# Mississippi Forestry Commission

## *Protection – Management – Information*

# 2014 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.**

# Table of Contents


| | |
|---|---|
| Message From the State Forester | 1 |
| Introduction & District Map | 2 |
| MFC's Organizational Chart | 3 |
| MS Institute for Forestry Inventory/Management | 4 |
| Private Lands | 4 |
| Forest Legacy | 5 |
| Forest Resource Development | 5 |
| Forest Stewardship Program | 5 |
| Public Lands | 6 |
| Sixteenth Section Lands | 6 |
| Forest Health | 7 |
| Fire Services | 8 |
| Communications | 8 |
| Aviation | 9 |
| Rural Fire Assistance | 9 |
| Volunteer Fire Assistance Program | 9 |
| Fire Law Enforcement | 10 |
| Information & Public Outreach | 11 |
| Underserved Outreach Program | 11 |
| Urban & Community Forestry Program | 12 |
| Champion Tree Program | 13 |
| Business Support | 14 |
| Financial Services | 14 |
| Information Systems | 14 |
| Human Resources | 14 |
| Safety & Training | 14 |
| Revenue Report | 15 |
| Expense Report | 15 |
| Board of Commissioners | 16 |
| Contact information | 17 |



The Mississippi Forestry Commission provides equal employment opportunity and services to all individuals regardless of disability, race, age, religion, color, gender, creed, national origin or political affiliation.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# 2014 – 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.

We are proud of our service to the public and our protection of the state's valuable forest resources. Committed to delivering quality services and assistance to both rural and urban landowners, the Forestry Commission looks forward to the continued privilege of caring for Mississippi's trees, forests and natural resources.

Additionally, we are very proud to have achieved American Tree Farm certification on Mississippi's School Trust Lands (16th Section Lands) that provide over $20,000,000 annually to support public education.

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 2014 a success.

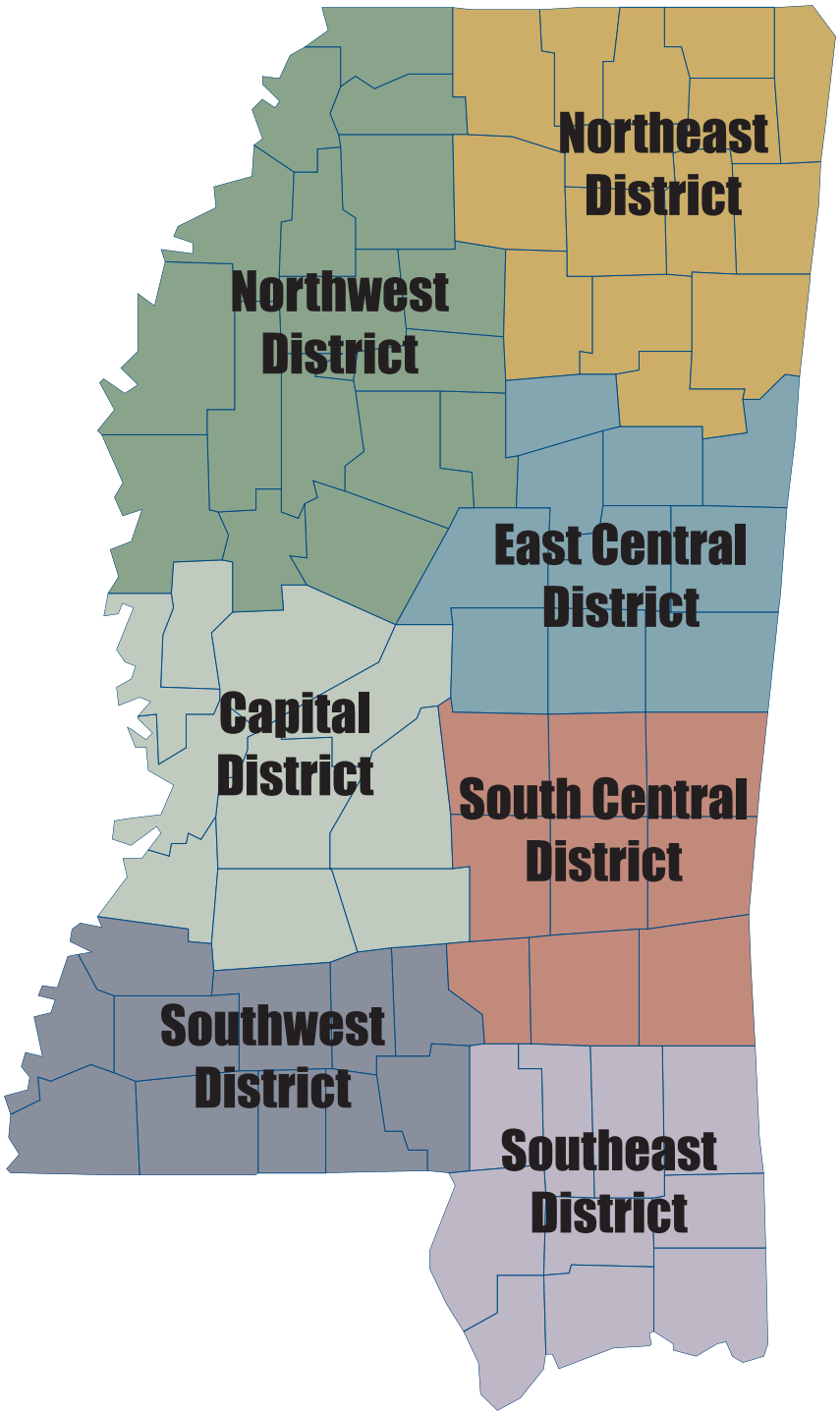
Please contact our office at any time. We look forward to serving you.

