

THE
SOUTHERN
APPALACHIAN
ASSESSMENT

SOCIAL | CULTURAL | ECONOMIC
TECHNICAL REPORT

Prepared by Federal and State Agencies

*Coordinated through Southern Appalachian
Man and the Biosphere Cooperative*

July 1996



REPORT
4 OF 5

Abstract

This report is an analysis of social, cultural, and economic forces that are a part of the ecosystems in the Appalachian Mountains in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. Population, employment, wages, housing, education, and ethnic makeup are described. The history of human influences is outlined, and current conditions and trends are reported for outdoor recreation, the timber economy, and management and use of wilderness and roadless areas.

Cover photos are by Bill Lea®, Asheville, North Carolina; report designs and layout are by Project Center, Atlanta, Georgia; maps are by agency Geographic Information Systems; other graphics and tables are by Blue Line, Inc., Roanoke, Virginia.

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Preface

Our vision for the Southern Appalachian region is an environment for natural resources management that applies the best available knowledge about the land, air, water, and people of the region. Applied on public lands, this knowledge would provide a sustainable balance among biological diversity, economic uses, and cultural values. All would be achieved through information gathering and sharing, integrated assessments, and demonstration projects.

The Southern Appalachian Assessment takes a major step toward fulfillment of that vision. It is an ecological assessment – a description of conditions that goes beyond state, federal, or private boundaries. In using Southern Appalachian Assessment data, land managers can base their decisions on the natural boundaries of ecosystems rather than on the artificial boundaries of counties, states, or national forests and parks.

The assessment was accomplished through the cooperation of federal and state natural resource agencies within the Southern Appalachian region. It was coordinated through the auspices of the Southern Appalachian Man and Biosphere (SAMAB) cooperative.

Members of the cooperative are: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service; Tennessee Valley Authority; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, National Park Service, National Biological Service, Fish and Wildlife Service; Appalachian Regional Commission; U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers; Georgia Department of Natural Resources; North Carolina Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources; Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation; U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration; and the U.S. Department of Energy, Oak Ridge National Laboratory. This cooperation significantly expanded the scope and depth of analysis that might have been achieved by separate initiatives. It also avoided duplicating work that might have been necessary if each agency had acted independently. The findings in this assessment do not reflect unanimous (unqualified) views of all agencies involved on all points.

Although the Southern Appalachian Assessment is broad and comprehensive in subject matter and geographic scope, there are many opportunities to further expand the analyses based on this data. Urgent demands for the assessment data restricted our time-frame. So, identifying data gaps became as important a task as identifying and gathering existing data. The Southern Appalachian Assessment serves as both a useful reference and as a benchmark for future analyses.

There was no specific statutory requirement for the assessment. However, national forest land and resource management plans authorized under the 1976 National Forest Management Act have been in place for almost 10 years and are therefore subject to revision. Due to the relationship of the national forests and other federal lands

to the biological, social, and economic conditions in the assessment area, more comprehensive and more scientifically credible data are needed to facilitate land management planning. This assessment supports individual forest plans by determining how the lands, resources, people, and management of the national forests interrelate within the larger context of the surrounding lands. The broadly identified pollutants and impacts of concern are not intended as a source of information upon which to base future regulatory or permitting action.

This report is one of five that document the results of the Southern Appalachian Assessment. The reports include a summary report, atmospheric, social/cultural/economic, terrestrial, and aquatic reports.

The five reports are available in printed form and via the Internet. By providing

direct access to assessment materials via Internet, we hope that users can obtain information more quickly and at a lower cost than would have been possible otherwise. As with most reference documents, users will need only a small portion of the assessment for their specific projects at any given time. Moreover, an Internet document can be revised or updated when the occasion arises.

In-depth versions of data are available on the SAMAB, Forest Service, and Info South Home Pages on the World-Wide Web (WWW). These versions can be accessed at <http://www.lib.utk.edu/samab> for SAMAB's Southern Appalachian Home Page, at <http://www.fs.fed.us/> for the Forest Service Home Page and at <http://wwwfs.libs.uga.edu> for the Info South Home Page. Additional materials such as maps and data that support the assessment are described and referenced in each report.

The Southern Appalachian Assessment is presented in five separate reports. The reports can be cited as follows:

Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB). 1996. The Southern Appalachian Assessment Summary Report. Report 1 of 5. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Region.

Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB). 1996. The Southern Appalachian Assessment Aquatics Technical Report. Report 2 of 5. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Region.

Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB). 1996. The Southern Appalachian Assessment Atmospheric Technical Report. Report 3 of 5. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Region.

Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB). 1996. The Southern Appalachian Assessment Social/Cultural/Economic Technical Report. Report 4 of 5. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Region.

Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere (SAMAB). 1996. The Southern Appalachian Assessment Terrestrial Technical Report. Report 5 of 5. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Region.

Table of Contents

	Acknowledgments	vii
	Executive Summary	1
chapter	1 Introduction Social and Cultural History of the Southern Appalachians	5
chapter	2 Communities and Human Influences in Southern Appalachian Ecosystems: The Human Dimensions	17
chapter	3 The Timber Economy of the Southern Appalachians	87
chapter	4 Outdoor Recreation Demand and Supply in the Region	139
chapter	5 Roadless Areas and Designated Wilderness	177
	List of Figures	201
	List of Tables	205
	References	209

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Figure 1

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN ASSESSMENT AREA

