

Mississippi Forestry Commission

Protection – Management – Information

2012

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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2012 – Annual Report



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.

Fiscal year 2012 brought with it many challenges, accomplishments and success stories. One of our success stories is the re-certification of our 480,000 acres of forested 16th 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 16th Sections.

Also this year, the Salmon Tract became officially titled the Jamie L. Whitten State Forest. This newest state forest is a 1,450 acre tract of land that was deeded to Mississippi in FY2011 by the U.S. Department of Energy. It was the location of two nuclear detonations during the cold war era for testing purposes by the U.S. government. The forest has many Longleaf Pine sites located on it, and a forest management plan has been developed. Forest management activities began on the tract this year. Our goal is to convert and cultivate the vegetation on the site to allow the tract to become a working demonstration forest of a typical

southern coastal pine forest ecosystem. Our partners, such as Mississippi State University Extension Service, Southern Mississippi University College of Nursing and Wildlife Mississippi, will also use the site for research and education purposes. The forest activities in FY2012 include sanitation cuts, thinnings and prescribed burning. We are currently looking at ways to place signs and informational kiosks that describe the forest conditions and management practices taking place for people to view while visiting the site in the future.

Some of the other success stories of FY2012 include:

- Sustained timber sale revenue of 16th section lands of \$23.99 million
- Continued implementation of the Forest Action Plan (previously named Mississippi Assessment of Forest Resources and Forest Resource Strategy)
- Submitted and received 8 grants through the competitive grant process from the USDA Forest Service totaling \$730,000.00
- Delivered 227,000 tree seedlings to schools statewide in February for the Toyota Arbor Day Event
- Adjusted the minimum weather requirements to obtain a prescribed burn permit to allow for more burning days

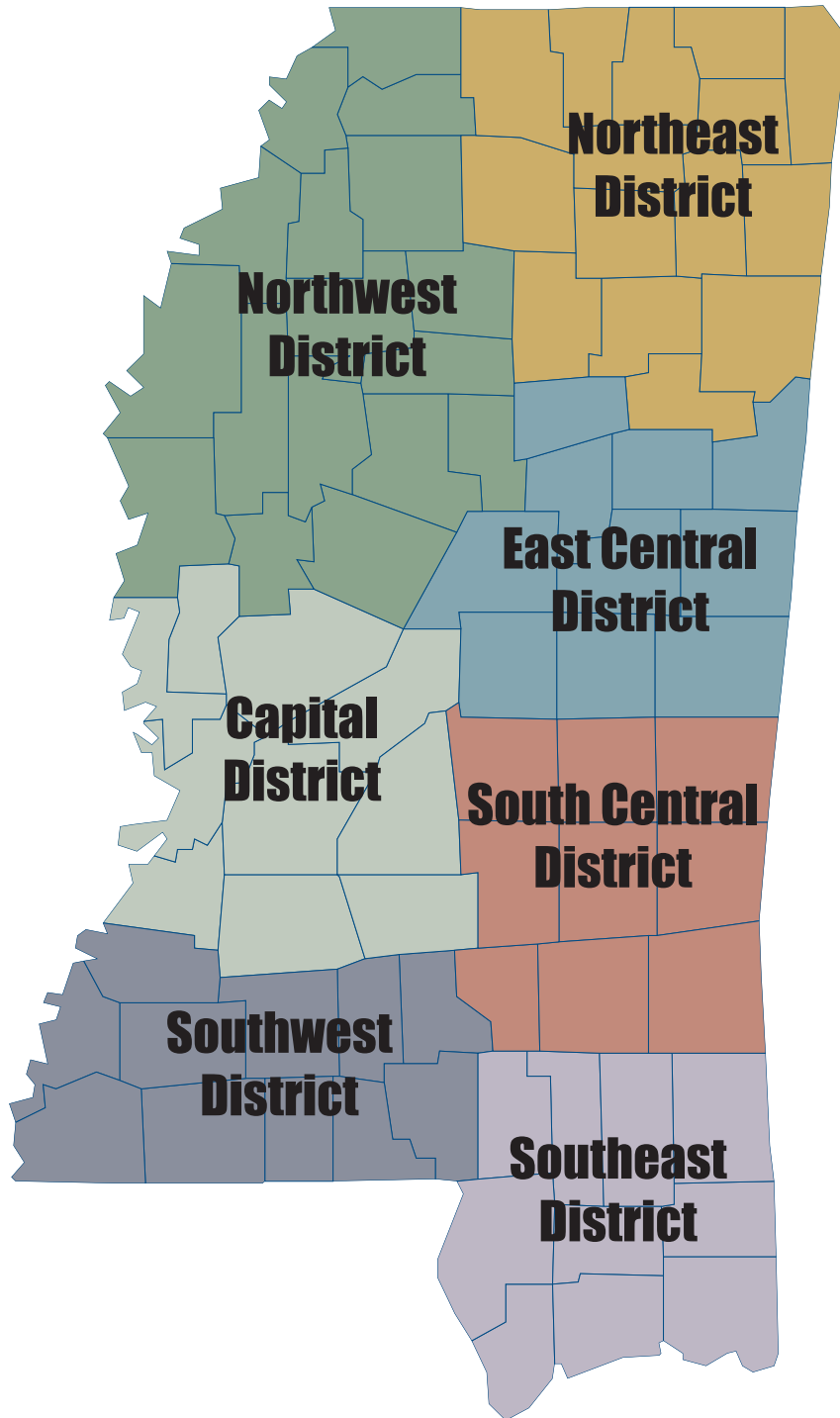
We appreciate our partners who provide support, collaboration and implementation of many of our programs and services. We work hard to maintain and develop our relationships with natural resource agencies, organizations and individuals. These relationships ensure the citizens of Mississippi receive the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

