

# Mississippi Forestry Commission

*Protection - Management - Information*



# 2018

## 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.



# 2018 – Annual Report

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Since 1926, the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) has been serving the public and protecting Mississippi's 19.8 million acres of forestland from wildfire. Our mission 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.

What does the Mississippi Forestry Commission do?

- We fight wildfires statewide.
- We help private landowners create long-term management plans for their forestland.
- We deliver quality forest management services and assistance to rural and urban private landowners.
- We help private landowners enroll in state and federal programs to offset the cost of certain forestry practices.
- We sustainably manage forested 16th section public school trust lands, which provide, on average, \$20 million annually to support public education.
- We monitor the health of Mississippi's forests for pests and diseases.
- We inventory the forests of Mississippi. Which provides necessary data to develop Mississippi's forest industry and economy.
- We educate and inform the public about relevant forestry programs and issues in Mississippi.
- We sustainably manage approximately 480,000 acres of non-federal public forestland in Mississippi.
- We help rural Volunteer Fire Departments purchase equipment and supplies.
- We offer a public course about reducing wildfire risk through prescribed burning for anyone wishing to become a Certified Prescribed Burn Manager in Mississippi.
- We help cities and municipalities maintain healthy urban forests.
- We protect water quality through the utilization of Best Management Practices.
- We aid other states with wildfires by deploying wildland firefighters and support personnel (when possible, based on Mississippi's current wildfire conditions).

Forests make important, positive contributions to the quality of life for Mississippians by providing jobs, a wealth of forest products, improved water quality, clean air, livestock forage areas, abundant wildlife habitat, recreational experiences, and economic benefits.

Mississippi's forestry and forest products industries have a \$12.79 billion economic impact and employ almost 70,000 people. Forestland covers 65% of Mississippi. Approximately, 350,000 private citizens own the majority of Mississippi's forestland (77%). Forestry consistently ranks as the state's second most valuable agricultural commodity, right behind the poultry industry.

The MFC understands that with proper planning and sustainable management practices, our precious natural resources become renewable. Trees, for example, can be sustainably harvested and replanted ensuring their abundance for future generations. The MFC looks forward to the continued privilege of caring for Mississippi's trees, forests, and natural resources.

## FY2018 Board of Commissioners

### Ken Martin, Chairman

Ken Martin, Vice Chair  
 951 Cato Road  
 Mendenhall, MS 93114  
 Phone: (601) 942-7513  
 Email: kmartin951@aol.com  
 \*Term Expires: June 30, 2020  
 Representing: 3rd Congressional District

### Al Hankins

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 Grenada, MS 38902  
 Work Phone: (662) 226-2961  
 Cell Phone: (662) 417-2600  
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 \*Term Expires: June 30, 2019  
 Representing: At-large

### Giles K. Ward

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 \*Term Expires: March 19, 2023  
 Representing: At-large

### Dr. George Hopper

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 Mississippi State, MS 39762  
 Office Phone: (662) 325-2953  
 Fax Number: (662) 325-0015  
 Email: george.hopper@msstate.edu  
 Term Expires: non-expiring  
 Representing: Ex-officio



### Jim Lockett, Vice-Chairman

5187 Dogwalk Road  
 Tutwiler, MS 38963  
 Home Phone: (662) 627-3882  
 Cell Phone: (662) 902-7348  
 Email: jhldublin@gmail.com  
 \*Term Expires: June 30, 2018  
 Representing: At-large

### Joseph E. Pettigrew

P. O. Box 592  
 Kiln, MS 39556  
 Cell Phone: (228) 493-8733  
 Email: petigru@aol.com  
 \*Term Expires: June 30, 2023  
 Representing: 4th Congressional District

### Linda Casey

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 Phone: (843) 877-3491  
 Email: Lascasey@yahoo.com  
 \*Term Expires: January 19, 2023  
 Representing: At-large

### Mike Mikell

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 Port Gibson, MS 39150  
 Phone Number: (601) 431-6535  
 Email: mikellpsi@hotmail.com  
 \*Term Expires: June 30, 2019  
 Representing: 2nd Congressional District

\* Members, by statute, may serve after their expiration date until they are replaced.



## MFC Office Contact Information

### Mississippi Forestry Commission State Office

Phone: (601) 359-1386  
 Fax: (601) 359-1349  
 Address:  
 660 North Street, Suite 300  
 Jackson, MS 39202

### Region 1 Office

Phone: (662) 842-5312  
 Fax: (662) 680-9999  
 Address:  
 1711 McCullough Blvd  
 Tupelo, MS 38801

Serving the counties of:  
 Alcorn, Benton, Calhoun,  
 Chickasaw, Coahoma, DeSoto,  
 Itawamba, Lafayette, Lee,  
 Marshall, Monroe, Panola,  
 Pontotoc, Prentiss, Quitman,  
 Tallahatchie, Tate, Tippah,  
 Tishomingo, Tunica, Union, Yalobusha

### Region 3 Office

Phone: (769) 218-6830  
 Fax: (601) 420-6027  
 Address:  
 3139 Highway 468 W  
 Pearl, MS 39208