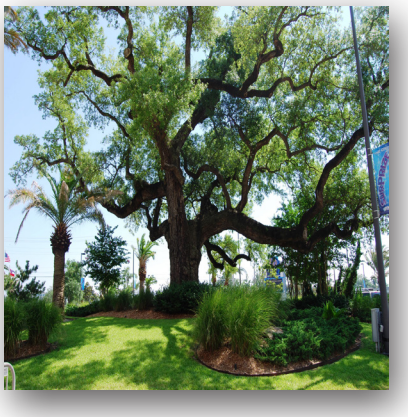
Charlie Morgan

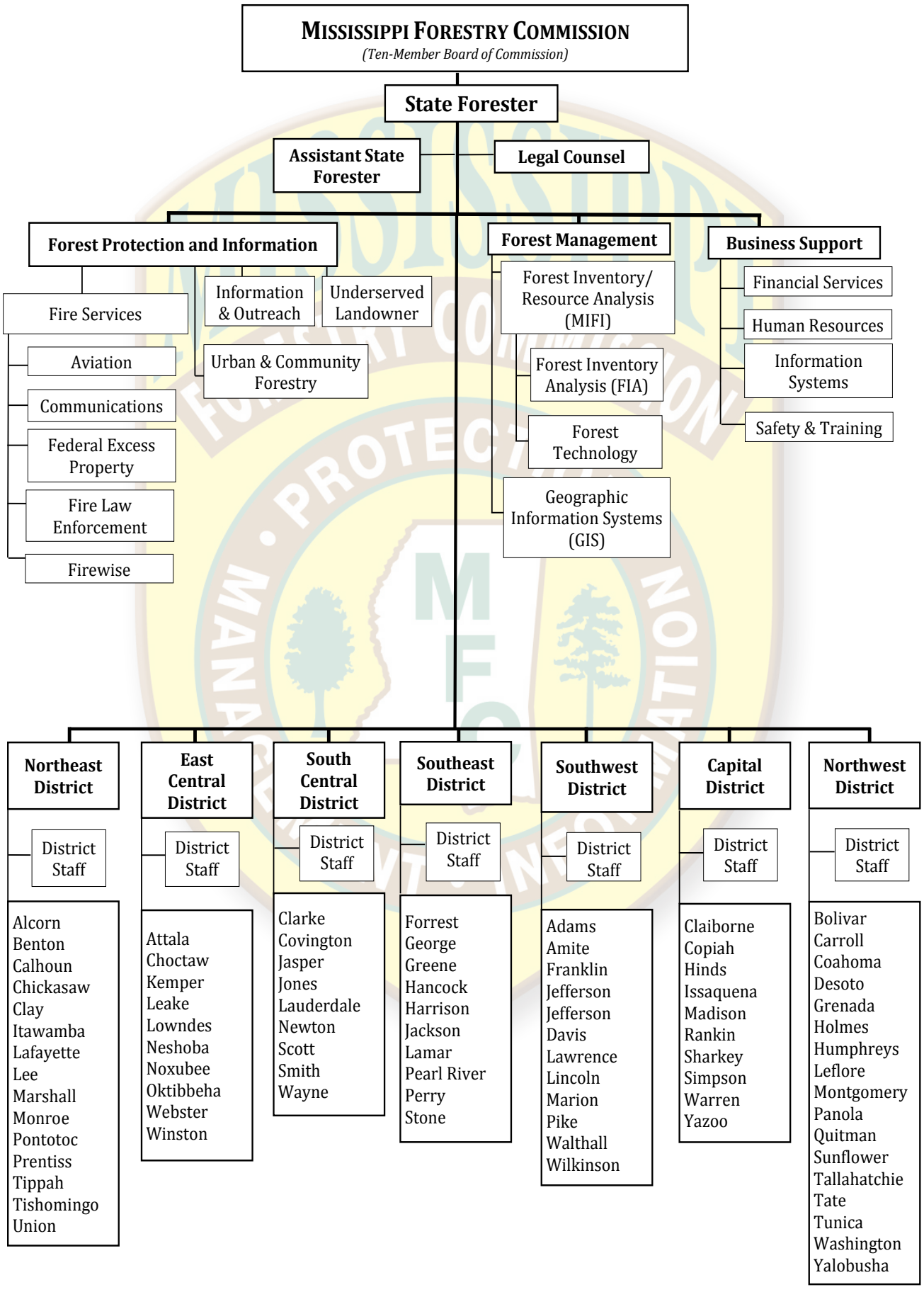
Charlie Morgan

State Forester

## Mississippi Forestry Commission Administrative Districits






*Fiscal Year 2014 Agency Organizational Chart*

# 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.

In FY12, MFC began to re-inventory the state. The re-inventory is a 5 year project, accomplishing 20% of the state per year. It is important that we continue to find ways to fund our statewide inventory so Mississippi can continue jto be competitive in the growing markert of bio-energy and forest products.

The forest industry in Mississippi is a $10.38B industry and represents over 63,000 jobs. In FY14, MFC/MIFI used this information to respond to numerous request for resource analyses for forest products, ethanol conversion and wood pellet facilities. A re-inventory is currently in progress and will continue to keep Mississippi's forest based economy competitive.

## 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 FY14, 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.

**FY14 Statewide Accomplishments**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Private Lands Activities** | |
| Landowners Assisted | 9,560 |
| Forest Management Plans | 1,588 |
| Acres | 118,941 |
| **Public Land Activities** | |
| Timber Sale Receipts | $23,187,894* |
| Number of Sales | 265 |
| Acres Regenerated | 9,009 |
| Boundary Line Maintenance (Miles) | 383 |
| Firebreak/Woods Road Maintenance (Miles) | 655 |
| **Forest Resource Development Program** | |
| Acres Regenerated or Improved | 22,814 |
| **Prescribed Burning** | |
| Private Lands (Acres) | 8,190 |
| Public Lands (Acres) | 6,754 |
| **Total (Acres)** | **14,944** |

*Source: MFC's Public Lands Timber Sale report and FY14 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 FY13, and actual thin sale revenue; does not include remaining pay-as-cut revenue which will be reported next year as carry over from FY14. Note: 23 public land timber sales were rejected in FY14 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 practices performed by MFC:

- 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, which takes data from SIMSMap and creates a statewide harvest plan to carry out management activities from one year to the next.

In FY14, the revenue from timber sales on non-federal public lands, including School Trust Lands, totaled $23.19 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 FY14 totaled $23.19 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 light for FY14 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). ARRA funding expired in December 2011. The Cogongrass Program continued operations in FY14 with USDA Forest Service Redesign Competitive State and Private Grant funding.

| **Cogongrass** | |
|---|---|
| Applications from Landowners | 325 |
| Applications/Landowners Inspected | 325 |
| Total Infested Spots Treated | 3,068 |
| Total Infested Acres Treated | 575.93 |

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.

*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.