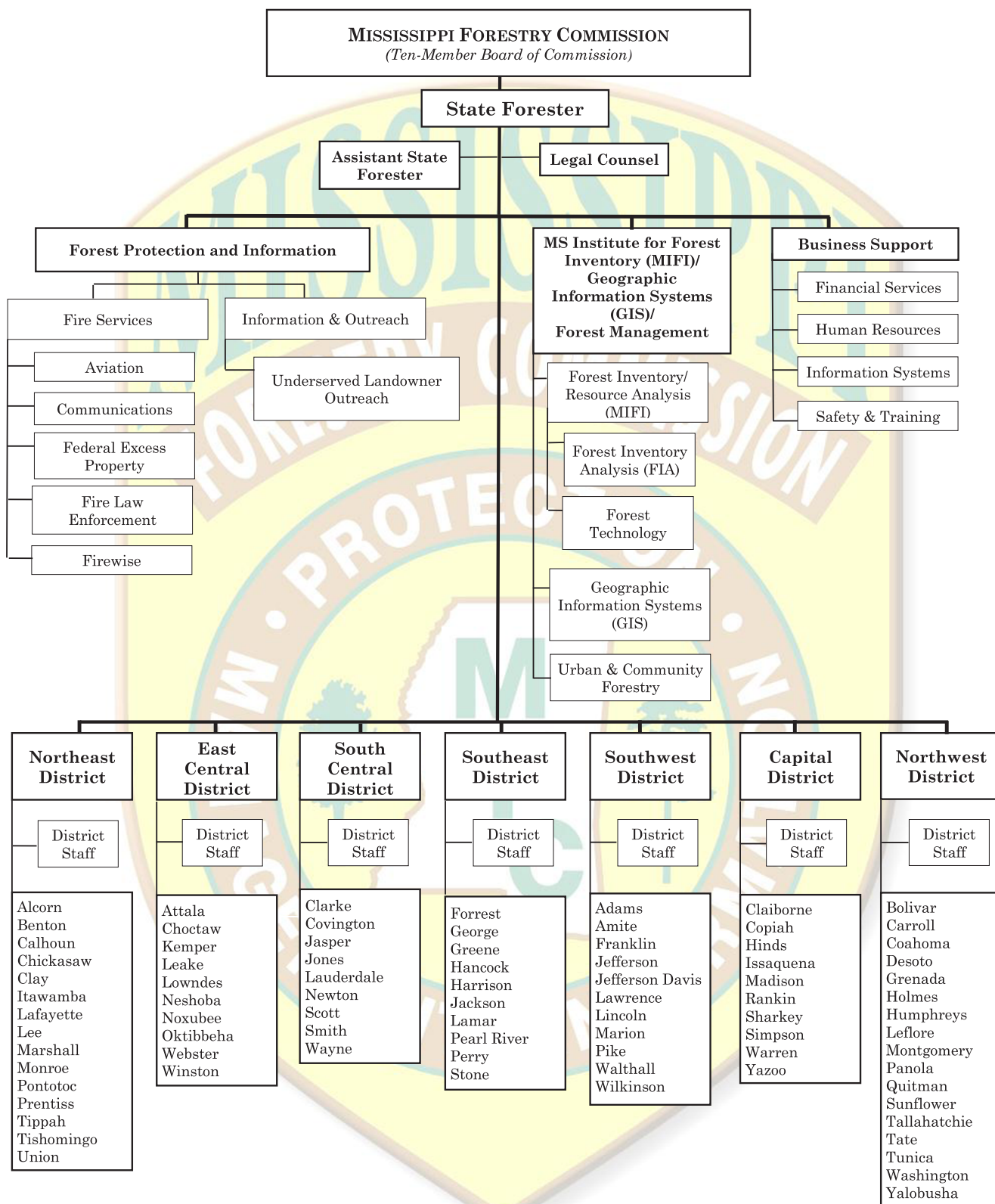
I would also like to thank our state leaders, commission, staff, partners and citizens for their continued support and assistance in making 2012 a success.

