

Rice, cotton, soybeans, and sugarcane represent some of the major crops grown in this ecoregion. The regional distribution for these crops in 1999 is illustrated in the maps above. The data is represented by county and is adapted from data obtained from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service.

73. MISSISSIPPI ALLUVIAL PLAIN													
	Level IV Ecoregion	15	Physiography		Geology		Soils			Climate		Vegetation	Land Use and Land Cover
		Area (square miles)		Elevation/ Local Relief (feet)	Surficial and Bedrock	Order (Great Group)	Common Soil Series	Temperature/ Moisture Regimes	Precipitation Mean annual (inches)	Frost Free Mean annual (days)	Mean Temperature January min/max; July min/max (°F)		
73a.	Northern Holocene Meander Belts	10869	Broad, flat alluvial plain, with point bar deposits, meander belts, oxbows, levees and abandoned channels. Large rivers and some smaller low gradient streams, often channelized.	50-320 / 5-20	Holocene alluvial sand, silt, clay, and gravel.	Inceptisols (Endoaquepts, Dystrudepts), Entisols (Udifluvents, Udipsamments), Alfisols (Hapludalfs, Endoaqualfs), Vertisols (Epiaquerts)	Commerce, Crevasse, Convent, Robinsonville, Dubbs, Beulah, Dundee, Sharkey	Thermic / Udic, Aquic	44-56	190-240	26/58; 70/91	Bottomland hardwood forests and woodlands. Sandbars dominated by pure stands of black willow, while point bars have diverse forests of cottonwood, sugarberry, sycamore, green ash, and pecan. Sugarberry, American elm, and green ash dominate broad, flood-prone, flats and willow oak, water oak, swamp chestnut oak, and cherry bark oak dominate drier sites on the margins of floodplains. These species along with pecan and cottonwood occupy natural levees within the floodplain.	Cropland of mostly cotton and soybeans, with areas in corn, wheat, rice, and sorghum. Commercial catfish production. Some areas of deciduous forest and forested wetlands.
73b.	Northern Pleistocene Valley Trains	1417	Wide, flat to irregular alluvial plain with relict patterns of branching channels, terraces, irregular braided bars and interfluve areas. Low gradient streams with silty substrates, often channelized.	100-275 / 5-20	Holocene unconsolidated silty, sandy, and gravelly alluvium covers Pleistocene sand and gravel, glacial outwash; deposits are early to late Wisconsin, generally 5 to 15 feet in depth. Older fluvial deposits can be greater than 100 feet deep.	Alfisols (Endoaqualfs, Hapludalfs), Vertisols (Epiaquerts), Inceptisols (Epiaquepts, Endoaquepts, Eutrudepts), Entisols (Udifluvents)	Dundee, Askew, Forestdale, Dubbs, Sharkey, Tunica, Waverly, Adler, Bruno	Thermic / Udic, Aquic	48-52	210-240	29/50; 72/94	Bottomland hardwood forests and woodlands with species typical of higher bottomlands such as Nuttall oak, willow oak, swamp chestnut oak, sugarberry, and green ash.	Cropland of mostly cotton and soybeans, with areas in corn, wheat, rice, and sorghum.
73c.	St. Francis Lowlands	3517	Wide, flat to irregular alluvial plain. Interfluves, relict channels, and terraces. Sand blowouts and dunes. Extensive channelized streams, braided streams and drained wetlands.	200-340 / 5-25	Holocene and Pleistocene unconsolidated silty alluvium and alluvial sand, generally 5 to 15 feet in depth with narrow sandy areas as deep as 50 feet. Older fluvial deposits greater than 100 feet deep. Alluvium covers Pleistocene sand and gravel, glacial outwash (late Wisconsin deposits).	Mollisols (Endoaquolls), Inceptisols (Epiaquerts, Endoaquepts), Entisols (Fluvaquents, Udipsamments), Alfisols (Hapludalfs, Epiaqualfs)	Sharkey, Sikeston, Broseley, Lilbourn, Wardell, Maldin, Convent	Thermic / Aquic, Udic	44-48	200-220	25/52; 68/91	Bottomland hardwood forests and woodlands with overcup oak, Nuttall oak, willow oak, water hickory, elm, green ash, and sweetgum. The wettest areas, poorly-drained depressions, and relict braided channels now occupied by streams contain bald cypress and water tupelo. Higher and drier areas contain species such as river birch, mixed with oaks and other bottomland species. Natural grasslands, possibly of Native American origin, occupied the sandy terraces.	Cropland with soybeans, corn, and cotton as main crops along with wheat, sorghum, and rice.
