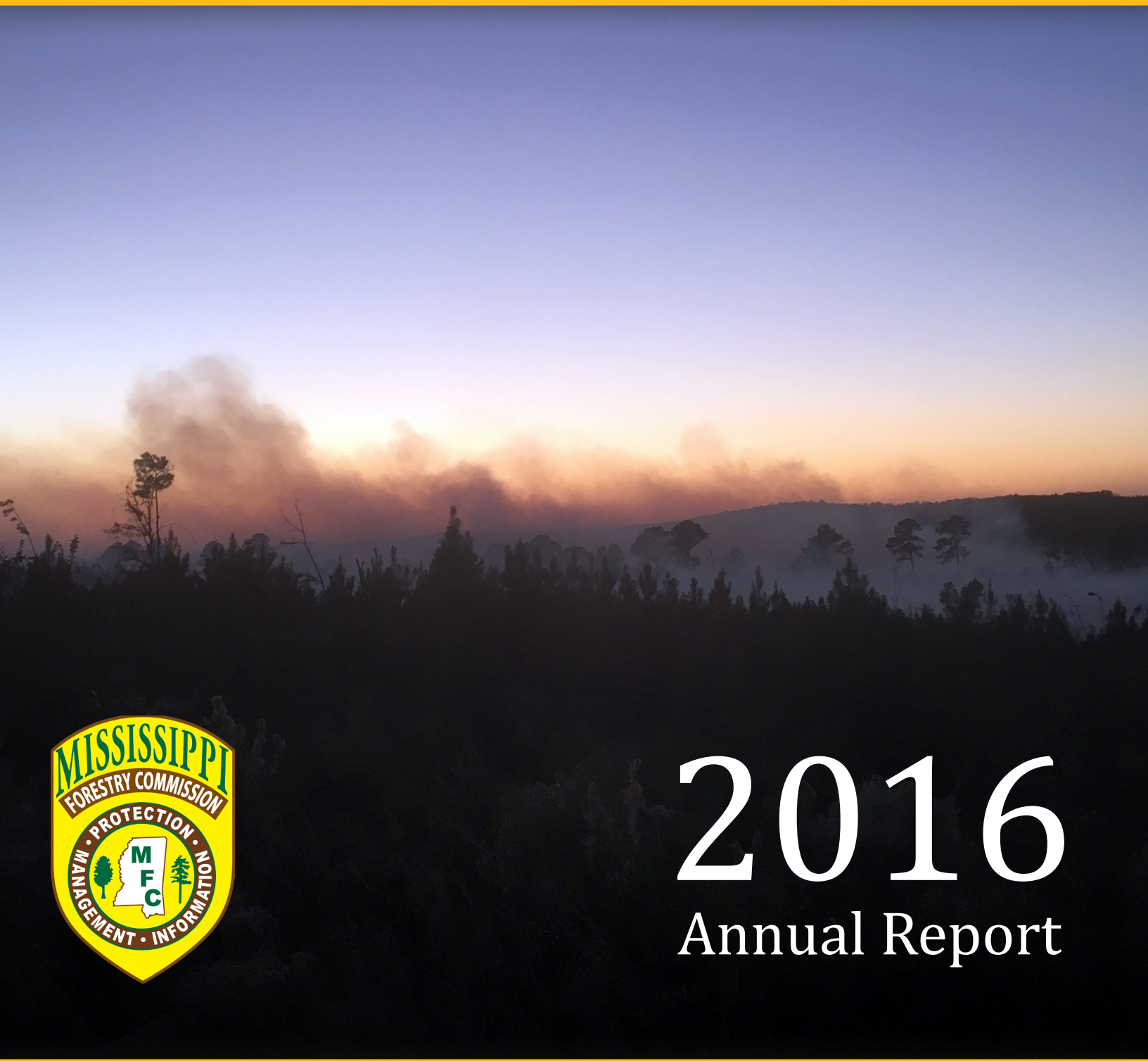
Mississippi Forestry Commission

Protection – Management – Information



2016

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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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.
The Mississippi Forestry Commission is an equal opportunity provider.

