



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

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MS Forestry Commission Deploys Task Force Leader to Oklahoma

JACKSON, Miss. – The Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) is deploying one Wildland Firefighting Task Force Leader to Oklahoma, where this individual will assist state and federal partners with wildfire suppression efforts. He will arrive near Oklahoma City on Saturday, April 14, 2018. This individual also served on the Texas Wildland Firefighting strike team, which returned home on Thursday, April 5, 2018. His name will be released upon his safe return to Mississippi in approximately two weeks.

“We appreciate our employees taking part in these efforts to help our state and federal partners in Oklahoma, especially going back out so soon. Fighting the destructive power of wildfire means that our Wildland Firefighters are working in extreme conditions protecting people’s lives, homes, and forestland,” said Charlie Morgan, State Forester. “We are proud of his service and look forward to his safe return home in approximately two weeks.”

Oklahoma is currently experiencing critical wildfire weather conditions. Earlier today, officials ordered evacuations for some areas, and several large wildfires were still active. The “34 Complex Fire” is estimated to have burned close to 60,000 acres at present.

How the Mississippi Forestry Commission fights wildfires

MFC Wildland Firefighters “fight fire with fire”. They create a fire line (aka fire break) by using bulldozers to plow through vegetation (down to mineral soil) around the perimeter of the wildfire, then they light a controlled backfire along the inner edge of the fire line to consume additional vegetation – this lack of “fuel” for the wildfire creates a barrier to slow or stop the spread of the wildfire. However, their job is not yet finished – even after containment has been reached, wildland firefighters continue to monitor the area. Since the wind can spread hot embers across fire lines, new spot fires may occur as far away as one-half mile from the original wildfire that must be suppressed. Depending on the size, location, wind conditions, and intensity of the wildfire it may have to be monitored anywhere from several hours to several days to make sure the wildfire is no longer a threat to life, property, or forestland.

To learn more about wildfires in Mississippi, please visit our [website](#) and follow us on social media: [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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About the Mississippi Forestry Commission

Established in 1926, the [Mississippi Forestry Commission](#) (MFC), protects the state's valuable forest resources from wildfire, manages approximately 480,000 acres of forested School Trust Land, and delivers quality forest management services and assistance to both rural and urban landowners. 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. The MFC looks forward to the continued privilege of caring for Mississippi's trees, forests, and natural resources. There are approximately 19.8 million forested acres in Mississippi. Mississippi's forestry and forest products industries have a \$12.79 billion economic impact and employs almost 70,000 people. Forestry consistently ranks as the state's second most valuable agricultural commodity, right behind the poultry industry.



MFC Deploys Wildland Firefighter to Serve as Task Force Leader fighting Oklahoma wildfires.