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

Charlie Morgan

State Forester





MS Institute for Forest Inventory/Management

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

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.

However, the data collected in MIFI's inventory is becoming aged. It is important that we find ways to fund another statewide inventory so Mississippi can continue to be competitive in the growing market of bio-energy and forest products.

In FY09, MIFI completed a baseline forest inventory for Mississippi. In FY12, MIFI used the information to respond to numerous requests for resource analyses for ethanol conversion and wood pellet facilities. These companies, because of the information provided through MIFI and MDA, have committed to investing in MS.

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

Mississippi Forest Action Plan – 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.

In FY11, the State Assessment and Strategy was put into action and effectively became known as the State Forest Action Plan (FAP). In FY12, the FAP continues to act as a general guideline for most forest management activities conducted by MFC throughout the state. The FAP 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.

FY12 Statewide Accomplishments

Private Lands Activities

Landowners Assisted	14,403
Forest Management Plans	2,801
Acres	291,579

Public Land Activities

Timber Sale Receipts	\$23,991,164.00*
Number of Sales	244
Acres Regenerated	9,052
Boundary Line Maintenance (Miles)	465
Firebreak/Woods Road Maintenance (Miles)	438

Forest Resource Development Program

Acres Regenerated or Improved	33,030
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Prescribed Burning

Private Lands (Acres)	15,316
Public Lands (Acres)	18,581

Total (Acres)	33,897
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*Source: MFC's Public Lands Timber Sale report and FY12 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 FY11, and actual thin sale revenue; does not include remaining pay-as-cut revenue estimated to be \$2.73 million, which will be reported next year as carry over from FY11. Note: 23 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.

At the end of FY 2012, the MFC in cooperation with the Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain were completing the acquisition of Mississippi's first Forest Legacy conservation easement on a 518 acre tract on the Escatawpa River in Jackson County. MFC also nominated two tracts for acquisition on the Pascagoula River that were listed in the FY 2013 President's budget.

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 three state forests (Kurtz, Camden and Jamie L. Whitten), 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 FY12, the revenue from timber sales on non-federal public lands, including School Trust Lands, totaled \$23.99 million.

“Our goal is to sustainably maximize School Trust Land timber sale revenue by applying a more intensive timber management process. 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 FY12 totaled \$23.99 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 FY12 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 FY12.

Cogongrass

Applications from Landowners	426
Applications/Landowners Inspected	429
Total Infested Spots Treated	20,045
Total Infested Acres Treated	2,786

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

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.

