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.
Message From the State Forester

2015 - Annual Report

The Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) has been a leader in the protection, management, and sustainability of our state’s forests for over 85 years. The MFC provides 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 Mississippi Forestry Commission looks forward to the continued privilege of caring for Mississippi’s trees, forests, and natural resources.

In addition, we are proud to have achieved American Tree Farm certification on Mississippi’s School Trust Lands (Sixteenth Section Lands) that provide over $20 million 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 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 2015 a successful year.

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

Sincerely,

Charlie Morgan
State Forester
**MS Statewide Forest Inventory**

**During Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15), the Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory/Forest Management Department provided direction and support to several program areas carried out on private and public lands.**

The MFC’s Resource Analysis Program oversees the development, implementation, and management of the agency’s geographic information system. This statewide system provided information on fires, public/private lands, and urban/community forestry programs. In 2006, the Mississippi Legislature passed a law that brought the Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory (MIFI) under the oversight of the Mississippi Forestry Commission, making it an agency program. In an effort to promote economic development of the state’s forest resources the MFC, in conjunction with the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), provided forest resource information and maps for economic development. A statewide assessment of forest resources has been maintained utilizing satellite imagery to estimate forest removals, regeneration, and developmental stages of forest cover.

In FY 12, the MFC began to re-inventory the state’s forestland. The re-inventory is a continuous project, during which MFC personnel worked to complete data collection on 20% of the state per year. In FY15, the MFC used the information compiled during the inventory to respond to forest resource requests for forest product, ethanol conversion, and wood pellet facilities. The strategy provided general long-term plans for investing state, federal, and other resources to effectively stimulate (or leverage) desired action and engage multiple partners. In FY11, the state assessment and strategy was put into action and effectively became known as the State Forest Action Plan. In FY15, the State Forest Action Plan continued to act as a set of guidelines for forest management activities conducted by the Commission throughout the state.

**Private Lands**

In FY15, the MFC continued to provide technical and financial assistance to non-industrial private forest (NIPF) landowners in Mississippi. Seventy percent of Mississippi’s timberland (13.86 million acres) belongs to an estimated 350,000 NIPF landowners, with parcels of 10 acres or greater. The MFC provided technical and financial assistance to NIPF landowners through programs designed to enhance and protect natural resources.

**FY15 Statewide Accomplishments**

- **Private Lands Activities**
  - Landowners Assisted: 7,480
  - Forest Management Plans: 1,169
  - Acres: 130,111

- **Public Land Activities**
  - Timber Sale Receipts: $205,712,912
  - Number of Sales: 215
  - Acres Regenerated: 7,664
  - Boundary Line Maintenance (Miles): 602
  - Firebreak/Woods Road Maint. (Miles): 684

- **Forest Resource Development Program**
  - Acres Regenerated or Improved: 24,496

- **Prescribed Burning**
  - Private Lands (Acres): 16,582
  - Public Lands (Acres): 4,498
  - Total (Acres): 21,080

**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, privately owned forests threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. The FLP is funded in partnership with the USDA Forest Service, and helps support local efforts to protect environmentally sensitive, privately owned forestlands through land acquisition and conservation easements. A Statewide Assessment of Need (AON) was completed in 2007 as the first step in identifying three Forest Legacy areas (North, Central, and Southeast Mississippi) where important natural forest communities existed on private lands that were potentially threatened by conversion from urban and suburban growth, or other threats.

In FY15, three Forest Legacy areas were scheduled to close in FY16, and will include additional protected forested acres through matching non-federal contributions.

**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 FY15, this program provided cost-share funding for tree planting and forest improvement practices for the purpose of long-term timber production. This program helped offset landowner’s expenses by reimbursing a portion of the costs associated with implementing specific forestry practices designed to produce timber and enhance wildlife development. Cost-share payments covered 50 to 75 percent (depending on the practice) of the total cost of implementing those 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 maintain the planting or improvement practices in perpetuity.

The Forest Stewardship Program was funded by the USDA Forest Service and is based on sound management principles designed to restore and protect forest resources and enhance fish and wildlife habitats.

**Forest Stewardship Program**

The Forest Stewardship Program promoted natural resource planning on non-industrial private forestlands in FY15. Landowners not classified under forest management programs were encouraged to utilize stewardship management 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 enhance fish and wildlife habitats.