Serving the counties of:  
 Claiborne, Clarke, Copiah,  
 Covington, Hinds, Issaquena,  
 Jasper, Jefferson, Jones,  
 Lauderdale, Madison, Newton,  
 Rankin, Scott, Sharkey,  
 Simpson, Smith, Warren,  
 Wayne, Yazoo

### Region 2 Office

Phone: (662) 226-3321  
 Fax: (662) 226-0170  
 Address:  
 1801 Highway 51 S  
 Grenada, MS 38901

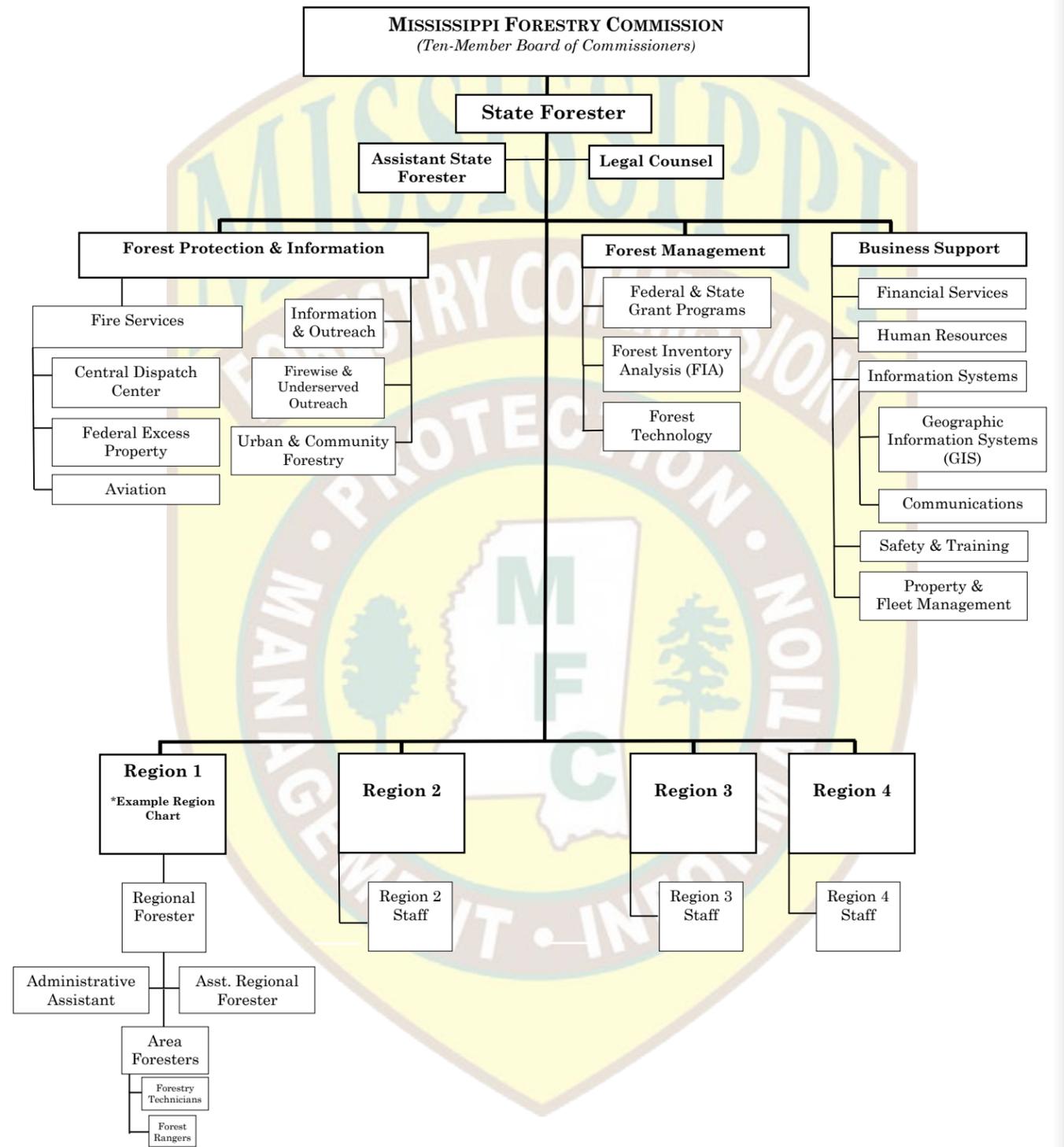
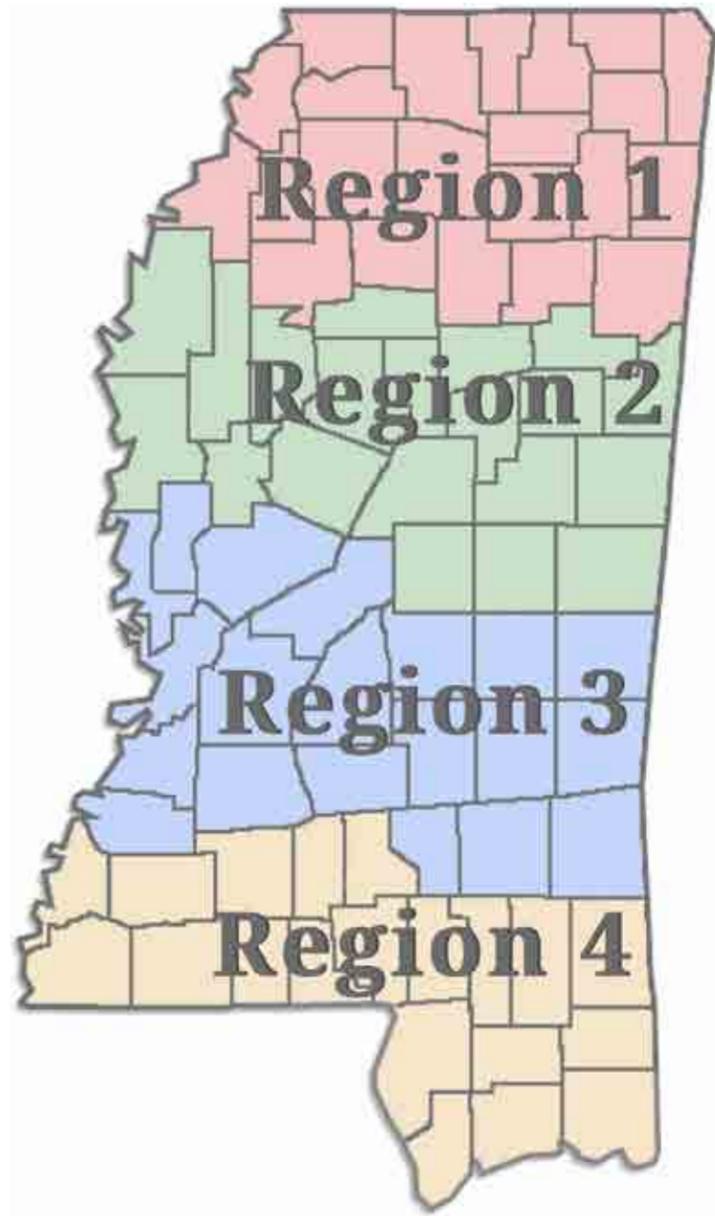
Serving the counties of:  
 Attala, Bolivar, Carroll,  
 Choctaw, Clay, Grenada,  
 Holmes, Humphreys, Kemper,  
 Leake, Leflore, Lowndes,  
 Montgomery, Neshoba, Noxubee,  
 Oktibbeha, Sunflower, Washington,  
 Webster, Winston