2016 – Annual Report

The Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) has been a leader in the protection, management, and sustainability of Mississippi's forestland since 1926. The MFC is a public service agency responsible for all facets of forest protection, management, and information for the state of Mississippi. The MFC provides expertise, information, and support to keep Mississippi's 19.8 million acres of forestland healthy, productive, and profitable. The MFC protects Mississippi's forestland from wildfire, sustainably manages approximately 485,000 acres of forested non-federal public land, and delivers quality forest management services and assistance to both rural and urban private landowners.

Forests make important, positive contributions to the quality of life for Mississippians by providing almost 70,000 jobs, a wealth of forest products, improved water quality, livestock forage areas, open spaces, abundant wildlife habitat, recreational experiences, and economic benefits. In Mississippi, the forestry and forest products industry has a $12.79 billion economic impact.

We are proud of our service to the public and our protection of the state's valuable forest resources. The MFC looks forward to the continued privilege of caring for Mississippi's trees, forests, and natural resources. Professional Foresters know that our precious natural resources - water, soil, wildlife, air, and timber - can be utilized and renewed with careful management. Sustainable management of our natural resources ensures the abundance of these resources for future generations.

In addition, the MFC is proud to have achieved American Tree Farm certification on Mississippi's School Trust (16th Section) Lands which provide over $19 million annually to support public education. This is the first large-scale certification of non-federal public forestland in the nation.

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 that the citizens of Mississippi receive the best assistance and service possible.

I would also like to thank our state leaders, commissioners, staff, partners, and citizens for their continued support and assistance in making 2016 a productive year.

Please feel free to contact our office anytime, we look forward to serving you.

Sincerely,

Charlie Morgan
State Forester
Mississippi Forestry Commission

Message from the State Forester

FY2016 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

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

James Cummins
P.O. Box 10
Stoneville, MS 38776
Office Phone: (662) 686-3375
Fax Number: (662) 666-4780
Home Phone: (662) 686-4592
Cell Phone: (662) 820-5703
Email: jcummins@wildlifemiss.org
Term Expires: non-expiring
Representing: Ex-officio

Dr. George Hopper
Mississippi State University
Box 9680
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

Mike Mikell
P. O. Box 247
Port Gibson, MS 39150
Phone Number: (601) 431-6535
Email: mikellpfsi@hotmail.com
*Term Expires: June 30, 2019
Representing: 2nd Congressional District

Ken Martin, *Vice-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

Joseph E. Pettigrew
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

Jim Luckett
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

Al Hankins
P. O. Box 575
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 District Offices

Mississippi Forestry Commission
State Forester's Office
Charlie Morgan, State Forester
660 North Street, 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

South Central District
Jack White, District Forester
2705 Highway 15 South
P.O. Box 348
Bay Springs, MS 39422
Phone: (601) 764-2711
Alt. Phone: (601) 764-3061
Fax: (601) 764-3037

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

Southeast District
Mike Lee, District Forester
1528 Azalea Drive
P.O. Box 430
Wiggins, MS 39577
Phone: (601) 928-5261
Fax: (601) 928-3174

