

# Mississippi Forestry Commission

## *Building on Success*

# 2011

## Annual Report



The mission of the Mississippi Forestry Commission is to provide active leadership in forest protection, forest management, forest inventory and effective forest information distribution necessary for Mississippi's sustainable forest-based economy.





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## 2011 – Building on Success



The Mississippi Forestry Commission has been a leader in forest protection, management and sustainability of our state's forests for over 85 years. Year after year we provide expertise, information and support to keep Mississippi's 19.8 million acres of forestland healthy, productive and profitable.

We have continued to build on success for the 2011 fiscal year. One of our success stories is the certification of our 480,000 acres of forested 16<sup>th</sup> Section School Trust Lands by the American Tree Farm System. This magnitude of public lands certification is the first of its kind in the nation and is a result of our continued use of technology and sustainable management practices to better manage the forested 16<sup>th</sup> Sections.

FY2011 will also be a year remembered for extreme weather conditions. One such condition was the record setting droughts the state experienced last fall and the first part of this summer. The extreme drought in the fall of 2010 increased wildfire activity in the state to such levels that, for the first time in a decade, we requested that the governor issue a statewide burn ban. There were also statewide tornado outbreaks this spring resulting in an estimated \$30 million in damages to timber. These events were then followed by record setting flooding along the Mississippi River. Through programs and other assistance, we will

continue to support those affected by these natural disasters for several years to come and will help them restore their forestlands.

Some of the other success stories of FY2011 include:

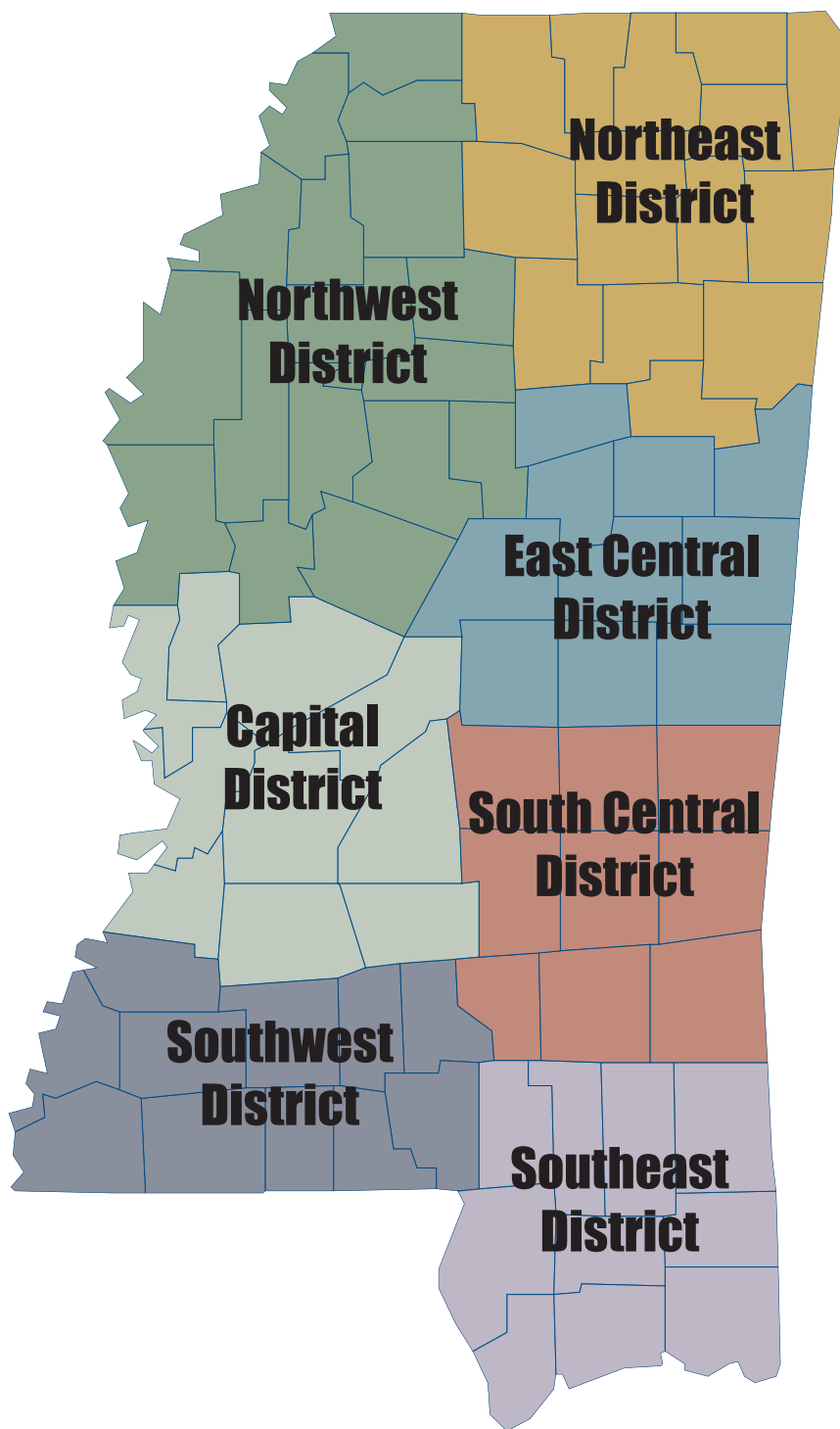
- Sustained timber sale revenue of 16<sup>th</sup> section lands of \$22.8 million
- Began implementation of the Forest Action Plan (previously named Mississippi Assessment of Forest Resources and Forest Resource Strategy)
- Acquired and began management of the Salmon Tract (1450ac.) deeded by U.S. Department of Energy to the State of Mississippi
- Through efforts of our new grants manager, MFC submitted and received 8 grants through the competitive grant process from the USDA Forest Service
- Combated extreme wildfire conditions during Fall 2010 drought with no serious injuries and minimal loss of structures
- Used new technology to map and calculate amount of damaged timber from the tornados that struck in the spring. This data helped secure federal support for private forestland restoration.