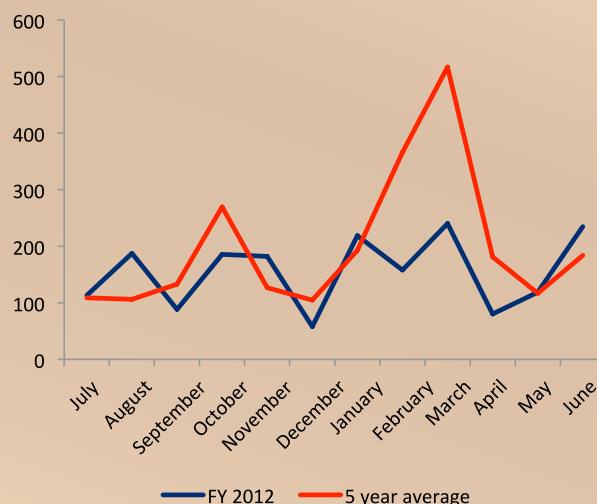
MFC collects all data needed to make sound decisions and long-range plans to ensure the adequate allocation of resources needed for pre-suppression and suppression of wildfires. MFC manages 12 remote area weather stations (RAWS) strategically located across the state as part of a national grid. These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

Cause	# Wildfires	# Acres
Campfire	3	31
Children	12	64
Debris Burning	773	5735
Equipment Use	51	297
Incendiary	758	11452
Lightning	21	275
Miscellaneous	154	1366
Railroad	9	141
Re-ignition	62	585
Smoking	22	110
Total	1865	20056

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 FY 2012



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 adequate rainfall during the wildfire seasons this year, occurrences and acres burned were below normal for FY12.

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.

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). During FY12, the radios were delivered and tested as some MSWIN towers became activated. 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 FY12, MFC suppressed 1,865 wildfires, which burned 20,056 acres. The average wildfire size for FY12 was 10.7 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.

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 FY12, MFC's FEPP/FFP issued 160 vehicles and 366 pieces of other equipment with an estimated value or acquisition cost of \$13.3 million.

In FY12, the Mississippi Forestry Commission awarded 72 grants totaling \$340,956 to volunteer fire departments.

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 FY12, the Mississippi Forestry Commission awarded 72 grants totaling \$340,956 to volunteer fire departments. These grants were used to purchase the wildland firefighting ready-kits containing protective clothing and gear for 720 volunteer firefighters.

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.

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 five 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
- Noxapater, MS in Winston County
- Ethel, MS in Attala 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 FY12, MFC investigators handled a variety of investigations, both criminal as well as civil. Investigators dealt with two Felony Woods Arson Cases. The first case included the arrest of two individuals from Copiah County. We also dealt with a felony arrest in Attala Co. during a woods arson investigation which resulted in charging an individual with felony malicious mischief and other misdemeanor charges. In both of these felony cases, we received favorable outcomes and each case included restitution payments, court costs and fines. The Copiah Co. case resulted in \$5214.84 in restitution from the defendants and the Attala Co. case resulted \$1450.00 from the defendant.

In our Misdemeanor cases we have dealt with total of 7 cases. We have issued a total of 5 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. \$11,871.68.

We 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 \$375,000.00 worth of timber stolen from these tracts. This case is now set for trial awaiting the hearing date set in Pearl River Co. This case is still pending.

In our suppression cases we have directly handled 15 cases in which the responsible parties were issued an invoice for the incurred costs totaling approx. \$13,891.55. The total amount involved in all pending civil and criminal cases is \$25,763.23. This includes suppressions, misdemeanor and felony restitutions. There are some of the cases that money totals are not yet available and will have to be added to next fiscal year. The total number of all investigated cases criminal or civil is approximately 100 cases.

In 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. These signs have proven beneficial in FY12.

ARSON

REWARD

Up To \$2,500

Please Call the Arson

Tip Line 1-800-240-5161

For Information Leading to the Conviction
of Anyone setting Arson Forest Fires

The next FOREST FIRE may
be on YOUR PROPERTY



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) and social media outlets (e.g., Facebook and YouTube) 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, producing the agency's newsletter, annual report and MFC News. In FY12, the Forest Information Department began utilizing social media to help carry the MFC message. Accounts were developed on Facebook and YouTube, at no cost to the agency. Other social media outlets are being considered and will be activated if we feel they can further assist the MFC in reaching the people of Mississippi.