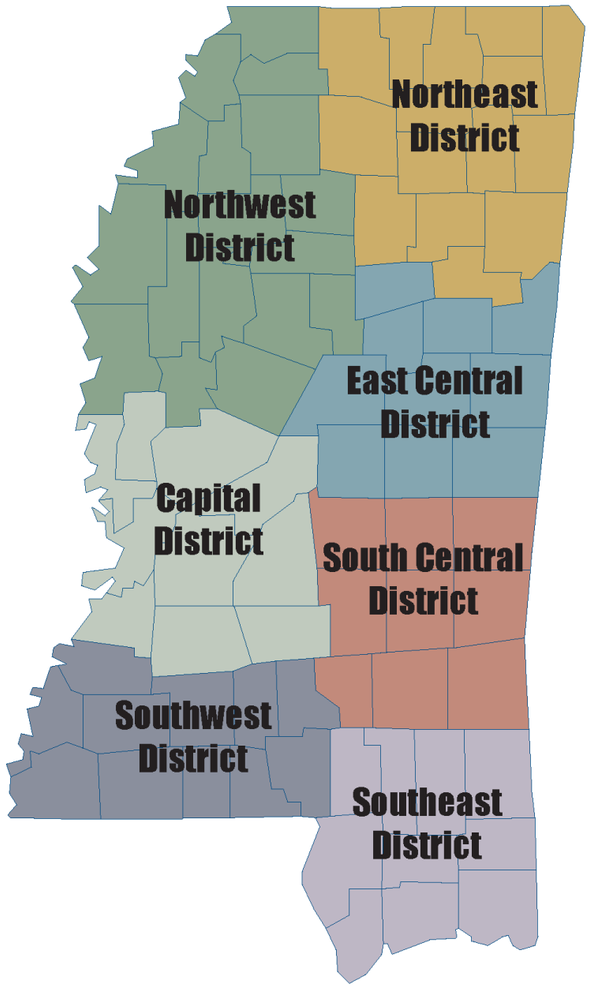
Capital District
Dale Oliver, District Forester
3139 Highway 468 West
Pearl, MS 39208
Phone: (769) 218-6745
Fax: (601) 420-6027

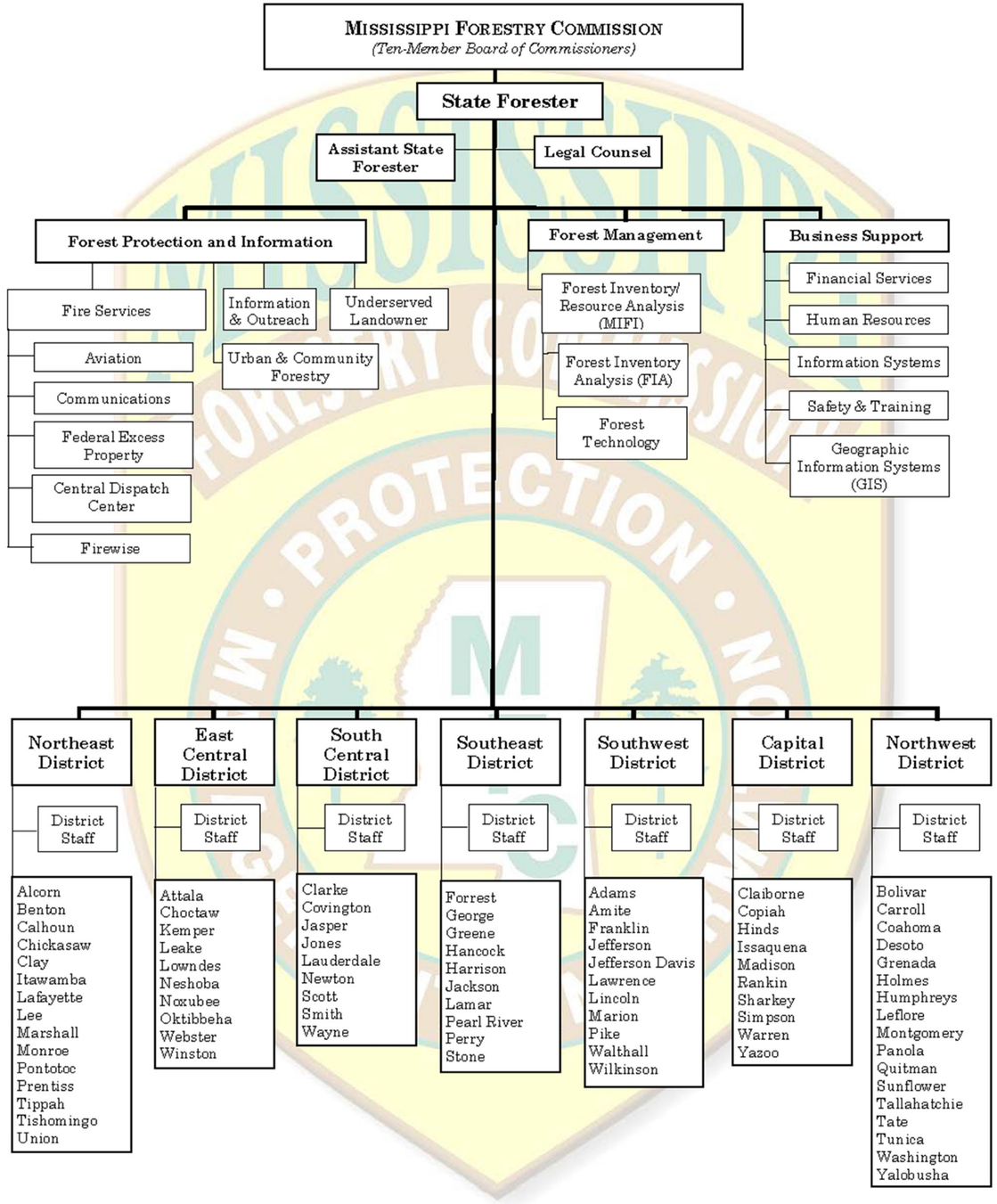
Southwest District
Randy Chapin, District Forester
515 County Farm Lane Northeast
P.O. Box 749
Brookhaven, MS 39602-0749
Phone: (601) 833-6621
Alt. Phone: (601) 833-2598
Fax: (601) 835-0188

