

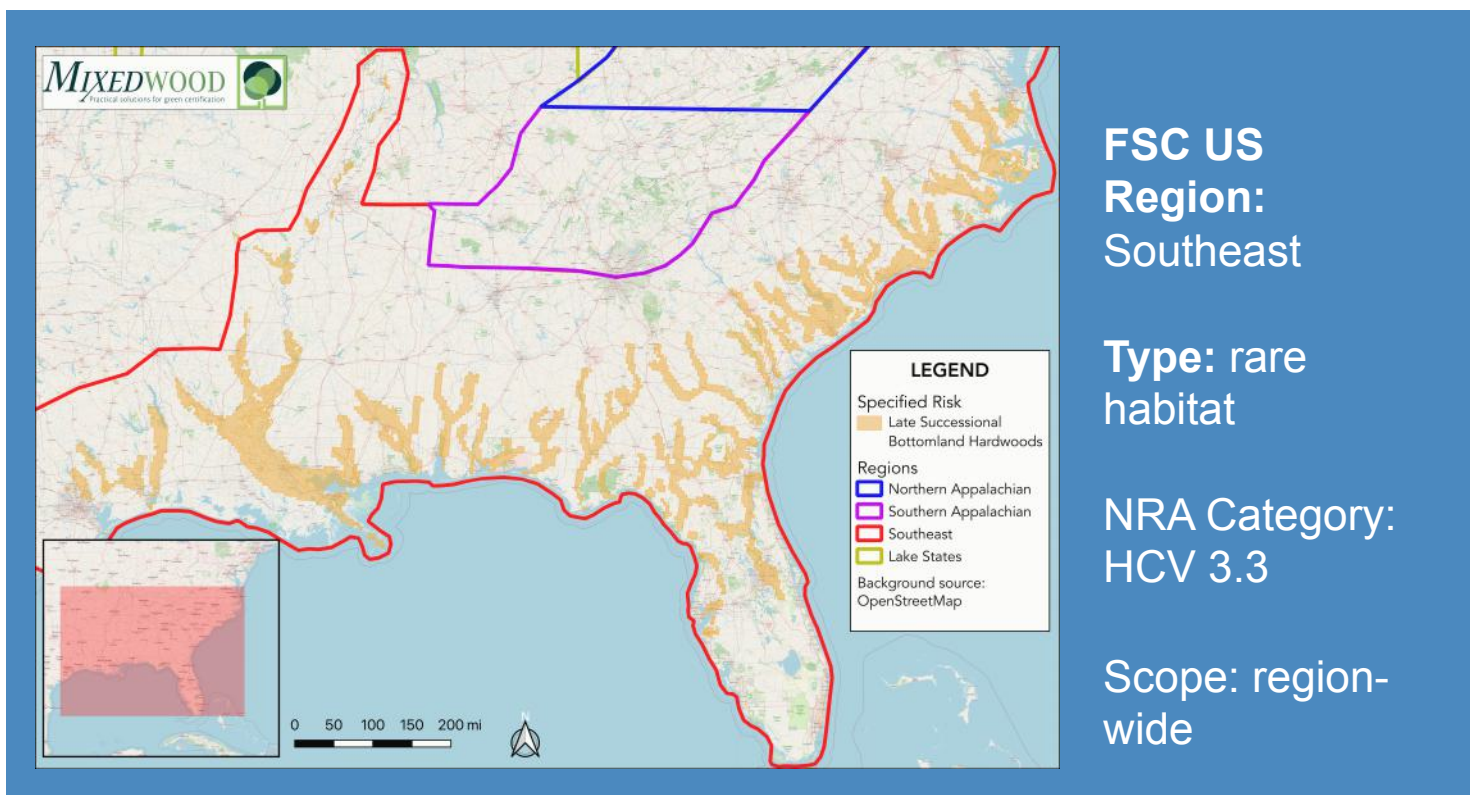
# LATE SUCCESSIONAL BOTTOMLAND HARDWOODS

## Description

Bottomland Hardwoods are periodically inundated, floodplain forests, where the entire ecosystem is driven by hydrology. Even small changes to the hydrology can result in significant effects on the system. These forests include different species that vary depending upon the extent of flooding, soil characteristics, decomposition rates, soil & water pH, nutrient availability & turnover rates, flood depth & water velocity, light intensity, and disturbance. Late successional stands are defined by the structural composition (e.g., more stratification) and existence of large wood debris, including standing hollow trees – these changes occur at about 80 years in most Bottomland Hardwood types and perhaps a little later in cypress swamps.

FSC Controlled Wood  
Specified Risk Fact Sheet

While old Bottomland Hardwood stands are not particularly rare, the late successional stands are quite rare. The extremely diverse stand conditions of these forests and the biodiversity they support make them particularly important. Woody species diversity can be comparable to the most diverse upland forests in the US. They tend to have structurally complex vegetation and a deep litter layer. The dense vegetation and the landscape connectivity they provide make them important travel corridors for wildlife.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Forest Stewardship Council. (2018). FSC US Controlled Wood Regional Meeting Report Southeast & Mississippi Alluvial Valley Regions: Atlanta, GA. Retrieved from <https://us.fsc.org/download.controlled-wood-regional-meeting-report-southeast-mississippi-alluvial-valley-regions.a-703.pdf>





## High Conservation Value (HCV)

Much of the original bottomland hardwood in the US was cleared for agriculture, particularly in the Mississippi valley, and much of the remainder was mismanaged – leaving very few intact examples. These HCVs were identified using FSC US Forest Management Standard guidance, with support from other information sources and expert consultation.<sup>1</sup>

## Recommended Mitigation

- **Education & Outreach:** information sharing with landowners, loggers, wood suppliers.
- **Procurement Policy:** supporting and promoting conservation.

## Mitigation Resources

- **USDA US Forest Service Southern Region Resource Management:** Website to resource links.
- **International Erosion Control Association (IECA) Southeast Chapter** - Resources: Guidelines & Regulations by state.
- **US Army Corps of Engineers** - Restoring Bottomland Hardwoods Forests. PDF.
- **Forest Stewardship Guild** - Southeast Region: Key projects, reports, and publications.

## Information Sources

- **USDA US Forest Service Southern Region** - Southern Hardwood Management. PDF.
- **US EPA - Bottomland Hardwoods**. Online article.
- **USDA US Forest Service Southern Resource Station** - A Guide to Bottomland Hardwood Restoration: PDF.
- **Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries** - Bottomland Hardwood Forests: PDF.
- Mississippi State University Extension - Bottomland Hardwood Management: Website with link to PDF download.

## Social Value

- **Dogwood Alliance** - The Value of Bottomland Hardwoods Swamps. Article.
- **National Park Service** - Congaree National Park. Information & maps.
- **North Carolina State University** - The Ecological and Economic Values of Bottomland Swamps/Hardwoods in the South. PDF.