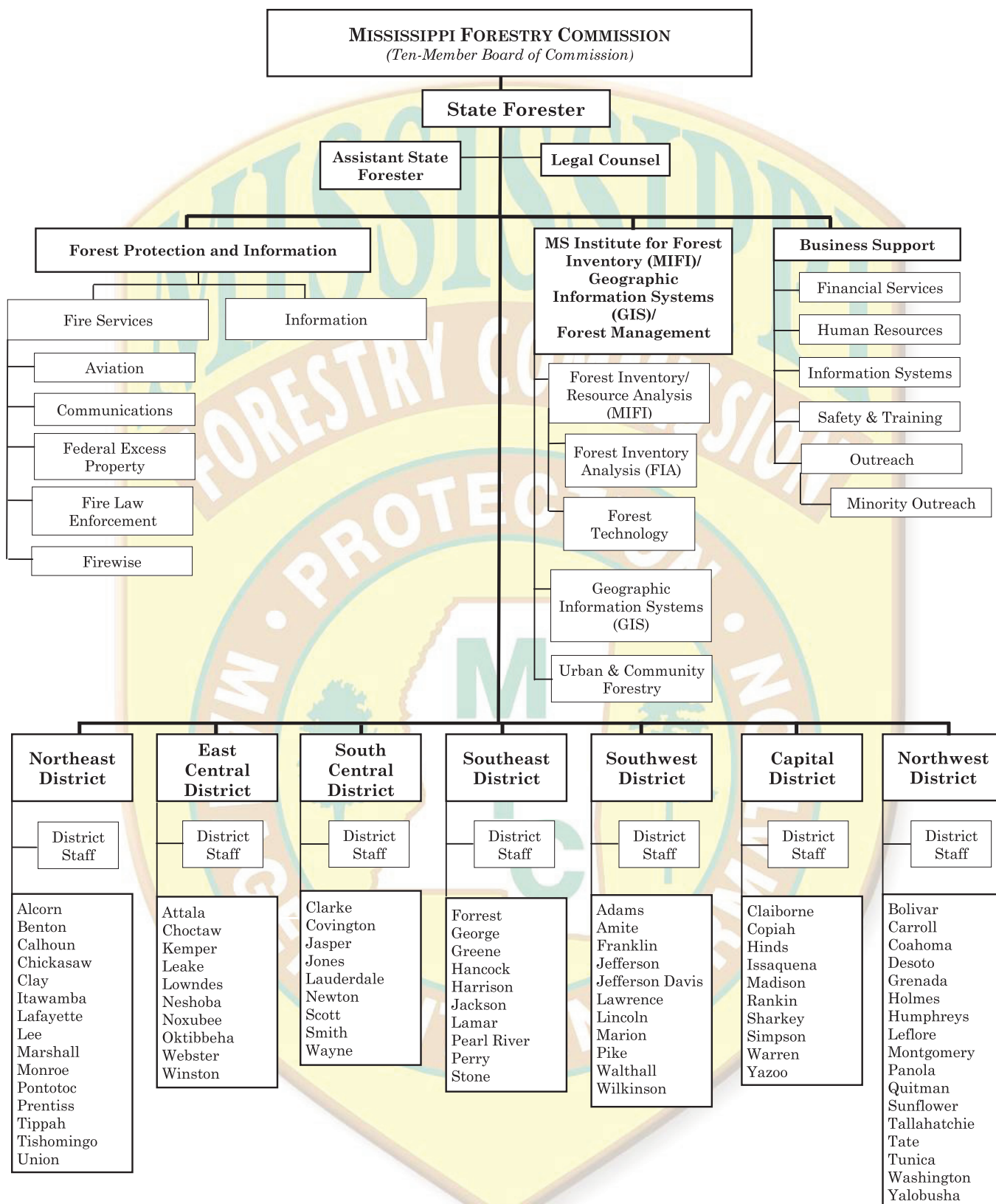
We appreciate our partners who provide support, collaboration and implementation of many of our programs and services. We work hard to maintain and develop our relationships with natural resource agencies, organizations and individuals. These relationships ensure the citizens of Mississippi receive the best assistance and service possible.

I would also like to thank our state leaders, commission, staff, partners and citizens for their continued support and assistance in making 2011 a success.

Please contact our office at any time. We look forward to serving you.

Charlie Morgan  
State Forester







## MS Institute for Forest Inventory / Forest Management

The Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory/Forest Management provides direction and support to several program areas carried out on private and public lands.

### Mississippi Institute of Forest Inventory

In 2006, the Mississippi Legislature passed a law that brought the Mississippi Institute of Forest Inventory (MIFI) under the oversight of the MFC. Both MIFI and MFC's Forest Management Division dealt with forest inventory. By consolidating these activities, the agency eliminated duplication of work in particular areas and also allowed each department to capitalize on the other's strengths to form a stronger organization.