73d.	Northern Backswamps	1821	Flat alluvial plain with floodplain depressions containing wetlands, swamps and lakes. Some low gradient streams with silty substrates.	60-200 / 5-15	Holocene fluvial deposits. Organic, alluvial and lacustrine deposits with heavy silt and clay.	Vertisols (Dystraquerts, Epiaquerts), Inceptisols (Endoaquepts, Epiaquepts), Mollisols (Hapludolls)	Alligator, Dowling, Sharkey, Tunica, Bowdre	Thermic / Aquic, some Udic	48-56	220-230	32/58 72/94	Bottomland hardwood forests and woodlands. The wettest areas contain bald cypress and water tupelo. Areas less frequently flooded support overcup oak, Nuttall oak, willow oak, water hickory, elm, green ash, and sweetgum. Some forested canebrakes with open, mixed deciduous trees and giant cane also occurred.	Deciduous forest and forested wetlands including a large area in the Delta National Forest. Some cropland with cotton, soybeans, corn, wheat, rice, and sorghum. Catfish production is also common.
73e.	Grand Prairie	1950	Broad nearly level upland terrace with areas of low ridges. Perennial and intermittent streams.	150-270 / 10-50	Loess veneers Pleistocene terrace deposits that are composed of alluvial sand, silt, and clay.	Alfisols (Hapludalfs, Fragiudalfs, Albaqualfs), Entisols (Fluvaquents, Udifluvents)	Loring, Falaya, Alder, Zachery, Crowley, Stuttgart, Hillemann	Thermic / Udic, Aquic	48-52	200-230	32/52; 70/93	Tallgrass prairie; big bluestem, Indiangrass, and switchgrass with some wooded and savanna areas. Wooded areas are in oaks, hickory, elm, maple, and locust.	Cropland with rice, soybeans, cotton, corn, and wheat. Wetlands and rice fields provide habitat for waterfowl. Duck and goose hunting is common.
73f.	Western Lowlands Holocene Meander Belts	1323	Flat alluvial plain, with point bar deposits, meander belts, oxbows, levees, and abandoned channels. Large rivers and some smaller low gradient streams, often channelized.	150-310 / 5-20	Holocene alluvial sand, silt, clay, and gravel.	Inceptisols (Endoaquepts), Alfisols (Hapludalfs), Vertisols (Epiaquerts)	Kobel, Commerce, Dubbs, Mhoon, Sharkey	Thermic / Aquic, Udic	46-52	200-230	25/50; 68/92	Bottomland hardwood forests and woodlands with a dominance of oak communities. Common trees include eastern cottonwood, green ash, cherrybark oak, Nuttall oak, water oak, willow oak, and sweetgum.	Deciduous forest and woodlands along many of the stream corridors. Cropland with soybeans, rice, grain sorghum, corn, and cotton also occurs.
73g.	Western Lowlands Pleistocene Valley Trains	4898	Wide, flat to irregular alluvial plain with relict patterns of branching channels, terraces, irregular braid bars and interfluve areas. Low gradient streams with silty substrates, often channelized.	150-340 / 5-20	Loess veneers Quaternary sand sheets and dunes, Pleistocene terrace deposits that are composed of unconsolidated alluvial sand, silt, and gravel, and Pleistocene glacial outwash deposits.	Inceptisols (Endoaquepts), Alfisols (Endoaqualfs, Hapludalfs), Vertisols (Epiaquerts)	Commerce, Kobel, Dundee, Sharkey, Bosket, Amagon	Thermic / Udic, Aquic	48-52	220-230	25/50; 68/92	Bottomland hardwoods with an abundance of green and Carolina ash, elm, cottonwood, sugarberry, sweetgum, and water tupelo, as well as oak and bald cypress. Pecan is also present, associated with eastern sycamore, American elm, and rough-leaf dogwood. Pleistocene dunes had white oak-black oak-southern red oak forest or post oak woodland. In dune depressions or sandponds are forests dominated by overcup oak, water hickory and pin oak with the federally- endangered shrub pondberry in the understory. Loblolly pine also occurred in a limited area.	Cropland with rice, grain sorghum, soybeans, cotton, corn, and wheat.
