



FOREST RESOURCES REVIEW

Although the timber growing stock is generally evenly distributed across the United States, recent expansion of the forest products industry has been concentrated in the southern states. The principal reason for this trend has been the availability of commercial species, particularly southern pine, and new technology which permits economical and functional utilization of small diameter, fast growing trees. Table 1 shows the distribution of growing stock in 1979. Although the western forests have seventy (70) percent of the U. S. softwood inventory, the majority of the western forests are controlled by states and the federal government as parks, recreational areas, and wilderness areas and are not available for commercial harvesting. Other distinct disadvantages of western wood products facilities compared to the south are the higher labor costs, higher stumpage costs, poorer accessibility to the wood base, and the distance that finished products must be hauled to the primary wood products consumption centers - the eastern United States. The harvest of timber in the south has been projected to increase by eighty (80) percent over the next fifty (50) years.

Table 1 - Distribution of U.S. Timber Growing Stock (1979)
in Billions of Cubic Feet¹

<u>Section</u>	<u>All Species</u>	<u>Softwoods</u>	<u>Hardwoods</u>
North	176	46	130
South	203	100	103
Rocky Mountain	100	90	10
Pacific Coast	<u>236</u>	<u>201</u>	<u>35</u>
Total	<u>715</u>	<u>437</u>	<u>278</u>

Species Distribution

Figure 1 is a physiographic representation of the study's geographic area and shows the wide range of topographical conditions across which the timber base is distributed. The biosphere of natural succession is for natural stands particularly on poor site index to revert to mixed hardwoods. Because of aggressive artificial regeneration policies and intensive silvicultural management over the last thirty (30) years, the southern forest instead is nearly evenly distributed between hardwoods and softwoods.

¹ U. S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Survey of Forest Resources.