MFC's Resource Analysis program oversees the development, implementation and management of the agency's geographic information system. This is a statewide system that is utilized for information on fires, public/private lands and urban/community forestry programs.

In an effort to promote economic development of the state's forest resources, MIFI, in conjunction with the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), provides forest resource information and maps for economic development. A statewide assessment of forest resources is maintained utilizing satellite imagery to estimate forest removals, regeneration and developmental stages of forest cover.

In FY09, MIFI completed a baseline forest inventory for Mississippi. In FY11, MIFI used the information to respond to numerous requests for resource analyses for ethanol conversion and wood pellet facilities.

### Forest Management

The MFC is charged in Mississippi Code Section 49-19-3 to "promote sound forest management practices which maintain the integrity of the environment and provide for our state's future natural resource needs." The MFC offers a variety of forest management services to private landowners and public forestlands of Mississippi, such as 16th Section Lands and other state agency properties

### State Assessment of Forest Resources and Forest Resource Strategy

In response to a requirement of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (the Farm Bill), MFC completed a statewide forest resource assessment and a long-term statewide forest resource strategy titled "Mississippi's Assessment of Forest Resources and Forest Resource Strategy" in FY10. This assessment and

strategy will allow Mississippi to receive funds under the amended Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act. The assessment provides an analysis of forest conditions and trends in the state and delineates priority rural and urban forest landscape areas. The strategy provides general long-term plans for investing state, federal and other resources to effectively stimulate or leverage desired action and engage multiple partners. A copy of the State Assessment and Strategy can be found on our website at [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov).

Starting in FY11, the State Assessment and Strategy was put into action and effectively became known as the State Forest Action Plan (FAP). The FAP will act as a general guideline for most forest management activities conducted by MFC throughout the state and will be adjusted as needs arise or until we have reached a point where a new state forest assessment is needed.

### Private Lands

MFC provides technical and financial assistance to private nonindustrial forest landowners (PNIFs) in Mississippi. Seventy percent of Mississippi's timberland, 13.86 million acres, belongs to an estimated 350,000 PNIFs with parcels of 10 acres or greater. MFC provides technical and financial assistance to PNIFs through programs designed to enhance and protect natural resources.

#### FY11 Statewide Accomplishments

##### Private Lands Activities

Landowners Assisted	13,529
Forest Management Plans	1,378
Acres	146,713

##### Public Land Activities

Timber Sale Receipts	\$22,801,966.00*
Number of Sales	241
Acres Regenerated	10,159
Boundary Line Maintenance (Miles)	419
Firebreak/Woods Road Maintenance (Miles)	463

##### Forest Resource Development Program

Acres Regenerated or Improved	7,803
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##### Prescribed Burning

Private Lands (Acres)	15,179
Public Lands (Acres)	13,815

<b>Total (Acres)</b>	<b>28,993</b>
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\*Source: MFC's Public Lands Timber Sale report and FY11 Crew Assistance report. Receipts are from sales made on School Trust Lands and other public lands. Timber sale receipts consist of lump sum sale revenue, carry-over revenue from FY10, and actual thin sale revenue; does not include remaining pay-as-cut revenue estimated to be \$2.84 million, which will be reported next year as carry over from FY10. Note: 26 public land timber sales were rejected in FY11 due to low bids or no bids, which reflects poor market conditions, especially in the sawtimber market.

## Forest Legacy Program

The Forest Legacy Program (FLP) was authorized by the 1990 Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act to identify and protect environmentally important, private forestlands threatened with conversion to non-forest uses. FLP is a USDA Forest Service program in partnership with Mississippi that will help support local efforts to protect environmentally sensitive, privately owned forestlands threatened by conversion to non-forest use through land acquisition and conservation easements. A statewide Assessment of Need (AON) was completed in 2007 as a first step to identifying the three Forest Legacy areas (North, Central and Southeast MS) where important natural forest communities exist on private lands that are potentially threatened by conversion from urban and suburban growth or other threats. The AON is posted on the MFC's Web site at [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov).

We are currently working with Forest Legacy partners on a potential acquisition of a conservation easement on a large tract of land on the Escatawpa River in Jackson County and are preparing a nomination to protect several tracts in the Pascagoula River Basin.

## Forest Resource Development Program

The Forest Resource Development Program (FRDP) was established in 1974 by the Mississippi Legislature for developing the state's forest economy. This program provides cost-share funding for tree planting and forest improvement practices for the purpose of long-term timber production. This program helps offset a landowner's expense by sharing the cost of implementing specific forestry practices designed to produce timber and enhance wildlife development. Cost-share payments cover 50 to 75 percent (depending on the practice) of the total cost of implementing one or more forestry practices, with a maximum limit set for each individual practice.

Eligible landowners can receive up to \$7,000 of FRDP assistance a year. In turn, a landowner agrees to protect the area receiving FRDP assistance from fire and grazing, and to properly manage the area for a minimum of ten years.

On average, more than \$2 million is distributed each year to private forest landowners in Mississippi through the Forest Resource Development Program, which provides cost sharing for tree planting and forest improvements.

## Forest Stewardship Program

The Forest Stewardship Program promotes natural resource planning on private, nonindustrial forestlands. Landowners not currently under forest management are encouraged to utilize stewardship management through the development and implementation of a Forest Stewardship Management Plan. These plans are based on sound management principles designed to restore and protect forest resources and water quality and to improve fish and wildlife habitats.