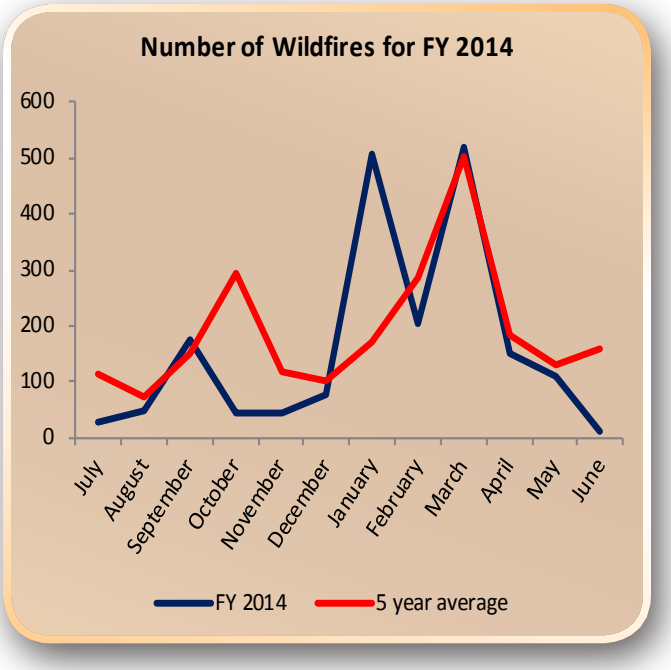
MFC provides assistance to Mississippi and other states with all weather-related events such as hurricanes, ice storms and large scale wildfires, and also coordinates the management of MFC's firefighting resources within the state.

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 | 7 |
| Children | 22 | 162 |
| Debris Burning | 828 | 7,788 |
| Equipment Use | 36 | 397 |
| Incendiary | 850 | 14,457 |
| Lightning | 14 | 1,015 |
| Miscellaneous | 156 | 1,824 |
| Railroad | 2 | 30 |
| Re-ignition | 0 | 0 |
| Smoking | 17 | 190 |
| **Total** | **1,928** | **25,870** |

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




While great strides in wildfire prevention, detection and suppression have been made, wildfires still continue to plague the state. Over the five year average, there are approximately 2,256 wildfires each year in Mississippi burning more than 27,717 acres.

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 dispatch sites, which provide statewide communication from dispatch centers to field personnel.

In FY11, MFC made our first purchase of radios for the Mississippi Wireless Integrated Network (MSWIN) system as required by the Mississippi Wireless Communications Committee. The new system is now fully deployed and is the agency's primary response communication system. The MSWIN system provides 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 FY14, MFC suppressed 1,928 wildfires, which burned 25,870 acres. The average wildfire size for FY14 was 13.4 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 FY14, MFC issued 82 vehicles and 69 pieces of other equipment with an estimated value or acquisition cost of $9.1 million.

In FY14, the Mississippi Forestry Commission awarded 54 grants totaling $191,894 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 FY14, the Mississippi Forestry Commission awarded 54 grants totaling $191,894 to volunteer fire departments. These grants were used to purchase wildland firefighting ready-kits containing protective clothing and gear for 540 volunteer firefighters.

## Firewise

In FY14, 26 homes were destroyed, 17 homes were damaged and 2,030 homes were threatened by wildfire. Is your home 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 nine 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
- Scooba, MS in Kemper County
- Iuka, MS in Tishoming County
- Batesville, MS in Panola County
- Sardis, MS in Panola 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)

In our misdemeanor cases, MFC investigators have dealt with total of eight cases. 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 approximately $24,200.00. We have issued total of eight citations under the woods arson statute and filed three affidavits charging the perpetrators under the woods arson statute. In both felony and misdemeanor cases the total of pending restitution stands at approximately $20,680.38.

In suppression cases, the MFC investigators directly handled 22 cases, in which the responsible parties were issued an invoice for the incurred costs totaling approximately $13,162.29. The total amount involved in all pending civil and criminal cases is $33,842.67. This includes suppressions, misdemeanor and felony restitutions. FY14 cases in which a money totals had not yet been determined will be reported next fiscal year. The total number of all investigated cases, criminal and civil, is approximately 110 cases.

The law enforcement division assisted on a timber theft case on a timber theft case that was led by Department of Agricultural and Commerce and has now been resolved thru the Circuit Court of Pearl River Co. This case 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. The perpetrator has pleaded guilty to the charges and will be responsible for some costs involved for restitution in this case. He will also serve some jail time, house arrest and probation time.