73h.	Arkansas/Ouachita River Holocene Meander Belts	1925	Flat alluvial plain, with point bar deposits, meander belts, oxbows, levees and abandoned channels. Large rivers and some smaller low gradient streams, often channelized.	70-260 / 5-20	Holocene alluvial sand, silt, clay, and gravel.	Alfisols (Hapludalfs), Vertisols (Epiaquerts)	Rilla, Sterlington, Bruno, Crevasse, Coushatta, Perry, Portland, Forestdale	Thermic / Udic, Aquic	48-56	220-240	32/58; 70/92	Bottomland hardwood forests and woodlands with cottonwood, elm, hackberry, pecan, sycamore, and willow. Other common trees include green and white ash, cherrybark oak, Nuttall oak, swamp chestnut oak, water oak, willow oak, sweetgum, and sycamore. Bald cypress and water tupelo are found in wet channels. Palmetto and Spanish moss are also found.	Cropland and pasture. Crops are mainly soybeans, rice, wheat, and oats.
73i.	Arkansas/Ouachita River Backswamps	1825	Flat alluvial plain with floodplain depressions containing wetlands, swamps and lakes. Some low gradient streams with silty substrates.	60-250 / 5-20	Holocene fluvial deposits. Organic, alluvial and lacustrine deposits with heavy silt and clay. Natural levee deposits are common.	Vertisols (Epiaquerts), Inceptisols (Epiaquepts), Alfisols (Endoaqualfs)	Portland, Perry, Alligator	Thermic / Aquic, some Udic	48-56	220-240	32/58; 72/92	Bottomland hardwood forests and woodlands with willow oak, Nuttall oak, water oak, and delta post oak. The wettest areas contain bald cypress and water tupelo. Some forested canebrakes with mixed deciduous trees and giant cane also occurred.	Deciduous forest, forested wetlands and extensive cropland. Areas cleared, drained, and protected by levees are in soybeans, rice, cotton, wheat, oats, and pasture.
73j.	Macon Ridge	1756	Wide, flat to irregular alluvial plain and terraces with relict patterns of branching channels, irregular braid bars and interfluve areas. Low gradient streams with silty substrates, often channelized.	60-140 / 5-20	Loess mantle, deepest on the eastern edge of the region. Pleistocene unconsolidated silty and clayey alluvium and alluvial sand.	Alfisols (Fraglossudalfs, Hapludalfs, Fragiudalfs, Endoaqualfs)	Calloway, Henry, Grenada, Memphis, Calhoun, Loring, Gilbert, Forestdale, Necessity	Thermic / Udic, Aquic	48-56	230-240	32/58; 72/92	Forest types range from bottomland forests dominated by willow oak, water oak, and swamp chestnut oak to upland hardwood forests dominated by white oak and southern red oak, with post oak on more xeric sites. Areas of loblolly pine, and some areas of tallgrass prairie with big bluestem, Indiangrass, and switchgrass may have occurred.	Pasture and cropland with sugarcane, sweet potatoes, soybeans, grain sorghum, wheat, and rice in rotation with crayfish production.
73k.	Southern Holocene Meander Belts	3651	Flat alluvial plain, with point bar deposits, meander belts, oxbows, levees and abandoned channels. Large rivers and some smaller low-gradient streams, often channelized.	5-100 / 5-15	Holocene alluvial sand, silt, clay, and gravel.	Entisols (Fluvaquents), Alfisols (Epiaqualfs), Inceptisols (Epiaquepts)	Commerce, Tensas, Cancienne, Convent, Schriever	Thermic / Udic, Aquic	56-64	240-300+	40/68; 72/92	Bottomland forest and woodland with laurel oak, live oak, cottonwood, hickories, and sweetgum with an undergrowth of vines and canes. Spanish moss is also found here. Tupelo- cypress swamp forest in areas most frequently flooded.	Cropland with sugarcane, cotton, soybeans, corn, and wheat. Some woodland, pasture, and hay crops. Urban, industrial, or residential uses common near New Orleans.
731.	Southern Pleistocene Valley Trains	192	Flat to irregular alluvial plain with relict patterns of branching channels, terraces, irregular braid bars and interfluve areas. Low gradient streams with silty substrates, often channelized.	50-60 / 0-10	Holocene and Pleistocene unconsolidated silty alluvium and alluvial sand, generally 5 to 15 feet in depth. Older fluvial deposits greater than 100 feet deep. Alluvium covers Pleistocene sand and gravel, glacial outwash (early to late Wisconsin deposits).	Alfisols (Glossaqualfs, Natraqualfs, Fraglossudalfs, Fragiudalfs, Hapludalfs, Epiaqualfs)	Bursley, Foley, Calloway, Calhoun, Deerford, Loring, Memphis, Solier	Thermic / Udic, Aquic	56-60	240-260	40/64; 72/92;	Bottomland forest and woodland with overcup oak, Nuttall oak, honey locust, elm, water oak, sweetgum, blackgum, Spanish moss, and hickory.	Cropland with soybeans, cotton, corn, small grains, and sugarcane.