The Forest Stewardship Program is funded by the USDA Forest Service. The program is carried out by MFC through its Forest Stewardship Committee. Technical assistance is provided by local, federal, state and private natural resource agencies and organizations. The State Plan for the Mississippi Forest Stewardship Program provides the framework for conducting the program. The plan also contains stewardship background, guidelines and forms for landowners and resource professionals.



## Public Lands

The MFC provides management assistance to boards, agencies and other entities having jurisdiction over approximately 480,000 acres of non-federal public forestlands in Mississippi. MFC is responsible for managing two state forests (Kurtz, Camden) and the newly acquired Salmon Tract, managing School Trust Lands, and rendering assistance to the various agencies, boards, departments and other entities having jurisdiction over state and other public lands in Mississippi.

The Mississippi Forestry Commission is a nationally recognized leader in forest management technology. Several unique software products have been created specifically for forestry management through hurricane recovery federal funding and at no cost to the state:

- A Geographical Information System (GIS) application called Spatial Information Management System (SIMSMap)
- A computer-driven forest management plan developer called PlanWriter
- A new Plot Allocator to more efficiently collect data and meet statistical objectives faster
- Use of handheld computers that allows for monitoring the sampling error during the inventory
- Use of trail/game cameras to monitor the number of loads leaving logging site for accountability
- A harvest scheduler called Woodstock, which takes data from SIMSMap and creates a statewide harvest plan to carry out management activities from one year to the next

In FY11, the revenue from timber sales on non-federal public lands, including School Trust Lands, totaled \$22.8 million.

“Our goal is to maximize School Trust Land timber sale revenue by applying a more intensive timber management process. This process yielded a 45% increase in revenue in FY10 over the previous year. These funds directly benefit the local school districts and the children attending those schools.”

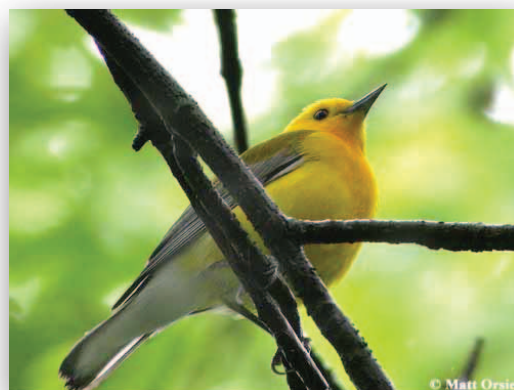
*Charlie Morgan, State Forester*

## Sixteenth Section Lands

The Forestry Commission is charged by state law to manage forested School Trust Lands, commonly referred to as Sixteenth Section Lands located in 67 counties. In addition to timber production, management considerations also include wildlife, soil and water quality, aesthetics and other appropriate benefits of forestlands. The revenue from timber sales on School Trust Lands and other public lands in FY11 totaled \$22.8 million.

The MFC has converted all its management data into a GIS system to prepare the first comprehensive Sixteenth Section Land Assessment. This assessment, together with more intensive forest management practices, has allowed us to meet our mark of timber-generated revenues on school trust lands. The assessment is what also gave us the opportunity to have these school trust lands certified by the American Tree Farm System, the first ever large scale certification of public lands in the nation. This certification ensures that these lands will remain sustainable and marketable into the future.

Anticipating future needs, the MFC ensures necessary steps are taken so that all School Trust Lands are managed sustainably, and best management practices are used on all lands.





## Forest Health

MFC provides forest pest detection, evaluation and control recommendations for all private and state-owned timberlands as well as urban areas. The agency conducts at least one statewide aerial survey each year and additional surveys when needed. Insect and disease spots are ground checked to determine the exact cause and extent of damage.

Timber damage from forest insects and disease has been very light for FY11 compared to average years. However, the southern pine beetle kills more pine timber in the South than any other forest insect. As a result, the MFC has partnered with the MSU Extension Service to carry out a Southern Pine Beetle Landowner Incentive Program designed to provide a financial incentive to landowners who apply management practices to their pine stands to reduce the risk for southern pine beetle attacks.

The second leading insect to kill pine timber in the South is the Ips engraver beetle. Drought conditions and stress from severe winds can cause the Ips engraver beetle populations to increase dramatically.



*Bark Beetle*

In FY08, the MFC launched a plan to mitigate the damage caused by invasive non-native plant species to the state's forestland. The Exotic Invasive Species Plan addresses the detection, identification, information, control and abatement of six species of concern that are either impacting or have the greatest potential to impact the forest resource of Mississippi. These species are cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*); kudzu (*Pueraria montana*); Chinese tallowtree (*Sapium sebifera*); Chinese/European privet (*Ligustrum sinense*); Japanese/glossy privet (*Ligustrum japonicum*); and Japanese climbing fern (*Lygodium japonicum*). The plan also addresses the need to develop partnerships with other agencies and organizations to achieve common goals in regard to invasive species.

In FY09, the MFC and Mississippi State University received American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants. These grants provide Mississippi landowners with financial and technical assistance for combating invasive plants, particularly cogongrass (MFC); reducing the number of wildfires by removing

fuel buildup through hazard mitigation (MFC); and treating pine timber stands to mitigate the high risk of infestations by the southern pine beetle (MSU). The grants were continued in FY11.

