

Bankhead National Forest

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News

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For Immediate Release

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Forest Service and Alabama A&M Sign Agreement

Normal, AL – March 17, 2005. The participating agreement opens the door for researcher scientists and forestry students from Alabama A&M University to use the Bankhead National Forest as a learning lab for research while providing valuable information to the Forest Service about the effects of thinning and prescribed burns in the forest.

“This is an excellent opportunity for us to have sound data about management activities as we implement our five-year forest health and restoration project”, said Glen Gaines, district ranger for the Bankhead National Forest.

Alabama A & M University has established the Center for Forest Ecosystem Assessment and has received a \$4.9 million grant from the National Science Foundation to implement a five year research project on the effects of specific management activities in the Cumberland Plateau. During the next five years, the university will implement the project in cooperation with the Forest Service's Southern Research Station.

"We will provide market place learning to our students and the Forest Service will benefit from the site specific scientific data and research results that will enhance and improve their management techniques", said Dr. Rose M. Yates, interim vice president for Research and Development at Alabama A&M University.

The timing of this research grant and the implementation of the Bankhead Forest Healthy and Restoration Project create the perfect situation to benefit both parties. The Forest Service can benefit from the research information on vegetative response to management activities in the forest. Specific forest stands have been selected to meet the criteria needed to carry on the research. The stands will be prepared and treated according to guidelines set by the University and Forest Service.

Researchers will design, locate, layout and designate all data plots in the selected treatment stands. Additionally, they will collect the data needed to accomplish the research objectives in a timely manner, analyze the results and publish them in scientific reports and publications.