Public Outreach

MFC Outreach Program	
Adult and Youth Programs	916
Participants	170,338*

* 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 school groups are carried out across the state to reach individuals at the community level. In FY12, outreach activities reached more than 24,000 youths and 86,000 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. Two outreach programs are housed within the Public Outreach Department: the Firewise Program and the Underserved Landowner Outreach Program.



Smokey Bear

While at the opening ceremonies for the new Toyota plant in Blue Springs, MS, Gov. Haley Barbour declared November 17th, 2011 as Toyota Arbor Day to celebrate both the opening of the car manufacturer's new plant and its commitment to the environment and Mississippi. To celebrate Toyota Arbor Day, public school districts, private schools and religious schools were given tree seedlings in January 2012 to distribute to their students for the planting season. The state and Toyota created Toyota Arbor Day to offset the loss of trees from construction of the company's manufacturing facility. The project was funded by Toyota. The MFC partnered with the Governor's office and Toyota to conduct the event. MFC's role was to obtain the seedlings and, using our county offices, individually bag them and distribute them to the different schools throughout the state. A total of 227,000 hardwood and pine tree seedlings were given out to schools across the 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
- 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 FY12, the MFC's Urban/Community Forestry Program provided 7 financial assistance grants totaling \$89,966.00 to state and local governments, non-profit groups and educational institutions.

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 City USA, Tree Campus USA and Tree Line 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 Tree Campus USA are Delta State University and Jackson 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 39 Mississippi cities and towns certified as Tree City USA.