### Region 4 Office

Phone: (601) 540-5239 or (601) 408-4176  
 Fax: (601) 544-0839  
 Address:  
 477 South Gate Rd  
 Hattiesburg, MS 39401

Serving the counties of:  
 Adams, Amite, Forrest,  
 Franklin, George, Greene,  
 Hancock, Harrison, Jackson,  
 Jefferson Davis, Lamar, Lawrence,  
 Lincoln, Marion, Pearl River,  
 Perry, Pike, Stone,  
 Walthall, Wilkinson

Mississippi Forestry Commission



Fiscal Year 2018 Organizational Chart

## Forest Management

The Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) is charged with promoting sound forest management practices, which help maintain the integrity of the environment and provide for our state's future natural resource needs. The MFC offers a variety of forest management programs and services to assist private landowners. The MFC also provides forest management assistance on School Trust forestland in Mississippi.

The Forest Management Department provides private forest landowners with limited on-the-ground services, technical assistance, cost-share assistance, and advice to increase timber production and provide for the sustainable management of forest resources.

### Private Land Activities

In FY18, the MFC continued to provide technical and financial assistance to nonindustrial private forest landowners in Mississippi. This assistance is provided through programs designed to enhance and protect Mississippi's natural resources.

**\$1.92 million in FRDP funding was distributed to private forest landowners.**

### Private Landowner Services

The MFC offers a variety of services, programs, and resources to private forest landowners of relatively small acreages. Landowners with large tracts of forestland are routinely referred to private consulting foresters. Most technical assistance and forestry advice is free to the landowner. Direct services are available for a fee. Prices and available services may vary by job type and area. Some of these services may be obtained from private vendors. The MFC also helps private landowners enroll in state and federal cost-share programs to offset the expense of certain forestry practices. Contact your local MFC Office for more information about available services ([www.mfc.ms.gov/offices](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/offices)).



Services provided free-of-charge:

- Preparing forest management plans (up to 250 acres)
- Conducting compliance checks for state and federal forest improvement cost-share programs
- Providing forest management advice regarding: forest-damaging insects, diseases, invasive species, and Best Management Practices (BMPs) to improve forest productivity and water quality

Direct services (for a fee):

- Hazard mitigation/ prescribed burning
- Firelane/firebreak establishment and maintenance
- Logging road/skid trail/loading deck maintenance
- Southern Pine Beetle suppression activities (ground location, flagging, marking, coordination of harvest)

Direct services (for a fee) - provider of last resort, only if the landowner is unable to find another available source:

- Tree planting/seeding (landowner must provide seeds or seedlings)
- Vegetation management (control of competition, wildlife habitat enhancement, and invasive species control - landowner must provide herbicide and surfactant)

## Forest Management Accomplishments

### Private Land Activities

Landowners Assisted	7,316
*Total Forest Management Plans	1,535
Acres under Management Plans	94,683
Prescribed Burning (Acres)	13,081

