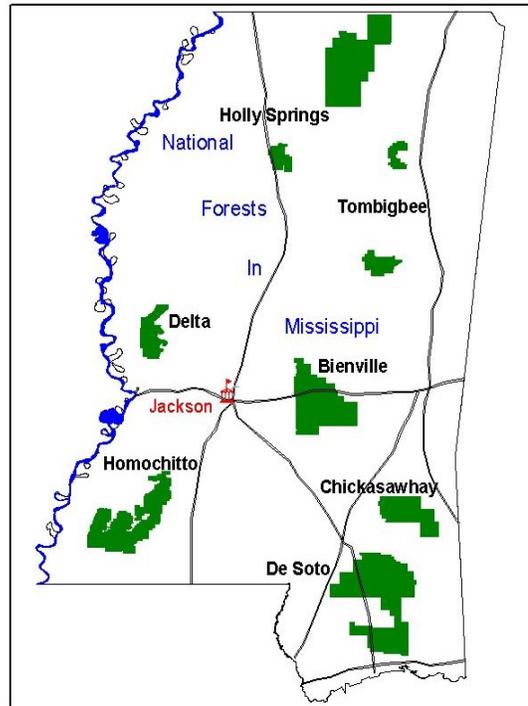


# MISSISSIPPI



## Weeks Act 1911–2011



The National Forests in Mississippi were born out of the soil-eroded, cut over landscape known as the “lands nobody wanted.” Today, the 1.2 million acres of the National Forests in Mississippi are among the nation’s best kept secrets. The forest is abundant in wildlife and numerous recreational opportunities, including hunting, fishing, hiking, nature study, boating, picnicking, and swimming.

The National Forests in Mississippi consist of six forests that cover all or part of 32 counties from as far north as the Tennessee border and as far south as the Gulf Coast.

## THEN



1930's Forest Road 201  
Chickasawhay Ranger District  
De Soto National Forest  
National Forests in Mississippi

## NOW



2010 Forest Road 201  
Chickasawhay Ranger District  
De Soto National Forest  
National Forests in Mississippi

**1961**

**DELTA NATIONAL FOREST:** Located north of Vicksburg within the alluvial floodplain of the Mississippi River, this forest is one of the few remaining in the Mississippi Delta. It is the only bottomland hardwood national forest in the nation. At its roots was an unbroken hardwood forest with abundant plants, animal and fish resources. The rich natural resources of the area provided for a large population of prehistoric groups and explains its claim to the title “cradle of cultural development in North American.” The Delta provides critical breeding habitat for a variety of Neotropical migratory songbirds in spring and summer.

**1934**

**BIENVILLE NATIONAL FOREST:** Located in the heart of the state, the forest is named after French-Canadian soldier and colonist, Jean Baptiste Bienville, who founded Mobile in 1702, Natchez in 1716, and New Orleans in 1718. Most land acquisitions destined to become the Bienville were directly purchased from four large lumber companies: Adams-Edgar Lumber, Bienville Lumber, Eastman Gardner, and Marathon Lumber. The historical Moore Fire Tower is listed on the Department of Interior’s National Register of Historic Places.

**1935**

**De SOTO NATIONAL FOREST:** Mississippi’s largest national forest, named after famous Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto, covers more than half of the 1.2 million acres of national forest land in the state. The Civilian Conservation Corp and Forest Service employees of the 1930s built the forest. Southern pine and bottomland hardwoods predominate the area. The De Soto is known as a showcase for longleaf pine restoration and management. The De Soto National Forest has a long-term partnership with the U.S. National Guard. More than 87 percent, or 117,000 acres, of Camp Shelby are located on the De Soto National Forest.

**1936**

**HOLLY SPRINGS NATIONAL FOREST:** Abandoned farmland with rapidly eroding soils covering the northernmost tip of the state became the Holly Springs. Loblolly, shortleaf pines, and upland hardwoods now cover the rolling hills. The Civilian Conservation Corp used loblolly pine, as it was easy to plant and suitable for the depleted soils of the north central hills, and cast large loads of needles to help prevent further erosion. Covering about 156,000 acres, the Holly Springs covers an expanse of dispersed land with private farms and woodlots. Located about 45 minutes from Memphis, TN, the Holly Springs is known for its seasonal beauty.

**1936**

**HOMOCHITTO NATIONAL FOREST:** The Homochitto purchase unit was established as the first national forest in Mississippi. The Homochitto, named after the river that flows through it, is a Native American name for “Big Red River”. This southwest Mississippi forest is located southeast of Natchez. Between the 1700s and the late 1800s, most of this area was held in large agricultural plantations with the land owners living in or around Natchez. As cotton fields lay fallow from the 1908 boll weevil, large scale cotton grew unprofitable. These fields seeded-in naturally and developed into heavy stands of loblolly pine. The first national forest established in Mississippi, the Homochitto is popular for hunting and known for its bike trail.

**1959**

**TOMBIGBEE NATIONAL FOREST:** Named for the nearby Tombigbee River and located in northeast Mississippi, this 67,000-acre forest is covered with pine and upland hardwood. This Tombigbee has several lakes and many botanical affiliations with the southern Appalachians. The forest is split into two blocks, one near Tupelo and the other near Ackerman. The Natchez Trace Parkway, south of Tupelo, leads through the northern section. State Highway 15, south of Ackerman leads through the southern section.