### Cogongrass

Applications from Landowners	911
Applications/Landowners Inspected	853
Total Infested Spots Treated	4,241
Total Infested Acres Treated	420

Native to Southeast Asia, cogongrass is believed to have entered the US in the early 1900s as packing material. Cogongrass is an aggressive invasive species that chokes out native vegetation, burns at extremely hot temperatures and is devastating to the native ecosystem. Today, infested areas of cogongrass are found on more than one million acres throughout the southeastern US. In Mississippi, cogongrass has been identified in 63 counties, with significant infestations in 28 counties. The ARRA grant will assist MFC with public education and cogongrass control measures in select counties.



*Forest Health Posters*

## Fire Services

The Fire Services Division includes four departments: Aviation, Communications, Rural Fire Assistance and Fire Law Enforcement.

In 1926, the Mississippi Legislature mandated that the MFC protect the state's forestland from wildfire. At that time, wildfires were consuming more than five million acres of timberland each year.

MFC provides assistance to Mississippi and other states with all weather-related events such as hurricanes, ice storms and large scale wildfires, and also coordinates the management of MFC's firefighting resources within the state.

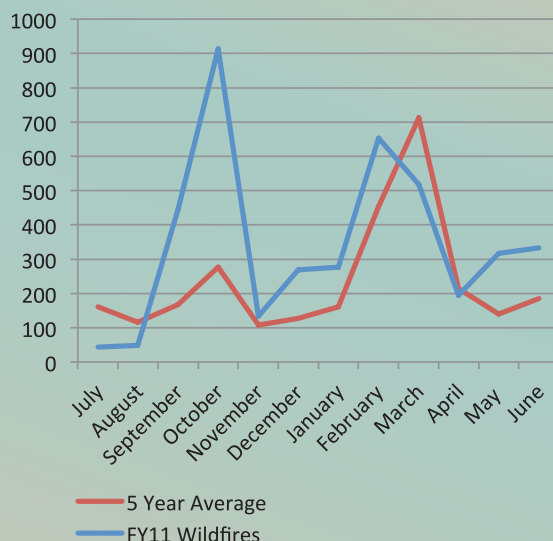
MFC collects all data needed to make sound decisions and long-range plans to ensure the adequate allocation of resources needed for pre-suppression and suppression of wildfires. MFC manages 12 remote area weather stations (RAWS) strategically located across the state as part of a national grid. These weather stations provide localized forestry and fire-related weather forecasts.

Cause	# Fires	# Acres
Debris burning	1,713	15,230
Incendiary	1,706	29,240
Miscellaneous	249	2,710
Re-ignition	238	5,279
Equipment Use	115	949
Lightning	47	641
Smoking	37	279
Children	20	241
Campfire	9	155
Railroad	8	66
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,142</b>	<b>54,790</b>

The MFC provides the following weather and fire information on the Web site:

- Fire Danger Rating (USDA Forest Service Wildland Fire Assessment System)
- Current Weather
- Forecast
- Fire Danger Rating and Color Code
- Keach Bryam Drought Index
- MFC Daily Fire Situation Report
- Southern Area Coordination Center (SACC)
- National Weather Service Enhanced Radar Image Loop for the United States
- NWS Enhanced Radar Image Loop for Lower Mississippi Valley Sector
- NWS Fire Weather Report

Number of Wildfires for FY2011



While great strides in wildfire prevention, detection and suppression have been made, wildfires still continue to plague the state. There are approximately 3,200 wildfires each year in Mississippi burning more than 55,000 acres. Due to excessive drought in Fall 2010 and Spring of this year, occurrences and acres burned were well above normal for FY11.

In an effort to reduce the number of carelessness-caused wildfires, burn bans are authorized by County Boards of Supervisors and approved by the MFC. Burn ban notifications are listed on the MFC's Web site at [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov).

## Communications

An essential element of the agency's ability to deploy firefighting resources and maintain situational awareness of wildfire activity is dependable radio communications. The Communications Department is responsible for the maintenance and upgrades to the MFC's communication network which spans across the state. Components of the network include mobile radios in the agency's fleet of vehicles, lightweight hand-held radios for field personnel and the communication network of radio repeater sites, which provide statewide communication from dispatch centers to field personnel.

In FY11, MFC made our first purchase of radios for Mississippi Wireless Integrated Network (MSWIN) system as required by the Mississippi Wireless Communications Committee (WCC). The MSWIN system will provide interoperable emergency radio communication across the state with all levels of government, agencies and organizations. This system is a result of Hurricane Katrina, where the need for a more coordinated response during times of crisis was identified.



In FY11, MFC suppressed 4,142 wildfires, which burned 54,790 acres. The average wildfire size for FY11 was 13.2 acres.

## Aviation

Wildfire detection is provided by airplane surveillance together with the public's reporting of wildfires using toll-free numbers provided by the MFC. Fire suppression crews are dispatched from a central dispatching center located at a district office. On large fires, the airplanes stay above providing ground personnel real-time information of the fires behavior. MFC's Aviation Department also provides service and support to Forest Health and other forest management programs.

After the severe tornados cut through the state in the spring of this year, our aviation fleet was used to survey and estimate the amount of damage sustained to our forestlands. Using state-of-the-art technology, the tornados' paths and widths were mapped and then the MiFI data was used to calculate a volume estimate. The damaged area covered 22 counties and exceeded \$30 million in damages to forestland.

## Rural Fire Assistance

Providing assistance to the state's volunteer fire departments has had a significant impact on reducing the number of wildfires in Mississippi. This assistance is available through the Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) Program and the Fire Fighter Program (FFP), administered by the MFC through an agreement with the USDA Forest Service.

