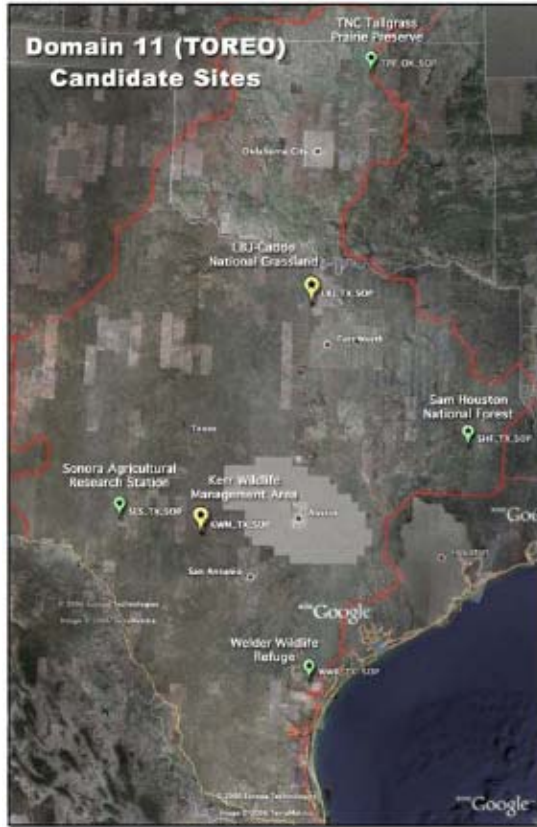


Sam Houston National Forest: Southern Plains Domain

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Location within Domain:



History: The Sam Houston National Forest (SHF), one of four National Forests in Texas, is located 100 km north of Houston. The forest contains 74,100 ha that is intermingled with privately owned timber lands and small farms. SHF is managed under the multiple-use concept to maintain diverse activities such as recreation, fish and wildlife, timber, grazing, and soil and water. Forest Service objectives, by law, must consider all resources of the forest.

Key Characteristics: SHF lies on the southwestern edge of the pineywoods region of eastern Texas. It is located within the Coastal Plains characterized by gently undulating topography and deep sandy soils. The dominant vegetation is a mixed pine-hard wood forest on the uplands and mixed hardwood forest on the lowlands. Native pines include, *P. taeda*, *P. echinata* and *P. palustris*. Native hardwoods include, *Liquidambar styraciflua*, *Quercus* spp., *Nyssa aquatica*, *N. sylvatica*, *Magnolia* spp., *Ulmus* spp. *Taxodium distichum* and various other species. A modest understory of vines,

shrubs and herbs are also present.

Existing Structure: SHF represents a unique pine-hardwood forest ecosystem that is prevalent in the eastern portion of the domain. This site provides an effective location to monitor the eastern end of the east-west precipitation gradient that characterizes the domain climate. A specific site within SHF has not been identified and public access is unrestricted. Negotiation with the US Forest Service may be required to secure a site to support national ecological observatory operations. The Crockett and Angelina Forests are also in the vicinity and they could be considered as alternate sites, if necessary. SHF is easily accessible along I-45 100 km north of Houston.

Facilities: SHF has a modest infrastructure including an administrative headquarters in New Waverly, a reasonable all weather road system, modern utilities, visitor center, and shop and maintenance facilities.