### Public Land Activities

Timber Sale Receipts	\$10,281,525
Number of Sales	174
Acres Regenerated	6,950
Boundary Line Maintenance (Miles)	414
Firebreak Maintenance (Miles)	782
Prescribed Burning (Acres)	12,483

### Prescribed Burning -

### Private & Public Land

Total (Acres)	25,564
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## Forest Resource Development Program

Acres Regenerated or Improved	31,053
Funds Distributed	\$1,920,507

*\*Certified Stewardship & other Forest Management plans*

## Forest Resource Development Program

The Forest Resource Development Program (FRDP) was established in 1974 by the Mississippi Legislature to aid in the development of Mississippi's forest economy

In FY18, the FRDP distributed \$1.92 million to private forest landowners and 31,053 acres were regenerated or improved. This program helps offset landowner's expenses by reimbursing a portion of the costs associated with implementing specific forestry practices.

Cost-share funding provides reimbursement for tree planting and forest improvement practices designed for the purpose of long-term timber production and enhanced wildlife development.

Payments cover approximately 50-75 percent (depending on the practice) of the total cost of implementing these forestry practices, with a maximum limit set for each individual practice.

Eligible landowners may receive up to \$7,000 of FRDP assistance per year. In return, the landowner agrees to manage and protect the area receiving FRDP assistance from fire and grazing for a minimum of 10-years, using the proper practices. To learn more about the FRDP visit [www.mfc.ms.gov/FRDP](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/FRDP) or contact your local MFC Office ([www.mfc.ms.gov/offices](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/offices)). Please note: submission of an application does not guarantee participation in the FRDP or that cost-share funds will be available. The local MFC Office will confirm funding amounts and participation in the FRDP when the application is finalized.



## Forest Stewardship

The Forest Stewardship Program promotes natural resource planning on privately owned forestland. Landowners not classified under other forest management programs are encouraged to utilize stewardship management to care for their natural resources through the development and implementation of a Forest Stewardship Management Plan.

Forest Stewardship Management Plans are based on sound management principles designed to restore and protect forest resources while improving fish and wildlife habitats. Forest Stewardship Management Plans share the same format as those required by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) for their certification program. 94,683 acres were reported under a Certified Stewardship plan or other type of forest management plan in FY18.

The Forest Stewardship Program is funded by the USDA Forest Service and administered by the MFC. The MFC provides technical assistance for the Forest Stewardship Management Program in conjunction with federal, state, and private natural resource agencies and organizations. For more information, please visit: [www.mfc.ms.gov/Forest-Stewardship](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/Forest-Stewardship)

**Revenue from timber sales on non-federal public forestland totaled \$10.28 million.**

## Public Land Activities

The MFC provides forest management assistance on approximately 485,000 acres of non-federal public forestland in Mississippi. In FY18, the MFC managed four state forests (Three Rivers, Kurtz, Camden, and Jamie L. Whitten) and assisted school boards with forest management on Mississippi School Trust (16th Section) Lands. The MFC also rendered assistance to other agencies, boards, departments, or entities that have jurisdiction over state and other public forestland statewide.

## School Trust Lands

The MFC is charged by state law to manage forested 16th section public school trust lands located in 67 counties throughout the state.

The MFC sustainably manages approximately 480,000 acres of forested 16th section public school trust lands. Timber sale revenue from school trust lands directly benefits children attending nearby schools. Funds are reinvested into the school districts where they are earned at the discretion of the local school board.

In addition to timber production, management considerations also include wildlife, soil and water quality, aesthetics, and other appropriate benefits of forestlands.

The MFC ensures that proper care is taken to manage forested 16th section public school trust lands sustainably and Best Management Practices (BMPs) are employed during the management process.

The combined revenue from timber sales on Mississippi school trust lands and other public lands totaled \$10.28 million in FY18.

The MFC converted their collective management data into a GIS system to prepare the first comprehensive 16th section public school trust lands assessment. This assessment, together with more intensive forest management practices, allowed the MFC to meet their goal for timber-generated revenue. Mississippi's forested 16th section public school trust lands are certified by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), the first ever large-scale certification of non-federal public forestland in the nation. ATFS certification ensures that School Trust Lands will continue to be managed sustainably, for the benefit of future generations.

**Timber sale revenue from School Trust Lands directly benefits children attending nearby schools.**

**94,683 acres were reported under a Certified Stewardship plan or other type of forest management plan in FY18.**

## Mississippi Forest Inventory

The Mississippi Forest Inventory (MFI) program is responsible for developing and implementing the statewide forest resource inventory, necessary for Mississippi's sustainable forest-based economy.

The forest inventory also effectively compiles forest inventory-based information for economic development and policy purposes. In order to present an accurate picture of Mississippi's forest resources, the statewide forest inventory operates on a continuous five-year cycle.

The MFC uses the information compiled during the inventory to respond to resource requests for forest product, ethanol conversion, and wood pellet facilities. The MFC's Resource Analysis Program oversees the development, implementation, and management of the MFC's Geographic Information System.

In an effort to promote the economic development of Mississippi's forest resources, the MFC, in conjunction with the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), provides forest resource maps and information to businesses investigating the possibility of locating in Mississippi.