Accidental wildffires, such as escaped campfires 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.

*Wildfire Investigation Training*

## 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 FY14, the Forest Information Department continues to utilizing social media to help carry the MFC message. Accounts were developed on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. 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 | 320 |
| Participants | 41,051* |

* 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 FY14, outreach activities reached more than 13,363 youths and 27,005 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 & Ole Miss Mascot*

## 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

*Public Outreach Display*

## 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 FY14, the MFC's Urban/Community Forestry Program provided 7 financial assistance grants totaling $131,743 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. Currently Mississippi's has two Tree Line USA Utility and they are 4-County Electric Power Association. and Entergy Corp.

## 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 Mississippi State University and The University of Southern Mississippi

## Tree City USA

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 41 Mississippi cities and towns certified as Tree City USA.

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

TREE CITY USA®

The Arbor Day Poster Contest is no longer sponsored nationally by the Arbor Day Foundation, but conducted by MFC with assistance from MUFC. The FY14 contest had 27 schools with 4,025 students participating statewide.

## *2014 Arbor Day Poster Winners*

| | Student | School |
|---|---|---|
| 1st: | Camryn English | Oak Grove Upper Elementary |
| 2nd: | Stephanie Kellum | Lafayette Upper Elementary |
| 3rd: | Garrett Greer | Port Gibson Elementary |

## *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 165 trees registered as Mississippi Champions, five are also national champions and two 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 FY14 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 FY14, 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 FY13, the MFC had 448 full-time and two part-time authorized employee positions. Authorized positions for FY14 include 449 full-time and two part-time.

**MFC Employees***

| Position | FY13 | FY14 |
|---|---|---|
| Full Time | 448 | 449 |
| Part-Time | 2 | 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 FY14. Some of the training includes forest management training, pipeline safety training, prescribe burn short course, fire safety training, defensive driving, EEOC, B.O.R.F. Ethics and equal employment opportunities in the workplace training.

*Wildland Firefighter Training*

# MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION
## Fiscal Year 2014 Income and Expense Statement thru June 30, 2014
## Comparative to June 30, 2013

| | 6/30/2014 | 6/30/2013 | Increase/ (Decrease) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Income:** | | | |
| General Funds | $17,847,780 | $16,225,829 | $1,621,951 |
| Severance Tax | 2,851,803 | 2,794,085 | 57,718 |
| Acreage Tax | 1,441,009 | 1,371,045 | 69,964 |
| Miscellaneous Income | 87,890 | 22,393 | 65,497 |
| Criminal Law Assessment Fines | 12,295 | 8,717 | 3,578 |
| Rent of State Property | 48,945 | 34,451 | 14,494 |
| Rent of Office Space | | 40,000 | (40,000) |
| Forestry Programs | 2,506,248 | 3,728,024 | (1,221,776) |
| Sub-Grants (DEQ | 7,175 | | 7,175 |
| Crew Assistance - Private Lands | 396,692 | 390,650 | 6,042 |
| Crew Assistance - Public Lands | 1,487,679 | 1,380,196 | 107,483 |
| Sale of Real Estate | 50,000 | 3,000 | 47,000 |
| Sale of Property | 43,154 | 87,292 | (44,138) |
| Sale of Scrap | 917 | 1,714 | (797) |
| Other Sales | 1,250 | (63,328) | 64,578 |
| Transfer from other funds | 421,755 | 500,000 | (78,245) |
| Other Refunds | 901 | - | - |
| **Net Revenue** | **$27,205,493** | **$26,524,068** | **$758,769** |
| **Accounts Receivable:** | | | |
| Billable Services | 355,869 | 5,521 | 350,348 |
| Federal Reimbursements | - | 189,531 | (189,531) |
| **Net A/R** | **$355,869** | **$195,052** | **$160,817** |
| **TOTAL REVENUE** | **$27,561,362** | **$26,719,120** | **842,242** |
| **Expense:** | | | |
| Salaries | 18,076,517 | 17,754,791 | $321,726 |
| Travel | 93,973 | 101,832 | (7,859) |
| Contractual | 2,652,899 | 2,470,080 | 182,819 |
| Encumbrances | 103,608 | 401,038 | (297,430) |
| Commodities | 2,252,626 | 2,180,343 | 72,283 |
| Encumbrances | 126,584 | 139,184 | (12,600) |
| Capital Outlay other than equipment | 6,250 | 314,375 | (7,669) |
| Encumbrances | - | - | - |
| Equipment | 389,212 | 270,501 | 118,711 |
| Encumbrances | 13,916 | 3,821 | 10,095 |
| Vehicles | 27,825 | 2,445 | 25,380 |
| Encumbrances | 381,724 | - | 381,724 |
| Wireless Communication Devices | 620 | 1,978 | (1,358) |
| Encumbrances | - | - | |
| Subsidies, Loans, and Grants | 3,159,005 | 2,340,768 | 818,237 |
| Encumbrances | - | - | - |
| **TOTAL EXPENSE** | **$27,284,759** | **$25,981,156** | **1,303,603** |
| **Net** | **276,603** | **737,964** | **(461,361)** |

