



## Trees & Forests

Bastrop County is home to the westernmost distribution of loblolly called the Lost Pines. This population of pine trees has developed adaptations over time to help them better survive the climate of central Texas. The east Texas population of loblolly pine receives at least 10 inches more annual rainfall than the Lost Pines area. Some of the adaptations the lost pines have made to survive these more arid conditions include: a thicker waxy coating on the needles, fewer stomata on the needles, more fibrous root systems, shorter height, and more persistent trunk branches.

According to the Texas Forest Service, more than 16,200 acres of pine and mixed pine-deciduous forests burned within the Bastrop Fire area. Standing dead trees (snags) will begin to rot and fall. This process has already started and will continue for many years to come. If these snags are near home sites or planned re-build sites there is a significant risk for injury as people work around their homes and yards. Priority areas for standing dead tree removal include around the perimeter of home sites, driveways, play areas, yards, parking areas, power-line easements, and fence-lines.

Encouraging natural regeneration of trees, where possible, will help improve the land. Planting trees can also help the land recover and may be required in some areas for a more timely recovery of desirable vegetative cover. If planting pines, choose only loblolly. The drought-hardy variety of loblollies will be available for the 2013 planting season.

*Courtesy of Lost Pines Recovery team*

<http://co.bastrop.tx.us/bcdisaster/index.php/protecting-natural-resources1>