Maintaining an up-to-date analysis of the state's forest resources is critical information for both existing and potential forest-industry investors. The Forest Inventory continues to provide the necessary data to keep Mississippi's \$12.79 billion forest-based economy competitive. Companies wishing to

locate in Mississippi often consult the Forest Inventory Program data during their decision-making process.



**The American Tree Farm Certification group certification on School Trust Lands ensures that Mississippi will remain a strong competitor in the growing global need for certified wood.**



## Forest Health

The MFC provides forest pest detection, evaluation, and control recommendations on private, urban, and non-federal public forestland in Mississippi. The MFC conducts at least one statewide aerial survey each year and additional surveys if necessary. Insect and disease spots identified during the aerial survey are then mapped on the Southern Pine Beetle Activity Map which makes the data available to the public, allowing private landowners the opportunity to determine if any SPB activity was located near their property. Visit [www.mfc.ms.gov/southern-pine-beetle-activity-map](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/southern-pine-beetle-activity-map) to view the map.

The MFC also provides technical assistance and special incentive programs to private landowners to combat threats from invasive plants, such as cogongrass, kudzu, and Chinese tallow tree. For more information, visit [www.mfc.ms.gov/forest-health](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/forest-health) for more information.

In FY18, the southern pine beetle continued to threaten more timber in the southern region of the United States than any other forest insect. In response to this ongoing risk, the MFC continued to partner with the USDA Forest Service's Forest Health Protection Program (Southern Region) to administer a Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) Prevention/ Education Program. This program aimed to teach landowners about the benefits of thinning, in order to reduce the risk of SPB hazards. The associated SPB cost-share program was designed to provide a financial incentive for landowners who applied approved first thinning management practices to their pine stands, to reduce their risk of southern pine beetle infestation. Financial incentives were also available to loggers working on SPB tracts in order to offset associated costs.



The second leading insect to threaten pine timber in the South continued to be the Ips Engraver Beetle. Drought conditions and stress from severe winds can cause Ips Engraver Beetle populations to increase dramatically.

**Cogongrass is an aggressive invasive species that chokes out native vegetation and devastates ecosystems.**

The Exotic Invasive Species Plan addresses the detection, identification, information, control, and abatement of six species of concern that impact the forest resources of Mississippi.

These species are cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*), kudzu (*Pueraria montana*), Chinese tallow tree (*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 shared goals regarding invasive species.

Cogongrass is an aggressive invasive species that chokes out native vegetation, creates fuel for wildfires by burning at extremely hot temperatures, and devastates ecosystems.

Infested areas of cogongrass are found on more than 1 million acres throughout the southeastern United States.

In FY18, the MFC's cogongrass program assisted 86 landowners. The program treated 831 cogongrass spots, which were comprised of over 253 acres.

### Invasive Plant Control Program for Cogongrass Suppression

Landowners Inspected	86
Total Infested Spots Treated	831
Total Infested Acres Treated	253

Chinese tallow tree is another rapidly spreading invasive species that can invade almost all habitats from wet to dry and from sun to shade. It crowds out native tree species once it becomes established and its leaves and fruit are toxic to cattle and known to cause nausea and other sicknesses in humans. In an effort to identify and stop the spread of Chinese Tallow Tree throughout the state, the MFC developed and launched the HelpStopThePop web-based app, designed for crowd-sourcing the mapping of this invasive species in Mississippi. The website has been widely used and received much publicity through a variety of media outlets. As a result, the agency (and the public) is beginning to get a better understanding of the distribution of this invasive tree in the state. The agency has also made herbicide available to municipalities interested in treating and controlling Chinese Tallow Tree on public property.

## Forest Legacy Program

The Forest Legacy Program was authorized by the 1990 Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act to identify and protect environmentally important private forestland threatened by conversion to non-forest uses.

The MFC administers the Forest Legacy Program through an agreement with the USDA Forest Service. Private forestland is protected through fee-simple or conservation easement acquisition from interested landowners. The program is implemented in states that have completed an Assessment of Need or have incorporated the assessment information into their State Forest Action Plans. States in the Southern Region that have completed Assessments of Need are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

There are three Forest Legacy Areas (FLAs) in Mississippi - Southeast, Central and Northeast. FLAs were identified based on many factors including the habitat diversity, types of natural forest communities in each area, significant past and projected increases in human population and recent conversion of forestland to other uses.

The Griffith Tract was acquired in the fall of 2018. This tract consists of 1,233 contiguous acres along the Pascagoula River in George/ Jackson counties. This tract will be part of the Pascagoula River Wildlife Management Area in FY19.



## Forest Protection

MFC Wildland Firefighters work long hours in demanding and dangerous conditions to protect lives, homes, and natural resources. The MFC suppresses, monitors, and detects wildfire activity occurring day and night on approximately 19.8 million acres of forestland statewide.

The MFC responded to and suppressed 796 wildfires that burned 11,204 acres in FY18. MFC Wildland Firefighters saved 1,654 structures threatened by wildfire activity. 63 structures were damaged or destroyed. The average wildfire size was 14 acres. The MFC dispatches wildland firefighting personnel and equipment to the location of reported wildfire activity 24/7. To report a wildfire, call 1-833-MFC-FIRE or dial 911.