East Central District
Buck Buchanan, District Forester
14941 Highway 16 West
P.O. Box 429
Philadelphia, MS 39350
Phone: (601) 656-1381
Fax: (601) 656-8739

For more information, please visit: www.mfc.ms.gov

Mississippi Forestry Commission Administrative Districts





Fiscal Year 2016 Agency 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 non-federal public forestland in Mississippi.

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

Private Land Activities

In FY16, 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.

$2.27 million in FRDP funding was distributed to private forest landowners.

Private Landowner Services

The MFC offers a variety of services, programs, and resources to nonindustrial 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 region. Some of these services may be obtained from private vendors.

Contact your local MFC District Office for more information about available local services (p.3).

Photo by Leslie Robertson, courtesy of National Association of State Foresters

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	**9,027**
*Total Forest Management Plans	**1,667**
Acres under Management Plans	**155,127**
Prescribed Burning (Acres)	**9,997**

Public Land Activities

Timber Sale Receipts	**$19,369,755**
Number of Sales	**256**
Acres Regenerated	**8,000**
Boundary Line Maintenance (Miles)	**465**
Firebreak Maintenance (Miles)	**954**
Prescribed Burning (Acres)	**9,738**

Prescribed Burning - Private & Public Land

Total (Acres)	**19,735**

Forest Resource Development Program

Acres Regenerated or Improved	**23,077**
Funds Distributed	**$2,267,434**

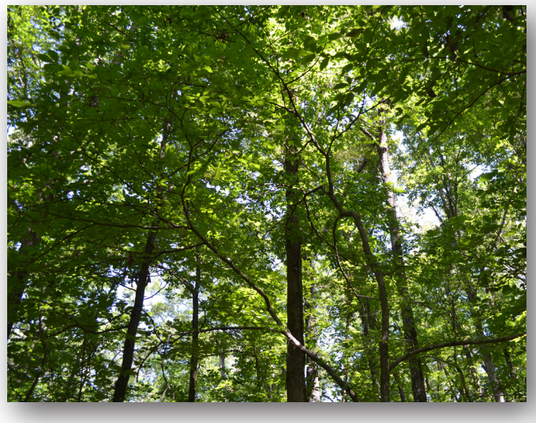
**Certified Stewardship & other Forest Management plans*

