



The Alabama Forestry Commission Storm Damage Assessment Report Hurricane Isaias – October 9, 2026

INTRODUCTION:

Isaias made landfall near Destin, Florida, around **8:30 p.m. CDT October 9**, with maximum sustained winds of **105 mph**. The circulation moved north into southern Alabama and rapidly weakened. By **1 a.m. October 10**, its center was about 55 miles south-southwest of Montgomery, with cyclone-wide maximum sustained winds of **65 mph**. Those intensity figures do not represent the wind experienced at every Alabama location.

Brewton and Escambia County

Brewton emerged as a major damage center. Local reporting documented uprooted trees, damaged homes, downed power lines, and a damaged emergency communications tower. By October 13, thousands of Escambia County residents remained without electricity.

Aerial Survey:

The initial TreeS-DIP Damage map (Figure 1.) produced by the U.S. Forest Service indicated a large cone of damage covering most of south-central and southeast Alabama extending northwards to Montgomery, AL. Using this information in combination from ground reports, it was decided to survey these areas of potential damage. On October 13th, AFC pilots conducted an aerial survey over multiple south Alabama counties. Fortunately, forestland impacts were much lesser than initially estimated on the TreeS-DIP damage map. However, a very distinct area of damage was mapped in Escambia, Conecuh, and Monroe counties. This correlates to the Alabama EMA's report of a "sting jet" phenomenon. A sting jet is a concentrated stream of fast-moving air that descends from several miles above the ground, producing a relatively narrow area of unusually strong surface gusts. In Isaias, Alabama EMA used that term to describe destructive winds northwest of the storm's eye in southwest Alabama. There is a distinct area of damage that is about 36 miles long and 6-7 miles wide extending northward from Escambia County and partially into Monroe County (Figure 2.) The total area impacted according to area survey was 154,783.4 acres. Of this area, approximately 64,795 acres are classified as forestland with an additional 40,805 acres classified as woody wetlands. It is important to note that this was just a preliminary aerial survey and not a complete survey with ground verified data. It is significant that the overall damaged area was far less than the initial predicted forest damage area in the TreeS-DIP model. Damaged areas were classified by categories explained in Table 1.

Table 1. SGSF damage severity categories, classes, and definitions.

<i>Damage Severity Category</i>	<i>Damage Severity Class</i>	<i>Damage Severity Definition</i>
Light	<16%	Less than 16% of stems broken, with 60-150 trees per acre (TPA) remaining in good condition or 60 square feet of basal area (BA) standing in good condition. Little to no visible lean, no visible uprooting, small wounds. Remaining stand is viable and should recover on its own.
Moderate	16-50%	16% to 50% stems broken, branches and limbs broken, tops broken throughout the stand, trees bent more than 45 degrees. Salvage logging or a sanitation thinning should be considered.
Severe/Catastrophic	>50%	More than 50% of stems broken. Multiple trees down across the stand or bent more than 45 degrees. Salvage logging must be considered.

