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## Introduction

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## INTRODUCTION

*by Mark Barringer*

Forests define East Texas, and to a great extent they always have. The vast pine and hardwood expanses that cover the region distinguish it from the rest of the state. Settlers in the region – Native Americans, French, Spanish, or Anglo-American – lived in the forests, utilized their resources, and altered the woodland environment in search of security and prosperity. It seemed fitting that on the fortieth anniversary of the East Texas Historical Association that the *East Texas Historical Journal* focus on the forests of the region and on how East Texans have interacted with them over the years. The topical scope is broad, from a general overview of Southern forests to institutional and company histories, from personal observations of wildlife to personal tributes to forest history scholars. Taken together, these articles present a well-rounded historical picture of how East Texans have lived in and utilized their forests.

This issue of the *Journal* also includes a bonus. Inside the back cover you will find a multimedia, interactive CD-ROM supplement to “The History of the Stephen F. Austin Experimental Forest,” which begins on page 40. Produced by Carey C. Russell, a graduate student at the Arthur Temple College of Forestry at SFA, it provides an audiovisual tour of the Forest, interviews with many of those who have worked there over the years, and maps to orient readers to features mentioned in the article. Please take the time to browse the CD; we are proud that the *East Texas Historical Journal* is among the first publications to include such a supplement. And we believe that it is only a sign of things to come.