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 FY16, the FRDP distributed $2.27 million to private forest landowners and 23,077 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 tree planting and forest improvement practices designed for the purpose of long-term timber production and enhanced wildlife development. Payments cover approximately 50 - 75% (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 protect the area receiving FRDP assistance from fire and grazing and to manage the area for a minimum of 10 years using the proper practices. To learn more about the FRDP, visit: www.mfc.ms.gov/forest-resource-development-program or contact your local MFC District Office (p.3). Please note: submission of an application does not guarantee participation in the FRDP or that cost-share funds will be available. The local MFC District Office will confirm funding amounts and participation in the FRDP when the application is finalized.



Forest Management

Forest Stewardship

The Forest Stewardship Program promotes natural resource planning on nonindustrial private forestlands. 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 and improve fish and wildlife habitats. Forest Stewardship Management Plans share the same format as the management plans required by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) for their certification program. 155,127 acres were reported under a Certified Stewardship plan or other Forest Management plan in FY16.

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-program

Revenue from timber sales on non-federal public forestland totaled $19.37 million.

Public Land Activities

The MFC provides forest management assistance on approximately 485,000 acres of non-federal public forestland in Mississippi. In FY16, the MFC managed 3 state forests (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 the other various agencies, boards, departments, and entities that have jurisdiction over state and other public forestland in Mississippi.

School Trust Lands

The MFC is charged by state law to manage forested Mississippi School Trust Lands (commonly referred to as 16th Section Lands) located in 67 counties throughout the state. The MFC sustainably manages approximately 480,000 acres of forested 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 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 Land and other public lands totaled $19.37 million in FY16.

The MFC converted their collective management data into a GIS system to prepare the first comprehensive 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 School Trust Lands are certified by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), the first ever large-scale certification of non-federal public lands 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.

"The MFI data was a key element to support and validate our decision to locate that new state-of-the-art mill in Mississippi.

The information is well laid out and gives a high degree of confidence in its accuracy."

-Dan Bowen
Biewer Lumber

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 MFI program also effectively distributes forest inventory-based information for economic development and policy purposes. For inventory purposes, the state is divided into five MFI regions, with each region being inventoried over a one-year period. In order to present an accurate picture of Mississippi's forest resources, the statewide forest inventory operates on a continuous five-year cycle.

In FY16, the Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory (MIFI), was renamed the Mississippi Forest Inventory (MFI). The MFI became a separate program area within the MFC budget in FY14, allowing the program to operate with greater efficiency.

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. This statewide system provides information on wildfires, public and private lands, and urban forestry programs. In an effort to promote the economic development of Mississippi's forest resources, the MFC, in conjunction with the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), provided forest resource maps and information to businesses investigating the possibility of locating in Mississippi.

The MFI region completed in FY16 will help provide the necessary data to keep Mississippi's $12.79 billion forest-based economy competitive. Maintaining an up-to-date analysis of the state's forest resources is critical information for both existing and potential forest-industry investors. Companies wishing to locate in Mississippi often consult MFI data during their decision-making process.

"We are proud to have achieved American Tree Farm certification on Mississippi's School Trust (16th Section) Lands.

This is the first large-scale certification of non-federal public forestland in the nation."

-Charlie Morgan
State Forester

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 ground-checked to determine the exact cause and extent of any damage.

The MFC also provides technical assistance and special incentive programs to private landowners to combat threats from invasive plants, such as Cogongrass and kudzu. Visit www.mfc.ms.gov/forest-health for more information.

In FY16, the southern pine beetle continued to threaten more pine timber in the southern region of the United States than any other forest insect. In response to this ongoing hazard, the MFC continued to partner with the Mississippi State University Extension Service and 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.

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.