**TO REPORT A WILDFIRE**

**1-833-MFC-FIRE**

**OR GET A BURNING PERMIT**

**WWW.MFC.MS.GOV**



Nationwide, nearly 9 out of 10 wildfires are human-caused and could have been prevented with proper care. In FY18, debris burns that escaped control were the leading cause of wildfires in Mississippi. In an effort to reduce the number of human-caused wildfires in Mississippi, burn bans are issued by each

**MFC Wildland Firefighters responded to & suppressed 796 wildfires that burned 11,204 acres.**

County Board of Supervisors and approved by the MFC.

Burn ban notifications are posted and updated on the MFC's website and social media pages. Visit [www.mfc.ms.gov/burn-bans](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/burn-bans) for an up-to-date list of burn bans statewide. Any person who knowingly and willfully violates a burn ban is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be fined. Burn bans are enforced by the local Sheriff's Department.

In addition, any individual who starts an outdoor fire will be held responsible for their fire and the smoke generated as a result. If a fire escapes their control and becomes a wildfire, which burns or damages the forestland/ property of another person, the individual who started the fire will be held



liable for any damages and suppression charges incurred.

The MFC coordinates the management of wildland firefighting resources within the state and deploys MFC employees to assist with federal wildland firefighting detail in times of need (as long as wildfire conditions permit in MS). The MFC collects the necessary data to make sound decisions and long-range plans to ensure the adequate allocation of resources needed for pre-suppression and suppression of wildfires. Burning permits are issued by MFC dispatch (upon request) when weather conditions are favorable for controlled burning,

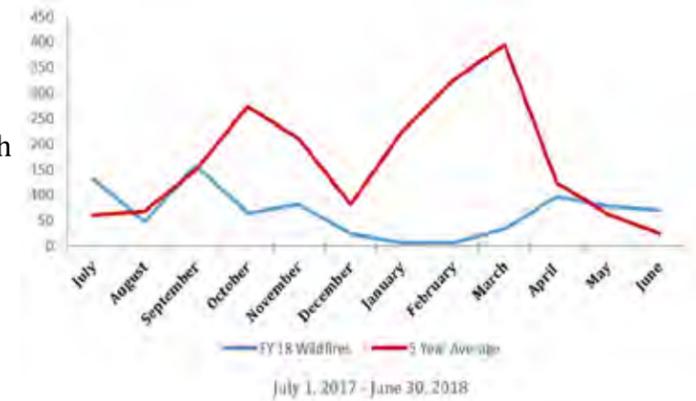
To request a burning permit, call 1-833-MFC-FIRE (1-833-632-3473).



Help the MFC prevent human-caused wildfire activity by checking burn bans and weather conditions before doing any outdoor burning. The wind can carry embers long distances, causing new spot fires one-half mile away from the original burning area. Check the local weather forecast - do not engage in any outdoor burning on dry, windy days. Everyday activities can cause wildfires. Sparks from dragging vehicle chains, hot equipment parts, cigarette ash, and exhaust particles can cause unintended wildfires when vegetation is dry. One less spark, one less wildfire.

The MFC manages 12 Remote Area Weather Stations (RAWS) strategically located across the state as part of a national grid. The MFC also provides assistance to Mississippi and other states with natural disaster clean-up and recovery from weather-related events (hurricanes, ice-storms, and large-scale wildfires).

Before engaging in any outdoor burning visit [www.mfc.ms.gov/fire-weather](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/fire-weather) for the following predictive services information:



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

### FY18 Wildfires by Cause

Cause	# Wildfires	# Acres Burned
Lightning	1	1
Campfire	1	32
Smoking	2	12
Debris Burning	353	3,413
Incendiary	173	3,651
Equipment Use	22	148
Railroad	2	11
Children	2	9
Miscellaneous	231	3,752
Undetermined	9	175
<b>Total</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>11,204</b>

## Rural Fire Assistance

The MFC offers several grant programs designed to help Mississippi's Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs) obtain equipment and supplies needed to fight wildland fires. The MFC provides assistance to VFDs through the Federal Excess Personal Property Program (FEPP) and the Firefighter Program (FFP). The MFC administers these programs through an agreement with the USDA Forest Service. In FY18, the MFC's FEPP/ FFP programs issued 80 vehicles and 94 other pieces of wildland firefighting equipment with an estimated value (or acquisition cost) of \$10.3 million.

Since 1956, the FEPP Program has allowed the USDA Forest Service to loan property to state forestry agencies for the purpose of fighting wildland and rural fires. The MFC delivered the first FFP equipment in FY10. The use of the equipment is reserved for wildland/ rural firefighting and emergency response situations.

Visit [www.mfc.ms.gov/rural-fire-assistance](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/rural-fire-assistance) for more information on VFD grant programs.

**\$10.3 million in wildland firefighting vehicles & equipment were issued to Mississippi VFDs through the FEPP/ FFP programs.**

## Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (VFA)

Formerly known as the Rural Community Fire Protection Program, the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (VFA) provided grants to eligible rural VFDs for the purchase of wildland firefighting and personal protection equipment in FY18. The MFC administers this program through an agreement with the USDA Forest Service. In FY18, the MFC awarded 49 grants with a total value of \$207,500 to volunteer fire departments through the VFA Program.