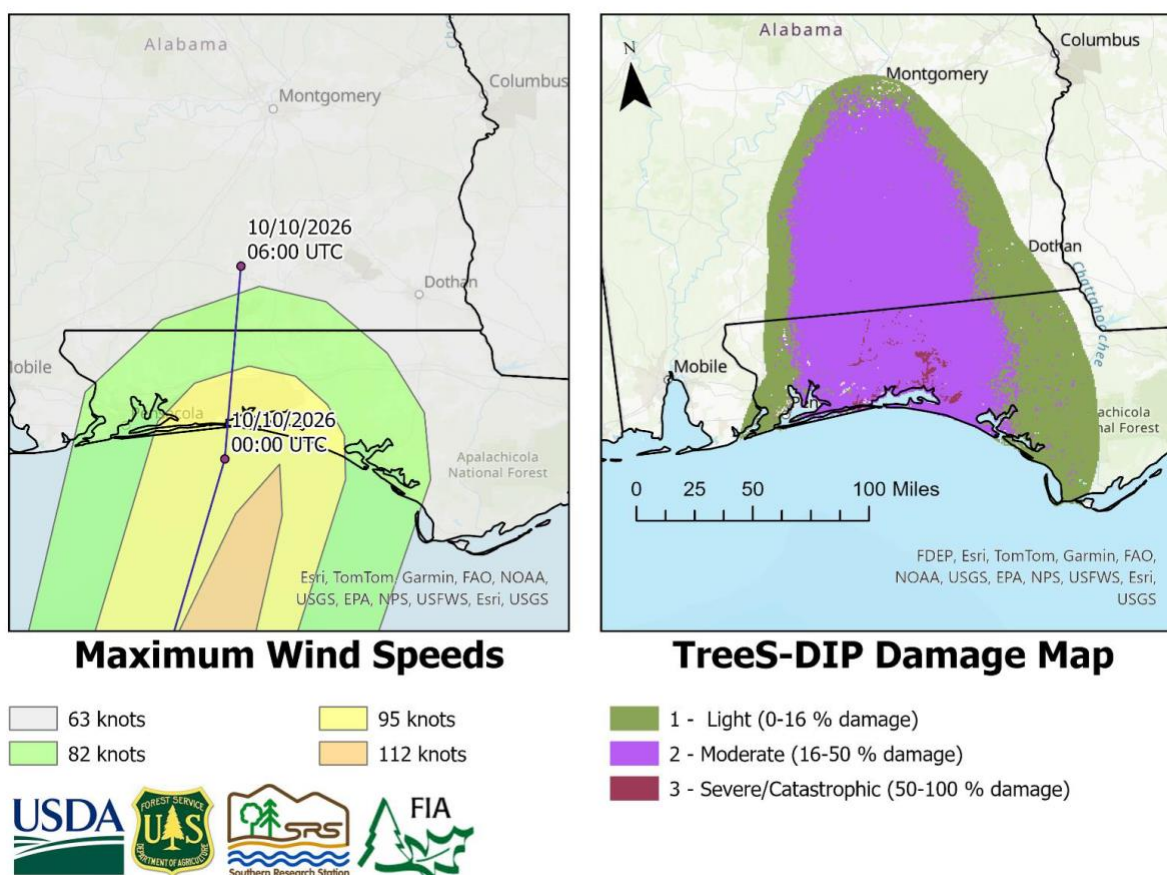
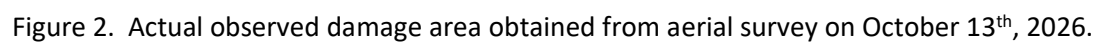


Figure 1. Hurricane Isaias wind zone boundaries modelled from NOAA National Hurricane Center (NHC, left) and the TreeS-DIP Forest damage map produced by the U.S. Forest Service, Geospatial Office.

2025 NLCD Forest Cover Within the Aerial Survey Corridor



Potential Timber Losses:

The Forest Inventory and Analysis Coordinator obtained volume estimates from current FIA data. The dollar value of the volume was obtained from TimberMart-South third quarter price report. The FIA Coordinator used the methodology of multiplying acres by the percent damage in the stand. The per- acre dollar amount was calculated using a combination of FIA county-level stand size data and TimberMart-South prices. The following information was produced: timber volume and estimated monetary loss. The Forest Health Coordinator reviewed the information and incorporated it into the Storm Damage Assessment Report. In summary, there was a possible 105,600 forested acres damaged by Hurricane Isaias with 2,583,494 tons of timber destroyed at a value of \$33,560,426.

Conecuh, Escambia, Monroe Counties	Forestland (Acres)	Percent Forestland Damage	Volume Per Acre (tons)	Total Volume Damaged (tons)	Weighted Value Per Ton	Total Value Damage
Pine	65,708	40.00	63.17	1,660,308	\$11.26	\$18,689,093
Hardwood	28,653	40.00	62.45	715,740	\$16.72	\$11,969,231
Mixed (P/H)	11,240	40.00	46.14	207,446	\$13.99	\$2,902,102
Total	105,600			2,583,494		\$33,560,426