Since 1956, FEPP has allowed the Forest Service to loan property to state forestry agencies for the purpose of wildland and rural firefighting. The Forest Service is authorized and encouraged by the Secretary of Agriculture to loan FEPP to states, and through the states, to local fire forces.

MFC delivered the first FFP equipment in FY10. The use of the equipment is for wildland/rural firefighting and emergency response. Unlike FEPP, FFP equipment ownership is transferred to the receiving organization.

Approximately 70 percent of the property involved in the FEPP program in Mississippi is sub-loaned to local fire departments. Approximately 90% of all equipment acquired through FFP is transferred to local fire departments. In FY11, MFC's FEPP/FFP issued 135 vehicles and 295 pieces of other equipment with an estimated value or acquisition cost of \$12 million.

## Volunteer Fire Assistance Program

Formerly known as the Rural Community Fire Protection Program, the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (VFA) provides grants to eligible rural volunteer fire departments (VFDs) for the purchase of wildland firefighting and personal protection equipment. The Mississippi Forestry Commission administers this program through an agreement with the USDA Forest Service. In FY11, the Mississippi Forestry Commission awarded 32 grants totaling \$113,752 to volunteer fire departments. These grants were used to purchase the wildland firefighting ready-kits containing protective clothing and gear for 320 volunteer firefighters.

In FY11, the Mississippi Forestry Commission awarded 32 grants totaling \$113,752 to volunteer fire departments

## Firewise

Firewise is an educational program for homeowners and community leaders. This program is for anyone living in, or connected to, the wildland/urban interface. Information is available on how to design, construct, landscape and maintain a home or community to withstand a wildfire without the aid of firefighting resources on scene. Firewise literature can be found on our website at [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov).

Firewise Workshops are also conducted throughout the state. These one day workshops are free of charge and bring together citizens, business, and community leaders, getting them involved in planning, financing, building, sustaining and protecting communities in the wildland/urban interface. Participants learn about why homes burn, various wildland fuel reduction techniques and how to assess the fire danger of their own home. The dates for Firewise Workshops can be found on our website as well.

There are three communities in Mississippi that have been officially designated as Firewise Communities/USA Communities. They are:

- Snow Lake Shores, MS in Benton County
- Lake Hillsdale Property Owner's Association in Pearl River County
- Gloster, MS in Amite County

## Fire Law Enforcement

The MFC and the Mississippi judicial system have the responsibility to pursue the arrest and conviction of woods arsonists, individuals who show little or no concern for Mississippi's citizens and forest resource. The MFC is also charged with pursuing retribution in instances where negligence has caused wildfires that result in the expenditure of state and/or federal funds.

Woods arson has historically been the leading cause of wildfires in Mississippi. In 1993, in an attempt to abate the problem, the Mississippi Legislature established fire law enforcement positions within MFC. The duties and authority of these officers are limited to woods arson. These officers may "... issue citations for any violation of those laws designed for the protection from fire recklessly or with gross negligence being communicated on the lands of another." (Section 49-19-3)

During FY11, MFC investigators handled a variety of different kinds of investigations, both criminal as well as civil. Investigators dealt with a total of 6 Felony Woods Arson Cases. These cases include the arrest of 10 individuals from six different counties in the state: George, Lawrence, Hancock, Holmes, Lamar and Harrison. During this year MFC has had several Grand Jury hearings on last year's felony cases and have received favorable out comes in these cases which includes restitution payments from the involved defendants.

In our Misdemeanor cases, investigators have dealt with a total of 9 cases, in which there have been issued 9 citations under the woods arson statute. In these Misdemeanor cases some are waiting on a pending court date to decide a verdict. Most of these cases have rendered a favorable decision and ordered the defendant to pay the restitution amount. In both felony and misdemeanor cases the total of pending restitution stands at approx. \$18,229.

MFC investigators also initiated and assisted on a timber theft case that is still ongoing and being lead by the Dept. of Ag. This case has now produced three different criminal/ felony indictments (Timber Theft) on the responsible individual on three different timber sales within school lands where timber theft was occurring. There was in excess of \$375,000 worth of timber stolen from these tracts. This case is now set for trial awaiting the hearing date set in Pearl River Co.

In our suppression cases MFC investigators have directly handled 37 cases in which the responsible parties were issued an invoice for the incurred costs totaling approx. \$25,340. The total amount involved in all pending civil and criminal cases is \$43,570 and includes suppressions, misdemeanor and felony restitutions. The total number of all investigated cases criminal or civil is 170 cases.

New for FY11, the Fire Law Enforcement Division, with assistance from the Outreach Department, developed new arson reward signs to be placed at locations where arson ignited wildfires occurred to help generate information and leads.



Accidental fires, such as escaped control burns and debris burns, are as costly as those set on purpose. Accidental fires, the second most common cause of wildfires in Mississippi, require the same types of actions and resources as arson fires.





## Forest Information and Public Outreach

The Forest Information and Public Outreach Division supports all MFC program areas by providing information, promotional activities and publicity. The division utilizes mass media outlets (e.g., radio, television and print) to release forestry and agency information to the public at large.

Multiple delivery methods are used in order to reach the public in the most effective manner.

### Forest Information

The Forest Information Department provides support to all MFC programs through the development of displays, exhibits, brochures and other informational material. The department is the point of contact for media relations and is responsible for maintaining the MFC Web site [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov), producing the agency's newsletter, annual report and MFC News.