**Forest Management**

The MFC is charged by state law to “promote sound forest management practices, which maintain the integrity of the environment and provide for our state’s future natural resource needs” (Miss. Code Ann. 49:193-3). The MFC offers a variety of forest management programs to private landowners and public forestlands of Mississippi, such as Sixteenth Section Lands and other state agency properties.

**The forestry and forest product industry has a $12.3 billion dollar economic impact on the state of Mississippi and represents almost 70,000 jobs.**

**Photos by Leslie Robertson, courtesy of National Association of State Foresters**
Public Lands

The MFC provided forest management assistance to boards, agencies, and other entities having jurisdiction over approximately 480,000 acres of non-federal public forestlands in Mississippi. In FY15, the MFC managed three state forests (Kurtz, Camden, and Jamie L. Whitten) and assisted school boards with forest management on Mississippi School Trust Lands, commonly referred to as Sixteenth Section Lands. The MFC also rendered assistance to the other various agencies, boards, departments, and entities that had jurisdiction over state and other public lands in Mississippi.

In FY15, the Mississippi Forestry Commission continued to be a nationally recognized leader in forest management technology. Several unique software products have been created specifically for forest management activities:

- 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, which allowed employees to more efficiently collect data, and meet statistical objectives faster.
- Handheld computers that allowed technicians to monitor for sampling errors during the inventory.
- Trail/game cameras that monitored the number of trails leaving logging sites (for accountability purposes).

Sixteenth Section Lands

The MFC is charged by state law to manage forested Mississippi School Trust Lands (commonly referred to as Sixteenth Section Lands) located in 67 counties throughout the state. In addition to timber production, management considerations also include: wildlife, soil and water quality, aesthetics, and other appropriate benefits of forestlands. The MFC ensured that proper care was taken to manage school trust lands sustainably, and that Best Management Practices (BMPs) were employed during the management process in FY15. The revenue from timber sales on Mississippi School Trust Lands and other public lands in FY15 totaled $20.57 million. Local school districts are the primary recipients of this timber-generated revenue.

The MFC converted their collective management data into a GIS system to prepare the first comprehensive Sixteenth Section Land Assessment. This assessment, together with more intensive forest management practices, allowed the MFC to meet their goal for timber-generated revenue on school trust lands. The Sixteenth Section Land Assessment is what also gave the MFC the opportunity to have the 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 school trust lands will remain sustainably managed for the benefit of future generations.

"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."

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Forest Health

In FY15, the MFC provided forest pest detection, evaluation, and control recommendations for all private and state-owned timberlands (as well as urban areas) in the state of Mississippi. The agency conducted at least one statewide aerial survey this fiscal year, and additional surveys when deemed necessary by insect / disease conditions. Once identified, insect and disease spots were ground checked to determine the exact cause and extent of damage.

The southern pine beetle (SPB) 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 their partnership with the Mississippi State University Extension Service and the USDA Forest Service Health Protection (Southern Region) to administer a Southern Pine Beetle 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, in order to reduce the risk of southern pine beetle infestation.

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

Mississippi invasive Plant Control Program for Cogongrass Suppression

Cogongrass

Applications from Landowners 300

Applications/Landowners Inspected 300

Total Infested Spots Treated 2,795

Total Infested Acres Treated 575.3

Cogongrass is an aggressive invasive species that chokes out native vegetation, burns at extremely hot temperatures, and devastates native ecosystems. Infested areas of cogongrass are found on more than one million acres throughout the southeastern United States.

Extreme weather patterns in Mississippi led to a unique mix of forest health issues associated with either too much or insufficient rainfall. Many parts of the Mississippi River basin experienced near-record rainfall during late winter/early spring, causing very high water levels in some areas. Flooding damage from prolonged inundation during the growing season damaged an appreciable number of lowland water oaks and other hardwood species in these areas. Following heavy rain through winter and spring, rainfall became very scarce through the summer, causing dangerously dry conditions throughout the state.

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 resources of Mississippi. These species are: cogongrass (Imperata cylindrica), kudzu (Pueraria montana), Chinese tallowtree (Sapium sebiferum), 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 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 FY15, MFC employees distributed promotional items at 31 venues across the state, including: SEC football games, MS State Fair, MS Wildlife Extravaganza, and the MS Garden and Patio Show.

In FY15, the revenue from timber sales on non-federal public lands, including Mississippi School Trust Lands, totaled $20.57 million.
Forest Services

The Fire Services Department includes four divisions: 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 consumed more than five million acres of timberland each year. The MFC continued to provide assistance to Mississippi and other states with weather-related events, such as: hurricanes, ice storms, and large scale wildfires. The Fire Services Department also coordinated and managed the MFC’s wildland firefighting resources within the state. The MFC collected 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. The MFC also managed 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.

