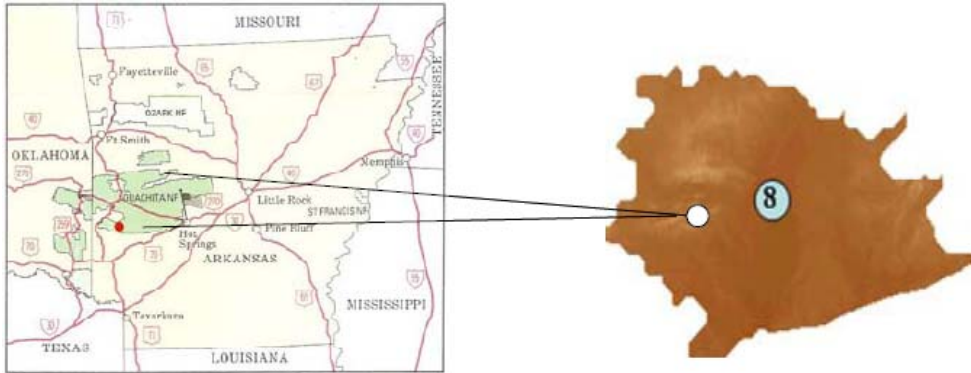


Ouachita Mountain Biological Station (OMBS)

Contact Person: Laurence Hardy; E-mail: Laurence.Hardy@lsus.edu; Voice: 318-797-5338

Web Page: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/ouachita/>; www.lsus.edu/lsusmus/ombs.html

Location within Domain: 34.486 N, 93.970 W



History: The Ouachita Mountain Biological Station (OMBS) was established by the purchase of 121 ha by Richard K. Spears, Jr. in 1962, with the intent that the property become a biology station. Small structures were added slowly over about 10 years. The station is now owned by the Richard K. and Betty M. Spears Charitable Foundation, and the OMBS has a 99-year lease from the Foundation. In 2004 the Foundation bought an additional 32 ha, bringing the total to 154 ha. In 2000 Laurence M. Hardy started renovating the buildings and physical plant. In 2003 a full-time Resident Manager was hired.

Key Characteristics: The OMBS is in the Ouachita National Forest that is part of the Ouachita Mountains Ecoregion in the western part of Domain #8. Elevation ranges from ~395 to 622 m. The area is cooler and slightly drier than much of the rest of Domain #8. The setting is suitable for climate, land-use change and invasive species ecological research themes. An ecotone between the prairies to the west and the eastern deciduous forest to the east, this ecoregion contains many western species that follow the Ouachita Mountains toward the east. This area also contains many endemic species, including several species of salamanders, plants, and fungi. General vegetation cover is mixed pine-oak forest in mountainous terrain. The OMBS property has short-leaf pine in the uplands and mixed pine-oak-hickory-sweetgum in the lowlands, typical of the larger forest. The Ouachita Mountains Ecoregion is a relatively small portion of overall Domain #8, but the area is important to ecological research themes because of its ecotone role, likely sensitivity to climate change and vulnerability to invasive species.

Existing Infrastructure: OMBS is a member of the Organization of Biological Field Stations (OBFS). Checklists of all species known from OMBS are being compiled. Existing data sets include plants, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. The station has on-site infrastructure, including a weather service meteorological station. To best serve the ecological research themes, the relocatable unit for this site should include at a minimum advanced met instruments, radiometric measurements, soil sensors, flux instrumentation.

Facilities: The OMBS has 8 buildings: 600 sq. ft. combination laboratory/kitchenette with two bathrooms, shower, dining area, a small work area, and sleeping facilities for 10, heat/AC; 1200 sq. ft. teaching space (lecture/lab) for 20 or more students; bathroom with shower, washer/dryer, heat/AC; residence; office and library, heat/AC; pavilion with lights, electrical outlets, water; shop and storage for tools; residence with 2 bdms, kitchen; storage building. Electricity via Rural Electric Association; telephone, internet via dial-up (high speed coming); potable well water, a central purification system, septic tank sewer system. The station is accessible by state highway and gravel roads.