73m.	Southern Backswamps	2032	Smooth alluvial plain with floodplain depressions containing wetlands, swamps and lakes. Some low gradient streams with silty substrates.	25-60 / 0-10	Holocene fluvial deposits. Organic, alluvial and lacustrine deposits with heavy silt and clay.	Vertisols (Epiaquerts, Hapluderts), Entisols (Hydraquents), Inceptisols (Endoaquepts)	Moreland, Latanier, Perry, Sharkey, Schriever, Barbary, Fausse	Thermic, Hyper- thermic / Aquic, Udic	56-64	240-260	40/64; 72/92	Tupelo-cypress swamp forest in areas most frequently flooded. Overcup oak-water hickory forest and oak- sweetgum forest in areas less frequently flooded. Other swampland and wetland vegetation include water hyacinths, water lily, cattails, and duckweed.	Forested wetlands, deciduous forest. Some areas of cropland with soybeans and rice as the principal crops. Corn, wheat, grain sorghum, and other small grains are also grown. Minor areas are in pecan orchards, woodland, and pasture.
73n.	Inland Swamps	2977	Alluvial plain with a transition to a deltaic plain. Backswamps, bayous, distributary ridges and natural levees. Wetlands, low gradient streams and channelized streams.	5-35 / 0-10	Holocene fluvial deposits. Lacustrine deposits, alluvium with organic deposits. Oil and gas deposits.	Vertisols (Epiaquerts), Entisols (Hydraquents), Inceptisols (Endoaquepts)	Schriever, Barbary, Fausse	Hyper- thermic / Aquic	60-64	260-320+	40/64; 72/92	Tupelo-cypress swamp forest with sedges, grasses, and rushes in areas most frequently flooded. Overcup oak-water hickory forest and oak-sweetgum forest in areas flooded less frequently. Live oak and Spanish moss are also common. Other swampland and wetland vegetation includes water hyacinths, water lily, cattails, and duckweed.	Forested wetlands and wildlife habitat. Recreation, fishing and hunting. Oil extraction.
730.	Coastal Marshes	5190	Flat deltaic and coastal plain with fresh- water and saline marshes. Rivers, lakes, bayous, tidal channels, and canals.	0-15 / 0-10	Alluvial and marine sediments heavy in organic deposits. Oil and gas deposits.	Histosols (Haplosaprists), Entisols (Hydraquents)	Allemands, Kenner, Larose, Clovelly, Lafitte, Bancker, Scatlake, Timbalier, Bellpass	Hyper- thermic / Aquic	64-66	280-320+	44/64; 72/92	Freshwater and saltwater marsh vegetation of grasses, sedges, and rushes. Few to no trees. Alligator weed, spike rush, maidencane, cutgrass, and bulltongue characterize the freshwater marshes. Marshhay cordgrass, Olney bulrush, and saltgrass are found in brackish areas, with smooth cordgrass and black needlerush in the saline marshes.	Marshland and wildlife habitat. Oil and gas extraction and production. Hunting, trapping, and fishing. Canals, levees, and flood control systems have contributed to the loss of wetlands and important marsh environments.

74. MISSISSIPPI VALLEY LOESS PLAINS												
Level IV Ecoregion	ns	Physiography		Geology Soils		Soils	Soils		Climate		Vegetation	Land Use and Land Cover
	Area (square miles)		Elevation/ Local Relief (feet)	Surficial and Bedrock	Order (Great Group)	Common Soil Series	Temperature/ Moisture Regimes	Precipitation Mean annual (inches)	Frost Free Mean annual (days)	Mean Temperature January min/max; July min/max (°F)		
74a. Bluff Hills		Isolated, low, and narrow ridges. Intermittent, moderate to low gradient, silt- and sand-bottomed streams.	/ 100-175	Quaternary loess, cherty gravel, and sand on ridges. Alluvial sand, silt, and clay on terraces. Bedrock exposures of Tertiary sands, gravels, and clays, Cretaceous sandstones, and Ordovician dolomites.	Alfisols (Hapludalfs, Fragiudalfs, Fraglossudalfs), Entisols (Fluvaquents), Ultisols (Hapludults)	Memphis, Loring, Grenada, Brandon, Falaya, Calloway, Henry, Lexington. Erodible soils are common.	Thermic / Udic, Aquic on floodplains	44-55	200-230	28/52; 66/92		Woodland, pastureland, and limited cropland of hay and forage crops.

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## **Summary Table: Characteristics of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain**

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