

# **OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND FORESTRY**

2800 North Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City OK 73105-4298

May 4, 2016

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Michelle Finch-Walker, 580-236-1021 or [michelle.finch@ag.ok.gov](mailto:michelle.finch@ag.ok.gov)

## **Oklahoma Forestry Services conducting inventory in Hughes, Okfuskee, and Okmulgee counties**

What type of forest or woodlands is present in Oklahoma? What tree species are in the state's counties? Is our forest healthy?

These and many other questions will be answered as a Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) crew from Oklahoma Forestry Services begins collecting data on plots in Hughes, Okfuskee, and Okmulgee counties.

Foresters began this important data collection in 2009. Each subsequent year, foresters continue gathering information about the amount of land under forest cover, the type of forests and tree species that are present, tree size, invasive species and forest health issues.

“Healthy forests and woodlands provide Oklahoma with many valuable goods and services,” said State Forester George Geissler. “We are collecting information about our forests in all 77 counties which will improve our planning and management strategies and ensure our citizens receive the greatest benefit possible.”

The analysis is conducted on randomly located plots across private, industrial, and public lands and includes both forested and non-forested areas. Private landowners are contacted directly by mail if a plot falls on their land. The information gathered from this analysis determines the status of the local forest resource and shows trends seen in the forests of Oklahoma. This data also contributes to similar nationwide efforts of the USDA Forest Service.

“The information we collect is added to the national database to give policymakers the data they need to make informed decisions for the future of our forest resources,” said FIA Coordinator Carri Abner. “We appreciate landowners allowing us access to their land so we will have an accurate assessment of Oklahoma's trees and forests.”

Crews will be traveling in marked Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry vehicles and will be carrying proper identification with them. Landowners and lessees can assist in this endeavor by granting crews access to property if an FIA plot falls on their land, as well as telling others about the program. They are also welcome to be present when the crew is conducting the measurements on their property. If you would like more information, contact Carri Abner at 918-290-9208 or [carri.abner@ag.ok.gov](mailto:carri.abner@ag.ok.gov).

###