### Public Outreach

MFC Outreach Program	
Adult and Youth Programs	950
Participants	100,532*

\* Numbers do not include participants from MS State Fair, MS Wildlife Extravaganza or MS Garden and Patio Show

The Public Outreach/Conservation Education Department maintains an active outreach program designed to educate youths and adults about forestry and related issues, in addition to the agency's mission and services. Local outreach activities such as civic club presentations, forestry field days and visits to



*Public Outreach Presentation*

school groups are carried out across the state to reach individuals at the community level. In FY11, outreach activities reached more than 27,000 youths and 73,000 adults. These numbers do not include the people we interacted with at the Mississippi State Fair, Mississippi Wildlife Extravaganza or Mississippi Garden and Patio Show.



*Firewise Presentation*

The Public Outreach Department also assisted in developing new arson reward signs. These signs are placed at the locations of wildfires that we believe may have been purposely set. The signs show our arson hot line number and state that a reward of up to \$2500 can be awarded for information leading to a conviction of felony woods arson. The goal is to not only generate more information, but to also let the people of the area know that we are serious about controlling the number one cause of wildfires in our state.

### Underserved Landowner Outreach Program

The Underserved Landowner Outreach Program is a joint project between the MFC, Alcorn State University and the USDA Forest Service. The program offers assistance to Underserved landowners in Mississippi. This program has three primary goals:

- To provide outreach support and technical assistance to Underserved landowners;
- To encourage young people to seek careers in forestry; and
- To work with Alcorn State University to develop and/or enhance projects of mutual forestry interest.

## Urban/Community Forestry

The MFC provides assistance and training to urban areas in developing community forestry programs. This includes support to counties and municipalities on developing tree ordinances, inventorying street trees and writing urban forest management plans. The MFC also provides technical advice to builders on tree preservation during construction and helps homeowners with advice on insects, diseases and other tree care problems.

In FY11, the MFC's Urban/Community Forestry Program provided 7 financial assistance grants totaling \$136,085 to state and local governments, non-profit groups and educational institutions.

The Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant Program, funded through the USDA Forest Service, provides funding for administration, demonstration projects and educational programs.

One of the major functions of the Urban Forestry Division is providing leadership, financial aid and technical support to the Mississippi Urban Forest Council (MUFC). The agency worked jointly with this volunteer organization to provide a series of regional workshops focused on the Community Revitalization with Trees program. This program provides training, educational material, technical tools and other resources to assist rural communities in revitalizing or enhancing local areas with community forestry. Six regional communities were selected as model projects to demonstrate implementation of long term locally sustainable community forestry programs.

The Urban Forestry Division and MUFC also promote and provide assistance for The Arbor Day Foundation's Tree Line USA, Tree Campus USA and Tree City USA programs.

## Tree Line USA

The Arbor Day Foundation recognizes public and private utilities that demonstrate practices that protect and enhance America's urban forests. The Tree Line USA program promotes the dual goals of safe, reliable electric service and abundant, healthy trees across utility service areas. Mississippi's only local Tree Line USA Utility is 4-County Electric Power Association.

## Tree Campus USA

Tree Campus USA program recognizes college and university campuses that: Effectively manage their campus trees, develop connectivity with the community beyond campus borders to foster healthy, urban forests and strive to engage their student population utilizing

service learning opportunities centered on campus, and community, forestry efforts. Mississippi's only Tree Campus USA, which was certified in FY11, is Delta State University.

## Tree City USA Awards

Tree City USA is a national recognition program that provides a basis for model community forestry practices. The program is administered by MFC in Mississippi. There are currently 38 Mississippi cities and towns certified as Tree City USA.

Two new cities were awarded in FY11: Hernando and Brookhaven. There are 36 cities that have received the award statewide.

<b>Laurel</b>	<b>Lucedale</b>
<b>Tupelo</b>	<b>Greenville</b>
<b>Winona</b>	<b>Columbus AFB</b>
<b>Meridian</b>	<b>Ocean Springs</b>
<b>Hattiesburg</b>	<b>Columbus</b>
<b>Keesler AFB</b>	<b>Grenada</b>
<b>Cleveland</b>	<b>Newton</b>
<b>Como</b>	<b>Leakesville</b>
<b>Oxford</b>	<b>Sandersville</b>
<b>Greenwood</b>	<b>Senatobia</b>
<b>Horn Lake</b>	<b>Wiggins</b>
<b>Olive Branch</b>	<b>Ridgeland</b>
<b>Ellisville</b>	<b>Bay St. Louis</b>
<b>Tunica</b>	<b>Mound Bayou</b>
<b>Pass Christian</b>	<b>Hernando</b>
<b>Gulfport</b>	<b>Brookhaven</b>
<b>Southaven</b>	<b>New Albany</b>
<b>Biloxi</b>	
<b>Long Beach</b>	



*Smokey Bear at MS Braves game*



The Arbor Day Poster Contest is no longer sponsored nationally by the Arbor Day Foundation so for FY11 the event was conducted by MFC with assistance from MUFC. The Contest had a record number of participants with 67 schools totaling 1116 students participating statewide.

## 2011 Arbor Day Poster Winners

Student	School
1st: Julian Saulsberry	Byhalia Middle
2nd: Caroline Lee	Immanuel Christian
3rd: Ashley McDaniel	Grenada Upper Elementary
Honorable Mention: Lillian Graafmeyer	Gorenflo Elementary, Biloxi



*First Place poster*

## Champion Tree Program

*Champion Trees of Mississippi*, the official publication of the Mississippi Champion Tree Program, records the largest trees of various species growing in the state. Seven new trees were added in FY11. Of the 175 trees registered as Mississippi Champions, nine are also national champions and five are national co-champions. You can find a list of these trees on our website at [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov).

