. Before this water can leave the forest, it must be as clean or cleaner than it was upon entering the forest. A low water crossing is also part of the forest management plan. The crossing is designed to accommodate the large amounts of rainfall that is sometimes customary as the forest has suffered

from hurricane Opal in 1995. This low water crossing allows water to run over a small concrete bridge. The banks along this crossing have signs of erosion from water rushing through the creek. There are two major creeks that run through the forest. One of these creeks include the Hondnett Creek which are home to hundreds of species of fish and six endangered species of mussels exhibiting the wide variety of benthos and nekton organisms.

Forest management not only includes maintaining adequate water levels and the quality of that water, but it also consists of trees and lumber, which is an even greater aspect of forest management. There are various techniques used to remove trees when there are too many occupying a specific area. One of these methods is the use of a prism. A prism is a device used to measure the square area of trees per lot. If it is determined that there are too many trees in a given area, then a burn can be prescribed. There are certain conditions that must occur before an area can be burned: (1) the relative humidity must be at least 30%, (2) no wind, (3) the type of "fuel"(anything in a forest that will burn) must be identified. A release burn is when trees that are to be saved have their neighboring trees cut down so the fire will not reach them. Pre-commercial thinning involves cutting down trees that are too small to sell and simply leaving them on the forest floor.

Not only can you find a numerous amount of trees residing in the forest, but a multitude of birds also occupy this space. These birds are referred to as neo tropical migrants, which include the oriole, cedar waxwings, robins, scarlet tanager, the indigo, and the painted birds.

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## Bibliography

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