Total Encumbrances thru June 2014: $625,832
(cash not expended, only authority reserved)

# FY14 Board of Commissioners

**Floyd "Buck" Hobbs**, *Chairman*
2479 Hwy 309 South
Byhalia, MS 38611
Home Phone: (662) 838-2056
Cell Phone: (901) 490-1541
Email: hobbs5h@aol.com
*Term Expires: January 19, 2017
Representing: At Large

**Joseph E. Pettigrew**, *Vice-Chairman*
P. O. Box 592
Kiln, MS 39556
Cell Phone: (228) 493-8733
Email: petigru@aol.com
*Term Expires: June 30, 2017
Representing: 4th Congressional District

**Neil Black**
187 Biglane Road
Ellisville, MS 39437
Phone: (601) 498-3038
Alt Phone: (601) 752-2696
Email: neilablack60@yahoo.com
*Term Expires: March 19, 2017
Representing: At Large

**Robert E. "Bob" Cox**
1732 Douglastown Road
Maben, MS 39750
Fax Number: (662) 324-3183
Home Phone: (662) 324-0194
Cell Phone: (901) 488-3795
Email: bob.cox@tembec.com
*Term Expires: June 30, 2014
Representing: 3rd Congressional District

**James Cummins** , *MIFI Board Member*
P.O. Box 10
Stoneville, MS 38776
Office Phone: (662) 686-3375
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Term Expires: non-expiring
Representing: Ex-officio

**Larry Homan**
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*Term Expires: June 30, 2018
Representing: 1st Congressional District

**Dr. George Hopper**
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Representing: Ex-officio

**Mike Mikell**
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Representing: 2nd Congressional District

**Jim Luckett**
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*Term Expires: June 30, 2018
Representing: At Large

**Al Hankin**
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Grenada, MS 38902
Work Phone: (662) 226-2961
Cell Phone: (662) 417-2600
Email: alberthankins@live.com
*Term Expires: June 30, 2019
Representing: At Large

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

# MFC Administrative Distric Offices

### Mississippi Forestry Commission

Charlie Morgan, State Forester
660 North St., Suite 300
Jackson, Mississippi 39202
Phone: (601) 359-1386 • Fax: (601) 359-1349

### Northeast District

Stacy Lewis District Forester
1711 McCullough Boulevard
P.O. Box 703 • Tupelo, MS 38802
Phone: (662) 842-5312 • Fax: (662) 680-9999

### Northwest District

Mark Williams, District Forester
1801 Highway 51 South • Grenada, MS 38901
Phone: (662) 226-3321 • Fax: (662) 226-0170

### Capital District

Dale Oliver, District Forester
3139 Highway 468 • Pearl, MS 39208
Phone: (769) 218-6830 • Fax: (601) 420-6027

### East Central District

Buck Buchanan, District Forester
14941 Highway 16 West
P.O. Box 429 • Philadelphia, MS 39350
Phone: (601) 656-1381 • Fax: (601) 656-9247

### South Central District

Jack White, District Forester
2705 Highway 15 South
P.O. Box 348 • Bay Springs, MS 39422
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Fax: (601) 764-3037

### Southeast District

Mike Lee, District Forester
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### Southwest District

Randy Chapin, District Forester
515 County Farm Lane Northeast
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Fax: (601) 835-0188

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

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