MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

To: Forestry

By: Senator(s) Little, Harvey, Gordon, Jordan, Hamilton, Burton, King, Chaney, Browning, Jackson, Farris, Scoper, Stogner, Dearing, Tollison, Williamson, White (29th)

AN ACT TO ENACT THE MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY INVENTORY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING ACT OF 2002; TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTE FOR FOREST INVENTORY; TO SPECIFY ITS POWERS AND DUTIES; TO ESTABLISH A BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE INSTITUTE; TO PROVIDE FOR THE REPEAL OF THIS ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the "Mississippi Forestry Inventory and Strategic Planning Act of 2002."

SECTION 2. (1) (a) There is hereby created the Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory. The institute shall be governed by a board of directors. The board shall consist of eleven (11) members. The Director of the Mississippi Automated Resource Information System; the Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority, or his designee; the Director of the Forest and Wildlife Research Center at Mississippi State University, or his designee; and the State Forester, or his designee; shall be ex officio members with full voting power. The Governor shall appoint four (4) members with the advice and consent of the Senate. The members shall be appointed from the state at large.

The Governor shall appoint one (1) member from each of the following categories: a private nonindustrial forest landowner, a Mississippi registered forester, a certified wildlife or fisheries biologist, and a representative of an environmental organization.

(b) The Lieutenant Governor shall appoint three (3) members from the state at large with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Lieutenant Governor shall appoint one (1) member from each of the following categories: the timber harvesting industry,
the forest products industry, and a citizen with forestry related
interests.

(c) Members of the board may be reimbursed for mileage
and actual and necessary expenses as provided under Section
25-3-41.

(d) The Chairman of the Senate Forestry Committee and
the Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee shall serve as
members of the Joint Institute for Forest Inventory Oversight
Committee. For attending meetings, the legislators shall receive
per diem and expenses from their respective contingent expense
funds at the rate authorized for committee meetings when the
Legislature is not in session. No per diem and expenses will be
paid for attending meetings when the Legislature is in session.

(2) The board shall appoint a director of the institute who
serves at the will and pleasure of the board.

(3) The board shall have the following powers:

(a) To apply for, accept and expend any funds, grants
or gifts from any public or private sources in furtherance of the
institute’s duties;

(b) To expend funds by appropriation or directly from
any federal, local or private sources;

(c) Enter into contracts and execute all instruments to
carry out the duties of the institute;

(d) To authorize the executive director with the
approval of the board to execute all contracts and agreements and
to employ such personnel as may be required to carry out the
duties of the institute; and

(e) To do all acts necessary to carry out the duties of
the institute.

(4) All funds received by the institute shall be deposited
in the State Treasury for the use of the institute.
SECTION 3. (1) The duties and responsibilities of the Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) To facilitate the development and implementation of a statewide forest resource inventory necessary for a sustainable forest-based economy on or before July 1, 2004, and thereafter on a continuing basis with updated published data;

(b) Analyze and publish a detailed report of Mississippi's forest resource inventory by January 1, 2005;

(c) Conduct and publish data for subsequent and supporting inventories of forest resources in the years following the initial full inventory;

(d) Develop policies to aid in the implementation of the inventory information and reports;

(e) Submit an annual report to the Legislature on the institute's funding, expenditures, accomplishments and recommendations; and

(f) Analyze and publish data on the volume, quality, size and ownership of forest resources to provide support for new and existing forest industries.

(2) (a) In accomplishing its duties and formulating the recommendations required of it, the institute may elicit the support of and participation by any commercial, industrial, governmental, environmental, minority and public interest organizations or associations, or individual members thereof, and any federal, state and local agencies and political subdivisions as may be necessary or appropriate in the furtherance of the activities of the institute.

(b) The institute may utilize the services, facilities and personnel of all departments, agencies, offices and institutions of the state and all such entities are authorized to assist the institute and to provide such support.
**SECTION 4.** The Executive Directors of the Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory, the Mississippi Forestry Commission, the Mississippi Development Authority, the MSU Forest and Wildlife Research Center, and the Cooperative Extension Service shall establish a procedure and guidelines for the coordination of outreach and education programs. It shall be the duty of each agency to cooperate and to promote a coordinated outreach and education program to increase the utilization of private nonindustrial forest landowner forest resources and increase profitability for such resources.

**SECTION 5.** This act shall stand repealed on July 1, 2007.

**SECTION 6.** This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2002.