

PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN VARIETAL FORESTRY

John Pait¹

CellFor Inc., Atlanta, GA

Loblolly pine varietal forestry has made substantial progress over the last 20 years including maturing field data, development of large scale production systems and demonstrated economic viability. Additionally, low levels of G x E have allowed for robust and stable genotypic performance for growth, disease resistance and log quality traits. Managed forest sustainability and genetic diversity are enhanced with deployment of well-tested varieties in terms of growth and productivity as well as reducing impacts of certain silviculture practices. Tailoring silvicultural systems for some genotypes with crop ideotype crown confirmation and improved growth efficiency can reduce regeneration and management costs. Finally, there are unique opportunities in species conservation and hybridization offered by varieties using the SE platform.