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

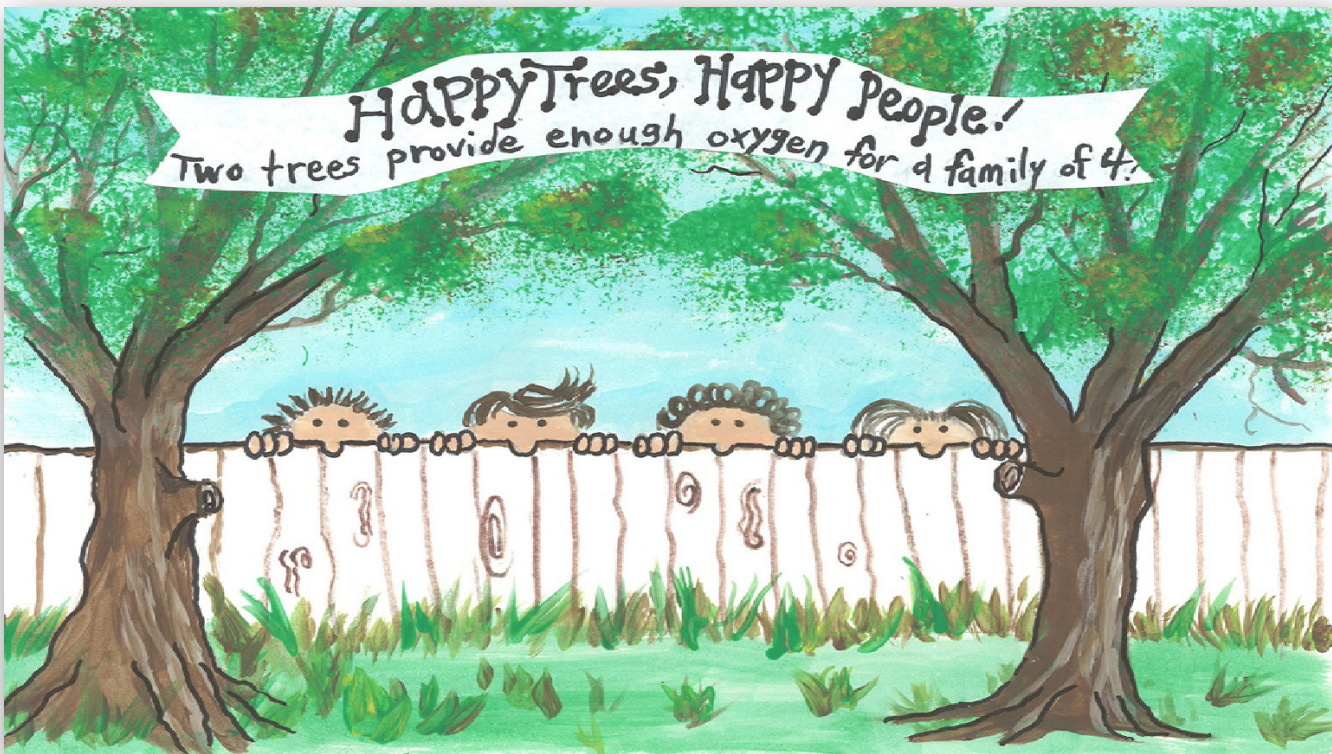


Smokey Bear at MS Braves game

The Arbor Day Poster Contest is no longer sponsored nationally by the Arbor Day Foundation, but conducted by MFC with assistance from MUFC, had 27 schools with 1116 students participating statewide.

2012 Arbor Day Poster Winners

Student	School
1st: Molly Oswalt	Ackerman Elementary
2nd: Abigail Garamendi	H.W. Byers Elementary
3rd: August Andre	Lafayette Upper Elementary
Honorable Mention: Anna Warden	Madison Ridgeland Academy



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. 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.

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. MFC FY12 Income and Expense Statement and financial highlights 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 FY12, 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 for the public and employees at 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" 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 FY11, the MFC had 474 full-time and three (3) part-time authorized employee positions. Authorized positions for FY12 include 460 full-time and two (2) part-time.

MFC Employees*

Position	FY11	FY12
Full Time	474	460
Part-Time	3	2

* 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 FY12. Some of the training includes forest management training, pipeline safety training, prescribe burn short course, fire safety training and the Changing Roles Workshop.



MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION
Fiscal Year 2012 Income and Expense Statement thru June 30, 2012
Comparative to June 30, 2011

	8/31/2012	8/31/2011	Increase/ (Decrease)
Income:			
General Funds	\$16,825,829	\$17,237,887	\$(412,058)
Severance Tax	2,702,924	2,627,676	75,248
Acreage Tax	1,380,430	1,387,741	(7,311)
Miscellaneous Income	541,440	110,827	430,613
Criminal Law Assessment Fines	4,664	3,874	790
Rent of State Property	35,202	35,383	(180)
Forestry Programs	5,746,327	4,475,943	1,270,384
Crew Assistance - Private Lands	350,058	343,170	6,888
Crew Assistance - Public Lands	1,364,343	1,532,027	(167,683)
Sale of Real Estate	-	-	-
Sale of Property	15,415	271,941	(256,526)
Sale of Scrap	1,453	2,382	(929)
Transfer from other funds	500,000	-	500,000
Net Revenue	\$29,468,085	\$28,028,851	\$1,439,235
Accounts Receivable:			
Billable Services	-	-	-
Federal Reimbursements	-	-	-
Net A/R	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$29,468,085	\$28,028,851	
Expense:			
Salaries	18,403,915	18,932,817	\$(528,902)
Travel	105,751	77,966	27,785
Contractual	3,400,190	2,737,088	663,102
Encumbrances	6	(6)	
Commodities	2,754,694	2,471,890	282,804
Encumbrances	529	178	351
Capital Outlay other than equipment	-	7,669	(7,669)
Encumbrances	-	-	-
Equipment	859,252	946,796	(87,545)
Encumbrances	-	-	-
Vehicles	490,436	91,243	399,193
Encumbrances	-	-	-
Wireless Communication Devices	7,184	1,466	5,719
Encumbrances	-	-	-
Subsidies, Loans, and Grants	3,350,236	2,513,790	836,445
Encumbrances	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$29,413,340	\$27,821,696	1,591,644
Total Encumbrances thru June	\$529		

(cash not expended, only authority reserved)

FY12 Board of Commissioners

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Maben, MS 39750
Home Phone: (601) 324-0194
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Larry Homan, *Vice-Chairman*

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James Cummins, *MIFI Board Member*

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Non-expiring

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For a complete list of all offices & employees,
please visit our website www.mfc.ms.gov.



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