## Business Support

Business Support consists of four service-oriented departments: Financial Services, Information Systems, Human Resources and Safety/Training.

### Financial Services

Financial records of the MFC are maintained in accordance with accepted accounting procedures and conform to state and federal law as defined by the Comptroller, Examiners of Public Accounts and the USDA Forest Service. The MFC's Financial report can be found on page 15.

A component of Financial Services, the Purchasing Department is responsible for ensuring that the MFC follows all state purchasing laws and requirements. Providing purchasing-related assistance to the agency's administrative districts and program areas is an essential function of the department.

### Information Systems

During FY11, Information Systems provided maintenance and technical support to the MFC's network of computers. Improvements and updates to the MFC's Web site were made throughout the year. The Web site is accessible by the public and employees at [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov). During periods of high fire danger, the Web site is used to provide public service information, including daily fire reports and news releases. The "Employee Section" section of the Web site has become very useful in providing updated forms and documents to employees. The Web site is managed as a joint project between Information Systems and Information/Outreach.

## Human Resources

The MFC's Human Resources Department strives to maintain a total personnel administration program for the entire agency. In FY10, the MFC had 490 full-time and six (6) part-time authorized employee positions. Authorized positions for FY11 include 474 full-time and three (3) part-time.

#### MFC Employees\*

Position	FY10	FY11
Full Time	490	474
Part-Time	6	3

\* Does not include federally-funded, time limited positions

### Safety & Training

The Safety and Training Program stresses the importance of safety in all programs of the MFC. Providing tools, techniques and training necessary for employees to work safely and effectively is essential to enhancing job skills and fostering personal development and growth. Continuing education and training opportunities were available for each employee in FY11. Some of the training include forest management training, pipeline safety training, prescribe burn short course, fire safety training and the Changing Roles Workshop.



*Wildland Firefighter Training*



**MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION**  
**Fiscal Year 2011 Income and Expense Statement thru June 30, 2011**  
**Comparative to June 30, 2010**

	6/30/11	6/30/10	Increase/ (Decrease)
<b>Income:</b>			
General Funds	\$ 17,237,887	\$ 17,790,063	\$ (552,176)
Severance Tax	2,627,676	2,407,250	220,426
Acreage Tax	1,387,741	1,379,507	8,234
Miscellaneous Income	110,827	119,794	(8,967)
Criminal Law Assessment Fines	3,874	690	3,184
Rent of State Property	35,383	34,122	1,261
Forestry Programs	4,475,943	6,279,166	(1,803,223)
Crew Assistance - Private Lands	343,170	287,594	55,576
Crew Assistance - Public Lands	1,532,027	1,504,826	27,201
Sale of Real Estate	-	55,500	(55,500)
Sale of Property	271,941	85,212	186,729
Sale of Scrap	2,382	956	1,426
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 28,028,851</b>	<b>\$ 29,944,680</b>	<b>\$ (1,915,829)</b>
<b>Accounts Receivable:</b>			
Billable Services	-	127,640	
Federal Reimbursements	-	-	
<b>Net A/R</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 127,640</b>	
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 28,028,851</b>	<b>\$ 30,072,320</b>	
<b>Expense:</b>			
Salaries	\$ 18,932,817	\$ 19,536,990	\$ (604,173)
Travel	77,966	91,125	(13,159)
Contractual	2,737,088	2,426,303	310,785
Encumbrances	6	29,030	(29,024)
Commodities	2,471,890	2,241,099	230,791
Encumbrances	178	3,499	(3,321)
Capital Outlay other than equipment	7,669	99,201	(91,532)
Encumbrances	-	-	-
Equipment	946,796	1,449,644	(502,848)
Encumbrances	-	-	-
Vehicles	91,243	163,286	(72,043)
Encumbrances	-	-	-
Wireless Communication Devices	1,466	725	
Encumbrances	-	-	
Subsidies, Loans, and Grants	2,513,790	2,788,991	(275,201)
Encumbrances	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$ 27,780,910</b>	<b>\$ 28,829,893</b>	<b>\$ (1,049,724)</b>

Total Encumbrances thru June \$184  
(cash not expended, only authority reserved)

## FY11 Board of Commissioners

**Robert E “Bob” Cox, Chairman**

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Maben, MS 39750  
Home Phone: (601) 324-0194  
Cell Phone: (901) 488-3795  
Fax Number: (662) 324-3183  
Email: bob.cox@tembec.com  
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**Larry Homan, Vice-Chairman**

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Cell Phone: (662) 891-2208  
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**Neil Black**

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**Buck Hobbs**

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**Dr George Hopper**

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**Danny Dilworth**

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**Glen Sowell**

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**Eddie Howze**

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**Joe Pettigrew**

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**James Cummins, MIFI Board Member**

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**MFC Administrative District Offices****Mississippi Forestry Commission**

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**Northeast District**

Brendix Glasgow, District Forester

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**South Central District**

Jack White, District Forester

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**Northwest District**

Brant Godbold, District Forester

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**Southeast District**

Mark Hamilton, District Forester

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**Capital District**

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**Southwest District**

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**East Central District**

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For a complete list of all offices & employees,  
please visit our website [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov).





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