

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below							
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				

Specific dates 1935

Builder/Architect Builder: Civilian Conservation Corps

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Criterion A

The Alexander State Forest Headquarters Building is of state level significance in the area of conservation because it is the primary resource associated with timber conservation efforts in early twentieth century Louisiana.

Until the 1880s Louisiana's vast pine forests were largely untouched. It was then that large-scale industrial lumbering began in earnest. During the so-called "Golden Years" of the Louisiana lumber boom (1904-1927), 4.3 million acres of virgin timber land was cut. Virtually all of the lumber companies had the same policy -- "cut out and get out." Reforestation was largely unheard of, and as a result, much of central and western Louisiana was reduced to a stump-covered wasteland. This cutover timber land was considered worthless. Some lumber companies tried to get rid of it by selling it off; others simply allowed parishes to take it in lieu of delinquent taxes.

Reaction to this "denuding" of the state was slow at first, but in the early twentieth century Louisiana took the lead in conservation efforts. In 1910 a permanent conservation commission was established. Six years later the Louisiana Division of Forestry was established with R. D. Forbes the first State Forester. The Division established a system of forest fire rangers and enacted a program to provide timber management assistance to small land owners. Under state law, the Division entered into reforestation contracts with owners of denuded land. Essentially property taxes were lowered in return for the promise of reforestation activities. In 1923 contracts were signed to reforest some 141,845 acres. The Division also supervised a boy's forestry club, held summer training courses for rangers, and encouraged property owners to leave seed trees because fully cutover land would not reforest by itself.

In many ways the centerpiece of the Division's conservation efforts was the state forest in Woodworth which was purchased in 1923. The purpose of the state forest was to provide a nursery and to act as a demonstration project to show what could be done with proper timber management. State purchase of the forest was hailed in the Southern Lumberman: "Louisiana, first in reforestation in the South, has now taken the lead by being the first state in the Southern pine belt to establish a state owned public forest. . . . It stands as an example of what reforestation can accomplish. . . ." Named the Alexander State Forest, the facility grew over the next several years and attained its present size (8000 acres) in 1938.

It should be noted that Louisiana was a pioneer in these conservation efforts. For example, the Alexander State Forest was established some six years before the federal government began acquiring land for the nearby Kisatchie National Forest.

In 1933 a Civilian Conservation Corps Camp was located in the forest. For the next few years the CCC workers developed the site, building fire lanes and bridges, providing for drainage, establishing nurseries, and constructing buildings. In 1935 they built the State Forest Headquarters Building.