**The MFC awarded 49 grants with a total value of \$207,500 to Volunteer Fire Departments.**

## Aviation

In FY18, aerial surveillance was used to manage wildfire activity. On large fires, planes fly above the wildfire, delivering real-time information to wildland firefighting units on the ground to help them manage the current fire situation.

The MFC's Aviation Department also provides service and support to Forest Health and other Forest Management program areas.



## Firewise

Firewise is an educational program for homeowners and community leaders. This program is for anyone connected to the wildland/ urban interface. Information is available on how to protect homes or communities until wildland firefighters arrive on the scene.

Factors addressed include design, construction, and landscaping techniques to help structures better withstand wildfires.

Firewise workshops were conducted statewide in FY18. Workshops were provided free of charge to the public and brought citizens together to learn about protecting their communities in the wildland/ urban interface

Firewise literature can be found by visiting [www.mfc.ms.gov](http://www.mfc.ms.gov).

**1,654 structures were threatened by wildfire activity & saved by MFC wildland firefighters. Is your home Firewise?**

## Communications

Dependable radio communication is an essential element of the MFC's ability to deploy firefighting resources and maintain situational awareness of wildfire activity. The Communications Department is responsible for maintaining and upgrading the MFC's radio network (which spans the state).

Components of the network include: mobile radios in the agency's fleet of vehicles and lightweight hand-held radios for field personnel, which provide statewide communication between dispatch centers and field personnel.

In FY11, the first set of radios was purchased for the Mississippi Wireless Integrated Network (MSWIN) system as required by the Mississippi Wireless Communications Committee (WCC). During FY18, the MFC continued to implement and use the new

radios. The MSWIN system provides interoperable emergency radio communication across the state with all levels of government agencies and partner organizations.



## Forest Information

The MFC distributes relevant information to the public regarding all MFC program areas. The Forest Information Department supports MFC program areas by providing information dissemination, educational presentations, and public relations support. This Department oversees media relations, internal and external communications, agency publications, and management of the MFC's digital presence.

The Forest Information Department utilizes mass media (radio, television, newspaper, web, print) and social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube) to reach the public.



## Public Outreach

During FY18, the Public Outreach Division of the Forest Information Department continued to provide public information, outreach programs, and area communication support to the MFC. The MFC maintains an active Public Outreach Program designed to heighten the public's awareness of wildfire prevention, the MFC's mission, services, and the importance of forest resources. Local outreach activities include civic club presentations, sporting



events, information booths at community events, forestry field days, and visits to school groups, which are carried out across the state to reach individuals at the community level. Two topic-specific outreach programs were housed within the Public Outreach Division in FY18, the Firewise Program and the Underserved Landowner Outreach Program. Visit [www.mfc.ms.gov/public-outreach-information](http://www.mfc.ms.gov/public-outreach-information) to contact the Public Outreach Officer for your area.

**\$59,299 was distributed to state and local governments, non-profit groups, and educational institutions through the Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant Program.**

Public Outreach Officers provide customized presentations and displays for schools, community organizations, and events based on the following topics:

- Wildfire Prevention
- Smokey Bear Appearances
- Firewise
- Forest Health
- Forest Stewardship
- General MFC Information
- Best Management Practices
- Underserved Landowner Outreach Program
- Urban and Community Forestry

## MFC Outreach Programs

Adult & Youth Programs	276
Participants	161,798*

*\*Data does not include participants from the MS State Fair, MS Wildlife Extravaganza, or the MS Garden and Patio Show.*

## Underserved Landowner Outreach Program

The Underserved Landowner Outreach Program is a collaborative project between the MFC, Alcorn State University, and the USDA Forest Service. This program offers assistance to underserved landowners in Mississippi and 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 and Community Forestry Program

The Urban and Community Forestry Division provides assistance and training to urban areas in the development of community forestry programs. Support is offered for counties and municipalities regarding the development of tree ordinances, hazardous tree inventories, and urban forest management plans. The Urban Forestry Program also provides technical advice to builders regarding tree preservation during construction and assists homeowners with advice regarding insects, diseases, and other urban forestry issues.

The Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant Program is funded by a grant from the USDA Forest Service for administration, demonstration projects, and

educational programs. The purpose of the Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant Program is to aid in the development of long-term, self-sustaining urban and community forestry programs. The goal of the Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant Program is to inspire or enhance local or statewide urban and community forestry programs.

The Urban Forestry Division also promoted and administered the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA®, Tree Campus USA®, and Tree Line USA® programs in Mississippi. The MFC also partnered with the National Arbor Day Foundation to provide free seedlings to homeowners affected by tornadoes in the cities of Louisville and Tupelo through the Mississippi Community Tree Recovery Program.



## Business Support

The Business Support Department consists of 5 service-oriented divisions: Financial Services, Information Systems, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Human Resources, and Safety and Training. These divisions provide services to support the MFC's program areas statewide.

### Financial Services

Financial records are maintained in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and conform to state and federal laws defined by the Comptroller, Examiners of Public Accounts, and the USDA Forest Service. A component of Financial Services, the Purchasing Division, ensures that the MFC follows purchasing laws and fulfills necessary requirements.