The following weather and fire information resources are available on the MFC website: mfc.ms.gov.

- NWS Fire Weather Report
- Keetch-Byram Drought Index
- Fire Danger Rating and Color Code
- Forecast
- Current Weather
- Fire Danger Rating (USDA Forest Service Wildland Fire Assessment System)
- Forecast
- Fire Danger Rating and Color Code
- Keetch-Byram Drought Index
- 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

In FY15, the MFC suppressed 1,756 wildfires, which burned 23,396 acres. The average wildfire size for FY15 was 13.3 acres.

While great strides in wildfire prevention, detection, and suppression were made, wildfires still continued to plague the state. In an effort to reduce the number of wildfires caused by careless behavior, burn bans are issued by each County’s Board of Supervisors and approved by the MFC. Burn ban notifications are listed on the MFC’s website: www.mfc.ms.gov.

**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 communication network (which spans across 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 FY15, 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 organizations.

**Volunteer Fire Assistance Program**

Formerly known as the Rural Community Fire Protection Program, the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program provided grants to eligible rural volunteer fire departments (VFDs) for the purchase of wildland firefighting and personal protective equipment in FY15. The Mississippi Forestry Commission administers this program through an agreement with the USDA Forest Service. In FY15, the Mississippi Forestry Commission awarded 52 grants with a total value of $165,000 to volunteer fire departments. These grants were used to purchase wildland firefighting ready-kits, which contained protective clothing and gear for 520 volunteer firefighters.

**Firewise**

Firewise is an educational program for homeowners and community leaders. This program is for anyone living in, or connected to, the wildland/urban interface. Information is available on how to design, construct, landscape, and maintain a home or community to withstand a wildfire without the aid of firefighting resources on scene. Firewise literature can be found on the MFC’s website: www.mfc.ms.gov.

Firewise Workshops were conducted throughout the state in FY15. These one day workshops were provided free of charge to the public, and brought citizens together to learn about protecting their communities in the wildland/urban interface. Participants learned how to assess the fire danger of their own home, and how to maintain their home or community to better withstand a wildfire.

There are five communities in Mississippi that have been officially designated as Firewise Communities/USA Communities. They are:

- Snow Lake Shores in Benton County, MS.
- Lake Hilldale Property Owner’s Association in Pearl River County, MS.
- Gloser in Amite County, MS.
- Nocapater in Winston County, MS.
- Ethel in Attala County, MS.

**Rural Fire Assistance**

The MFC provided assistance to Mississippi’s volunteer fire departments through the Federal Excess Personal Property (FPEP) Program and the Fire Fighter Program (FFF), administered by the MFC through an agreement with the USDA Forest Service.

Since 1956, the FPEP Program has allowed the Forest Service to loan property to state fire agencies for the purpose of fighting wildland and rural fires. The MFC delivered the first FPP equipment in FY10. The use of the equipment is reserved for wildland/rural firefighting and emergency response situations. Approximately 70 percent of the property involved in the FPEP program in Mississippi is sub-loaned to local fire departments. Approximately 90 percent of all equipment acquired through FFP is transferred to local fire departments. In FY15, MFC’s FPEP/FFF programs issued 31 vehicles and 74 other pieces of equipment with an estimated value or acquisition cost of $5.57 million.

In FY15, 27 homes were destroyed, 12 homes were damaged, and 2,049 homes were threatened by wildfire activity. Is your home Firewise?

**Aviation**

In FY15, aerial surveillance was used to detect and manage wildfire activity. On large fires, planes flew above the fire, delivering real-time information to firefighting units on the ground about the current fire situation. The MFC’s Aviation Department also provides service and support to Forest Health, and other forest management program areas.

**FY15 Wildfires by Cause**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th># Wildfires</th>
<th># Acres Burned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lightning</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campfire</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debris Burning</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>8,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incendiary</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>10,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Use</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railroad</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>2,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-ignition</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,756</td>
<td>23,396</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In FY15, 100 wildfires, which burned 2,339 acres.  The average wildfire size for FY15 was 23.3 acres.