In FY08, the MFC launched a plan to mitigate the damage caused to Mississippi's forestland by invasive non-native plant species. 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.

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

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 shared goals regarding invasive species.

In an effort to stop the spread of invasive pest species through the transportation of non-native firewood into the state, the MFC continued to reach out to the public regarding the "Don't Move Firewood" campaign. In FY16, MFC employees distributed promotional items at 39 venues across the state, including sporting events, the Mississippi State Fair, Mississippi Wildlife Extravaganza, and the Mississippi Garden and Patio Show.

Invasive Plant Control Program for Cogongrass Suppression

Cogongrass Applications from Landowners	316
Landowners Inspected	316
Total Infested Spots Treated	3,164
Total Infested Acres Treated	660

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 Mississippi, cogongrass has been identified in 63 counties, with significant infestations in 28 counties.

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 in the 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.

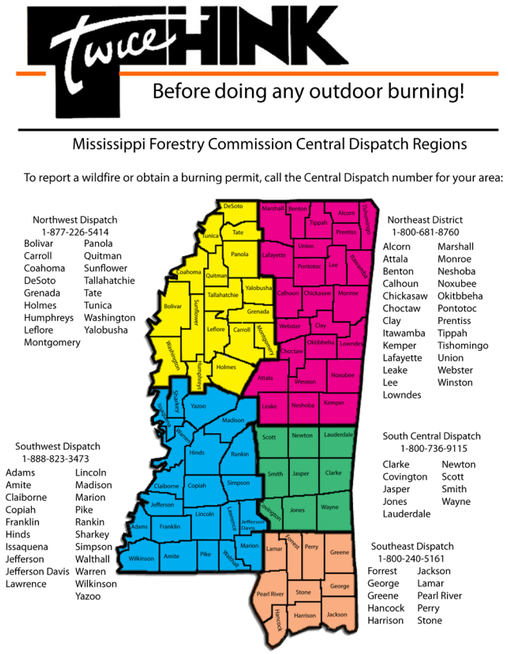
The goal of Mississippi's Forest Legacy Program is: to protect environmentally important forestland threatened by conversion to non-forest uses.

In FY16, the MFC had two Forest Legacy projects approved for acquisition in the Southeast Mississippi Forest Legacy Area. Counties with Forest Legacy Program approved tracts are George, Greene, and Jackson - all within Mississippi's Fourth Congressional District in the Pascagoula River Watershed. The Leaf River Tract (Scarborough Tract) is scheduled to be acquired in the fall of 2016. The Leaf River Tract consists of 2,100 contiguous acres along the Pascagoula River in George/ Greene Counties.

Forest Protection

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

The MFC responded to and suppressed 1,916 wildfires that burned 31,370 acres, in FY16. MFC Wildland Firefighters saved 2,073 structures threatened by wildfire activity. 38 structures were damaged or destroyed. The average wildfire size was 16.4 acres. The MFC dispatches wildland firefighting personnel and equipment to the location of reported wildfire activity 24/7. To report a wildfire, contact the appropriate Central Dispatch number for your area or dial 911.



Visit www.mfc.ms.gov/wildfire-report for more information.

Nationwide, 9 out of 10 wildfires are human-caused and could have been prevented with proper care. In an effort to reduce the number of human-caused wildfires in Mississippi, burn bans are issued by each County Board of Supervisors and approved by the MFC.

MFC Wildland Firefighters responded to & suppressed 1,916 wildfires that burned 31,370 acres.

Burn ban notifications are posted and updated on the MFC's website and social media pages. Visit 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 not less than $100 and not more than $500. 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.

In FY16, Governor Phil Bryant issued a Statewide Burn Ban Proclamation in Mississippi. The Statewide Burn Ban was requested by the MFC and issued as a State of Emergency Proclamation by the Governor.

