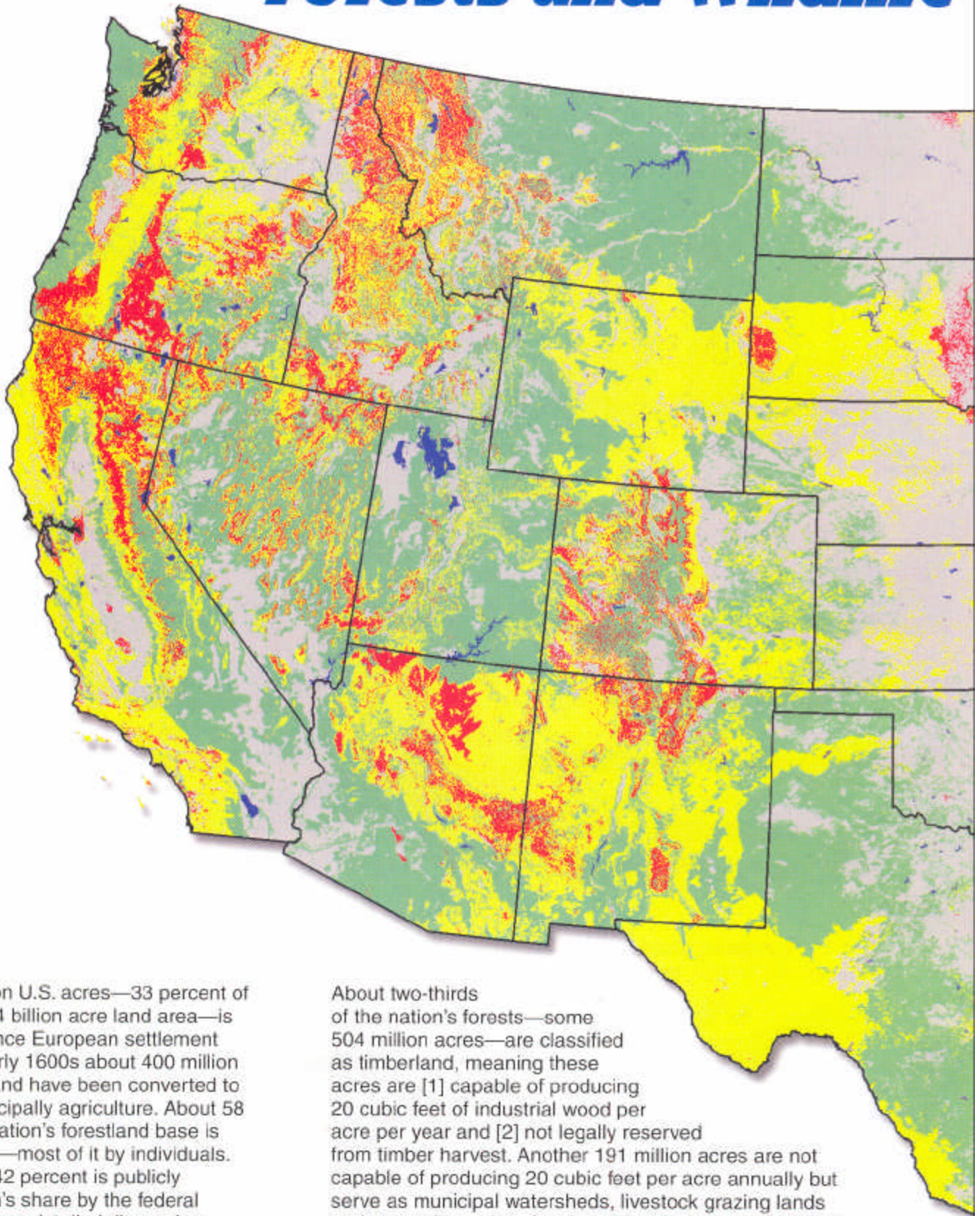


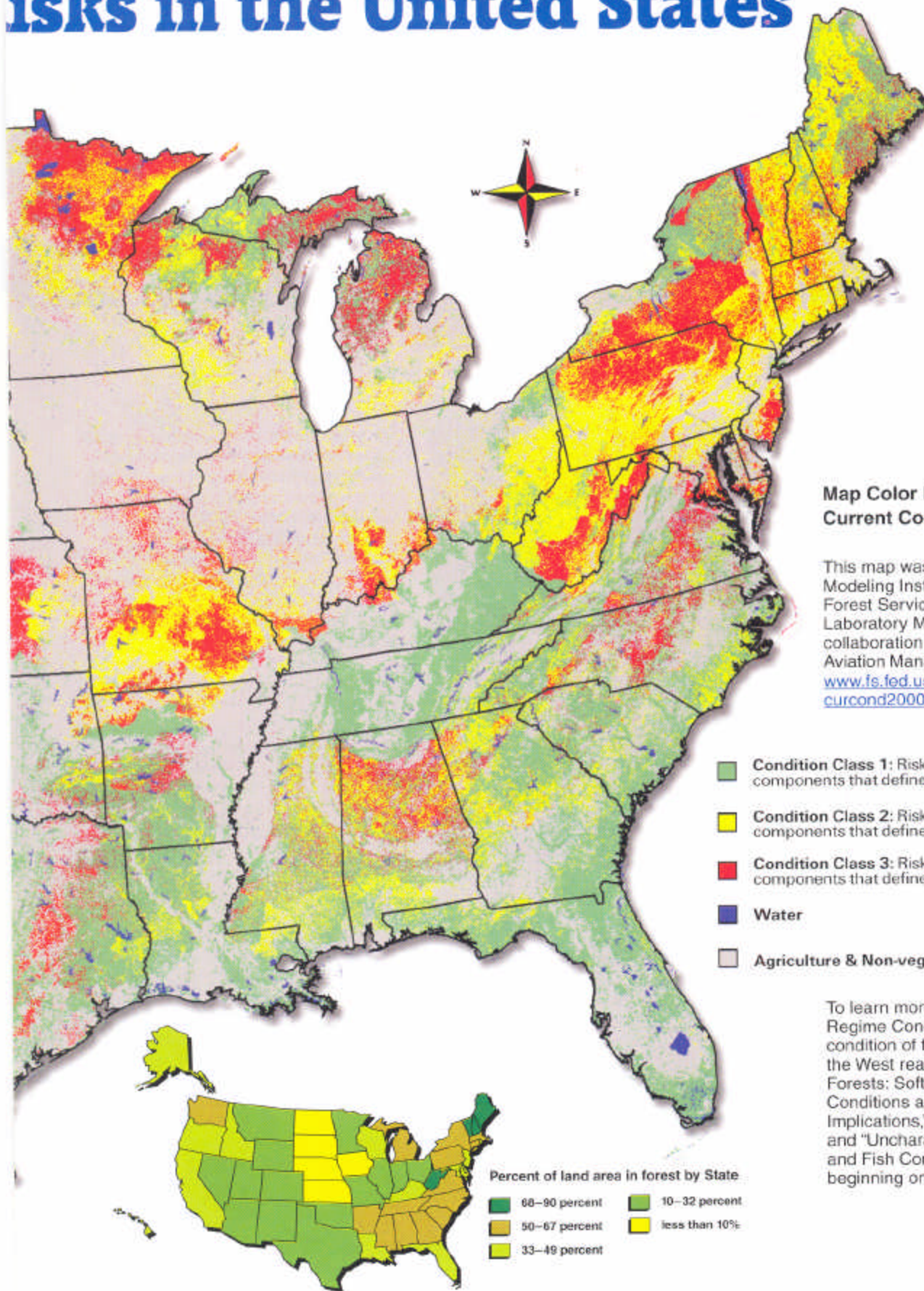
Forests and Wildfire



Some 747 million U.S. acres—33 percent of the nation's 2.24 billion acre land area—is still forested. Since European settlement began in the early 1600s about 400 million acres of forestland have been converted to other uses, principally agriculture. About 58 percent of the nation's forestland base is privately owned—most of it by individuals. The remaining 42 percent is publicly owned—the lion's share by the federal government. [For a detailed discussion of U.S. land use through time, turn to page 5 and read "A Brief History of U.S. Forests," by Doug MacCleery.]

About two-thirds of the nation's forests—some 504 million acres—are classified as timberland, meaning these acres are [1] capable of producing 20 cubic feet of industrial wood per acre per year and [2] not legally reserved from timber harvest. Another 191 million acres are not capable of producing 20 cubic feet per acre annually but serve as municipal watersheds, livestock grazing lands and recreation areas. Another 52 million acres are legally reserved for non-timber use, principally in public owned parks and wilderness areas. [Source: USFS, Forest Resources of the United States, 1997]

Risks in the United States



Map Color Key: Fire Regime Current Condition Classes

This map was developed by the Fire Modeling Institute and the U.S. Forest Service Fire Sciences Laboratory Missoula, Montana, in collaboration with USFS Fire and Aviation Management.
www.fs.fed.us/fire/fuelman/curcond2000/maps/cc2000.pdf

- Condition Class 1:** Risk of losing one or more components that define ecosystem is low
- Condition Class 2:** Risk of losing one or more components that define ecosystem is moderate
- Condition Class 3:** Risk of losing one or more components that define ecosystem is high
- Water**
- Agriculture & Non-vegetated Areas**

To learn more about the Fire Regime Condition Classes and the condition of federal forest lands in the West read "Western National Forests: Softwood Resource Conditions and Management Implications," beginning on page 18 and "Uncharacteristic Wildfire Risk and Fish Conservation in Oregon," beginning on page 41.

- Percent of land area in forest by State**
- 68–90 percent
 - 10–32 percent
 - 50–67 percent
 - less than 10%
 - 33–49 percent

At 90 percent, Maine is the most heavily forested state, and at one percent North Dakota is the most sparsely forested state [Source: USFS, Forest Resources of the United States, 1997]