### Information Systems

The Information Systems Division continued to provide technical support and assistance to the MFC's computer network of servers and workstations. The transition to cloud based services will begin in early FY18. By leveraging SaaS (Software as a Service), IaaS (Infrastructure as a Service), and PaaS (Platform as a Service), additional flexibility and efficiency will be introduced, as well as cost-savings in providing consistent service delivery.



## Human Resources

The MFC's Human Resources Division maintained personnel administration for all MFC employees. In FY18, the MFC filled 260 full-time and 2 part-time authorized PINs.

### MFC Employees FY18\*

Filled Positions	
Full-time	260
Part-time	2

*\*Data does not include federally funded, time-limited positions.*

### Safety and Training

The Safety and Training Division offers tools, techniques, and training opportunities to teach employees safe and effective workplace habits. The importance of a safe workplace environment is paramount in all program areas of the MFC. Continuing education and training opportunities were made available to all MFC employees in FY18. Training opportunities are essential to enhancing job skills as well as fostering personal development and growth.



## MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION Fiscal Year 2018 Finances July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018

### Revenue

State Provided Funds	FY Projected	Received
General Funds (Appropriated)	\$ 13,628,515.00	\$ 13,628,515.00
Severance Tax (FRDP)	\$ 3,000,000.00	\$ 3,097,440.00
Acreage Tax	\$ 1,300,000.00	\$ 1,421,679.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 17,928,515.00</b>	<b>\$ 18,147,634.00</b>

### Agency Generated Funds

Agency Generated Funds	FY Projected	Received
Crew Assistance	\$ 1,264,000.00	\$ 1,649,146.00
Federal Revenue	\$ 612,000.00	\$ 612,000.00
Misc (Equip Sales, Rent, Etc.)	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 1,222,688.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 2,376,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,483,834.00</b>

### Expense

Agency Expenses (Non-Grant)	FY Projected	Expended
Beaver Control Program	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
Salaries & Related	\$ 13,428,515.00	\$ 11,821,009.00
Operating (Non-Salary)	\$ 2,512,000.00	\$ 2,159,685.00
Equipment (Dozers, Trucks, Etc.)	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 1,086,950.00
FRDP Payments	\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 1,926,587.00
Capitol Improvements	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 750,000.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 20,640,515.00</b>	<b>\$ 17,944,231.00</b>

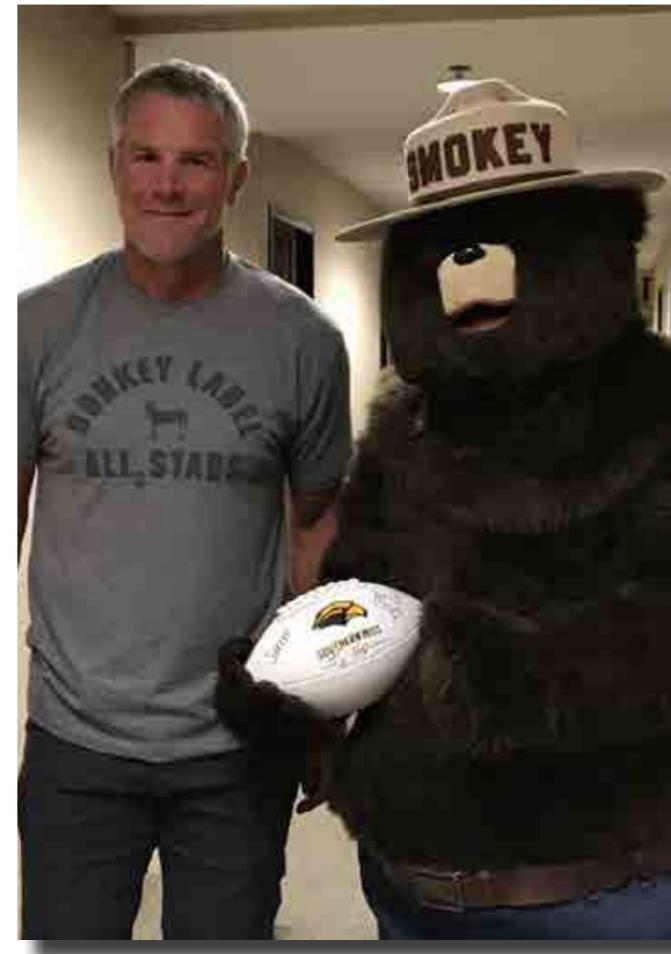
### Restricted Funds (Sources restricted to non-operating expenses. i.e. Camden, Kurtz, Whitten, etc.)

#### Source Generated Funds

	Cash Balance
Forest Management	\$ 952,547.00
Volunteer Fire Equipment	\$ 59,473.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 1,012,020.00</b>

#### Federal Grant Fund

	Expended	Reimbursement Received
MFC FY18 Protection Grants	\$ 735,134.00	\$ 735,134.00
MFC FY18 Management Grants	\$ 900,797.00	\$ 900,797.00
MFC FY18 Legacy Grant	\$ 53,898.00	\$ 53,898.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 1,689,829.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,689,829.00</b>





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