The MFC requested the Statewide Burn Ban due to the increase in wildfire occurrences, elevated drought conditions, dry vegetation, and the lack of forecasted rainfall to alleviate drought conditions. These conditions created an increased risk for devastating wildfire occurrences. The Statewide Burn Ban was in effect from October 20 - 26, 2015.

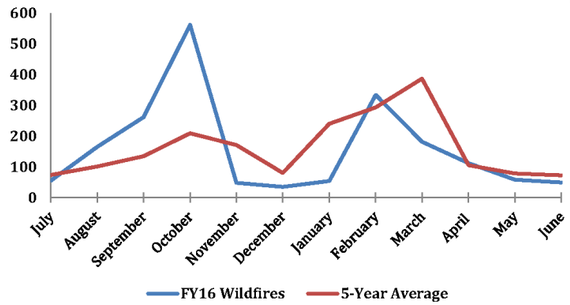
The MFC coordinates the management of wildland firefighting resources within the state and deploys MFC employees to assist with federal wildland firefighting detail in times of need (as long as wildfire conditions permit). The MFC collects the necessary data to make sound decisions and long-range plans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

Visit www.mfc.ms.gov/burning-permits to request a burning permit, or call the MFC Central Dispatch number for your area.

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).

The following weather and fire information resources are available on the MFC website: www.mfc.ms.gov/predictive-services-fire-weather



July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

- 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

FY16 Wildfires by Cause

Cause	# Wildfires	# Acres Burned
Lightning	16	320
Campfire	8	17
Smoking	20	170
Debris Burning	743	6,747
Incendiary	325	11,772
Equipment Use	69	1,641
Railroad	5	66
Children	13	45
Miscellaneous	717	10,592
Total	**1,916**	**31,370**

Forest Protection

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 FY16, the MFC's FEPP/FFP programs issued 61 vehicles and 210 other pieces of wildland firefighting equipment with an estimated value (or acquisition cost) of $7.72 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 for more information on rural fire assistance grant programs.

$7.72 million in wildland firefighting vehicles & equipment were issued to Mississippi VFDs through the FEPP/ FFP program.

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 FY16. The MFC administers this program through an agreement with the USDA Forest Service. In FY16, the MFC awarded 62 grants with a total value of $279,000 to volunteer fire departments through the VFA Program.

The MFC awarded 62 grants with a total value of $279,000 to Volunteer Fire Departments.

Aviation

In FY16, 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 FY16. 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.

2,073 structures were threatened by wildfire activity and 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 FY16, 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 disseminating information, providing educational presentations, and offering public relations support. This Department oversees media relations, internal and external information distribution, agency publications, and management of the MFC's online presence.

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

In FY16, Governor Phil Bryant issued a Statewide Burn Ban. During that time, information distribution efforts centered predominately on wildfire prevention, burn bans, and media coverage of wildfire activity statewide.

Public Outreach

During FY16, the Public Outreach Division of the Forest Information Department continued to provide support to MFC program areas by providing public information, outreach programs, and communication resources. 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 such as civic club presentations, sporting events,

information booths at community events, forestry field days, and visits to school groups 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 FY16, the Firewise Program and the Underserved Landowner Outreach Program. Visit www.mfc.ms.gov/public-outreach-information to contact the Public Outreach Officer for your area.

$62,800 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 exhibit 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	198
Participants	80,609*