**In FY15, the MFC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Wildfires</th>
<th>Acres Burned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Number of Wildfires for FY 2015**

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Fire Law Enforcement

The MFC and the Mississippi judicial system have the shared responsibility to pursue the arrest and conviction of woods arsonists (individuals who show little or no concern for Mississippi's citizens and forest resources). The MFC is charged with pursuing retribution in instances where negligence 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 an attempt to abate the problem, the Mississippi Legislature established fire law enforcement positions within MFC in 1993. The duties and authority of these officers are limited to woods arson cases. 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” (Miss. Code Ann. 49-19-3).

During FY15, MFC Investigators handled six felony woods arson cases. These cases included the arrest of thirteen different individuals in Hancock, Amite, and George Counties. Three cases have been heard by the Grand Jury and indictments were filed in two cases. In the remaining case, the Grand Jury did not find sufficient evidence for an indictment. MFC Investigators handled eight misdemeanor cases in FY15. Investigators issued four citations and filed one affidavit charging the perpetrators under the woods arson statute. In both felony and misdemeanor cases the total of pending restitution was approximately $35,000.

In suppression cases, MFC Investigators directly handled twenty-two cases. The responsible parties were invoiced for the incurred costs, which totaled approximately $27,000. The total amount involved in all pending civil and criminal cases in FY15 was $62,000. This includes suppression, misdemeanor, and felony restitutions. In cases where totals were pending at the end of FY15, this data will be added to figures reported in FY16. The total number of all cases (criminal or civil) investigated in FY15 was approximately one hundred fifty.

Accidental fires, such as escaped debris burns, are as costly as those set on purpose. Accidental fires require the same actions and resources to suppress as arson fires.

Forest Information

The Forest Information Department provided support to all MFC program areas in FY15 through the development of displays, exhibits, brochures, and other informational material. This Department was responsible for overseeing media relations, internal and external information distribution, agency publications, and continued management of the MFC’s online presence. The Forest Information Department also utilized mass media outlets (radio, television, and print) and social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) to release forestry and agency information to the public. Multiple delivery methods were used in order to reach the public in the most effective manner possible.

Public Outreach

During FY15, 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 Public Outreach Division maintains an active outreach program designed to educate young people and adults about forestry and related issues, as well as the agency’s mission and services. Local outreach activities such as: civic club presentations, forestry field days, and visits to school groups were carried out across the state to reach individuals at the community level.

Two topic-specific outreach programs were housed within the Public Outreach Department in FY15, the Firewise Program and the Underserved Landowner Outreach Program.

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 Mississippi landowners 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.

MFC Outreach Program

Adult and Youth Programs 216 Participants 59,852* * Data does not include participants from the MS State Fair MS Wildlife Extravaganza, or the MS Garden and Patio Show.
Urban and Community Forestry

The MFC provided assistance and training to urban areas in the development of community forestry programs in FY15. This included support to counties and municipalities regarding the development of tree ordinances, street tree inventories, and urban forest management plans. The MFC also provided technical advice to builders regarding tree preservation during construction and helped homeowners with advice on insects, diseases, and other urban forestry issues.

In FY15, the MFC’s Urban and Community Forestry Program provided 8 financial assistance grants totaling $12,700 to state and local governments, non-profit groups, and educational institutions.

The Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant Program is funded through 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 Program is to inspire or enhance local or statewide urban and community forestry programs.

The Urban and Community Forestry Division also provided leadership, financial aid, and technical support to the Mississippi Urban Forest Council (MUFC). The MFC worked collaboratively with this volunteer organization to provide a series of regional workshops focused on the Community Revitalization with Trees Program. Six regional communities were selected as model projects to demonstrate implementation of long term, locally sustainable community forestry programs.

The Urban Forestry Division and the MUFC also promoted and administered the Arbor Day Foundation’s Tree City USA®, Tree Campus USA®, and Tree Line USA® programs in Mississippi.

The Tree Line USA Program recognized organizations that employed best practices in public and private utility arboriculture. Utility companies that demonstrated urban forestry and utility management co-existing for the benefit of the community, qualified to apply for this designation. The 4-County Electric Power Association and Entergy Corporation were two utility companies in Mississippi recognized by the Tree Line USA Program in FY15.

The Arbor Day Poster Contest is no longer sponsored nationally by the Arbor Day Foundation. However, the contest was continued statewide in FY15 by the MFC and the MUFC.

2015 Arbor Day Poster Winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kara Hilliard</td>
<td>Oxford Intermediate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheridan White</td>
<td>North Jones Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maggie May</td>
<td>Magnolia Heights School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1st Place Arbor Day Poster


Tree Campus USA® Communities

The Tree Campus USA Program recognized cities and towns that met four core standards of sound urban forestry management:

- Maintained a tree board or department.
- Had a community tree ordinance.
- Spent at least $2 per capita on urban forestry.
- Celebrated Arbor Day as a community.