**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

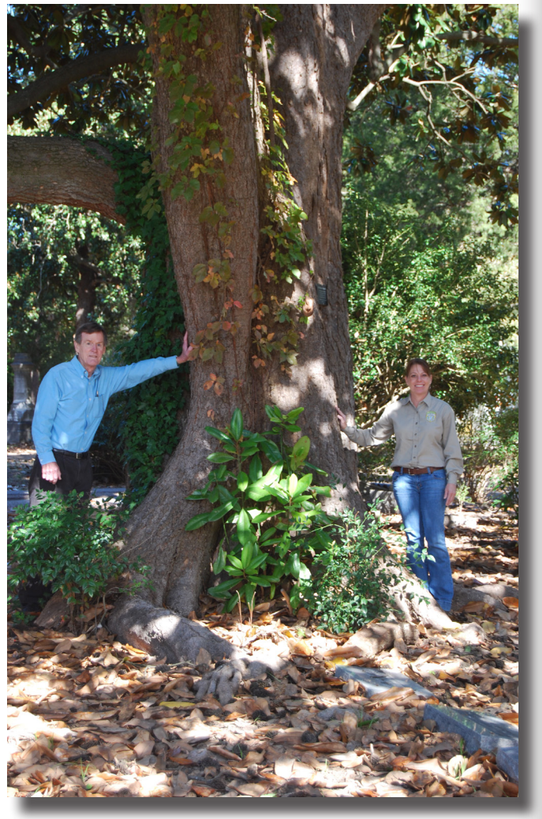
The Urban and Community Forestry Division provides assistance and training to urban areas in the development of community forestry programs. Support is offered for counties and municipalities regarding the development of tree ordinances, hazardous tree inventories, and urban forest management plans. 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.

Champion Tree Program

Champion Trees of Mississippi, the official publication of the Mississippi Champion Tree Program, recorded the largest trees of various species growing in the state. Of the 175 trees registered as Mississippi Champions, 9 are national champions and 5 are national co-champions.



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. Following the virtualization of the agency's server based infrastructure in FY15, implementation was completed in FY16. These advancements reduced server total cost of ownership (TCO) by up to 80% and dramatically reduced power consumption costs.

Human Resources

The MFC's Human Resources Division maintained personnel administration for all MFC employees. In FY16, the MFC had 450 full-time and 2 part-time authorized employee positions. In FY15, the MFC had 449 full-time and 2 part-time positions.

MFC Employees*

Positions	FY15	FY16
Full-time	449	450
Part-time	2	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 FY16. Training opportunities are essential to enhancing job skills as well as fostering personal development and growth.

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION
Fiscal Year 2016 Finances
July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016

Revenue (Sources available to the agency for programs and operations.)

State Provided Funds		Projected		Received
General Funds (Appropriated)	$	19,453,087.00	$	19,453,087.00
Severance Tax (FRDP) 80%	$	2,700,000.00	$	3,167,810.00
Severance Tax (Admin) 20%	$	540,000.00	$	633,562.00
Acreage Tax	$	1,250,000.00	$	1,398,262.00
Totals	**$**	**23,943,087.00**	**$**	**24,652,721.00**

Agency Generated Funds		Projected		Received
Carryover from Prior FY	$	-	$	-
Crew Assistance	$	2,562,512.00	$	2,212,671.00
CRP	$	527,458.00	$	-
Misc (Equip Sales, Rent, Etc.)	$	343,122.00	$	343,122.00
Totals	**$**	**3,433,092.00**	**$**	**2,555,793.00**

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

Source Generated Funds		Cash Balance
Forest Management	$	1,387,199.00
Volunteer Fire Equipment	$	38,410.00
Totals	**$**	**1,425,609.00**

Expense

Agency Expenses (Non-Grant)		Budgeted		Expended
Salaries & Related	$	21,569,318.00	$	17,614,021.00
Operating (Non-Salary)	$	5,704,475.00	$	5,955,729.00
Equipment	$	2,642,348.00	$	195,899.00
Vehicles	$	207,000.00	$	2,107,523.00
FRDP Payments	$	2,156,292.00	$	2,156,292.00
Totals	**$**	**32,279,433.00**	**$**	**28,029,464.00**

Federal Grant Funds	Expended	Reimbursed
Protection Grants	1,477,104.00	1,320,078.00
Management Grants	713,219.00	1,255,630.00
Other Grants / CRP	3,281,062.00	3,281,062.00
Totals	5,471,385.00	5,856,770.00

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660 North Street, Suite 300
Jackson, Mississippi 39202
www.mfc.ms.gov