In FY15, Mississippi had three college campuses recognized as Tree Campus USA schools: Mississippi State University (MSU), the University of Mississippi (UM), and the University of Southern Mississippi (USM).

Tree City USA® Communities

The Tree City USA Communities Program recognized cities and towns that met four core standards of sound urban forestry management:

- Maintained a tree board or department.
- Had a community tree ordinance.
- Spent at least $2 per capita on urban forestry.
- Celebrated Arbor Day as a community.

There were 26 Mississippi cities and towns certified as Tree City USA Communities in FY15.

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, nine are also national champions and five are national co-champions.
Business Support

The Business Support Department consists of four service-oriented divisions: Financial Services, Information Systems, Human Resources, and Safety and Training. During FY15, these divisions provided services to support the MFC’s program areas and employees across all seven administrative districts.

Financial Services

Financial records of the MFC 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, ensured that the MFC followed all state purchasing laws and requirements.

Information Systems

The Information Systems Division continued to provide technical support and assistance to the MFC’s computer network. During FY15, in addition to providing maintenance and technical support to the MFC’s network of servers and workstations, the Information Systems Division completed the virtualization of the agency’s server based infrastructure. Following implementation, these advancements reduced server total cost of ownership (TCO) by up to 80%. They also dramatically reduced power consumption costs.

In addition, the Information Systems Division began the deployment of Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) to further capitalize on the savings from the server virtualization, into the desktop computer environment. VDI deployment should be completed during the second quarter of FY16, while full implementation will likely press into the fourth quarter of FY16.

Human Resources

The MFC’s Human Resources Division maintained personnel administration for all MFC employees. In FY14, the MFC had four hundred forty-nine full-time and two part-time authorized employee positions. Authorized positions for FY15 were the same, and included four hundred forty-nine full-time and two part-time positions.

Safety and Training

The Safety and Training Division stresses the importance of safety in all program areas of the MFC. In FY15, tools, techniques, and training opportunities were provided to teach employees safe and effective workplace habits. Continuing education and training opportunities were available for each employee in FY15, these opportunities were essential to enhancing job skills and fostering personal development and growth. Some examples of training courses included: forest management, pipeline safety, prescribed burning short course, fire safety, defensive driving, EEOC annual seminar, B.O.R.F. ethics seminar, wildland firefighter training, and equal employment opportunities in the workplace training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MFC Employees*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position FY14 FY15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Time 449 449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time 2 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Does not include federally-funded, time limited positions.

Fiscal Year 2015 Income and Expense Statement through June 30, 2015

Comparative to June 30, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>6/30/15</th>
<th>6/30/14</th>
<th>Increase/ (Decrease)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48000 General Funds</td>
<td>$19,071,100</td>
<td>$17,487,780</td>
<td>$1,583,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40615000 Severance Tax</td>
<td>3,003,896</td>
<td>2,851,803</td>
<td>152,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40639000 Acreage Tax</td>
<td>1,381,548</td>
<td>1,441,809</td>
<td>(59,461)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43100000 Miscellaneous Income</td>
<td>74,773</td>
<td>87,340</td>
<td>(12,567)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43500000 Criminal Law Assessment Fines</td>
<td>5,254</td>
<td>12,295</td>
<td>(7,041)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43300000 Rent of State Property</td>
<td>48,415</td>
<td>48,945</td>
<td>(530)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43300000 Rent of Office Space</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42100000 Forestry Programs (Grants)</td>
<td>1,918,936</td>
<td>2,506,248</td>
<td>(587,312)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43100000 Sub-Grants (DEQ)</td>
<td>32,476</td>
<td>71,755</td>
<td>39,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43220000 Crew Assistance - Public Lands</td>
<td>940,004</td>
<td>396,692</td>
<td>543,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43220000 Crew Assistance - Private Lands</td>
<td>1,596,483</td>
<td>1,487,679</td>
<td>108,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43250000 Sale of Real Estate</td>
<td>1,394</td>
<td>43,154</td>
<td>(41,760)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43250000 Sale of Property/Scrap</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>(495)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43250000 Sale to Fed Govt.</td>
<td>95,274</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>94,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43250000 Sub-Grants (DEQ)</td>
<td>421,755</td>
<td>421,755</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43250000 Sub-Grants (DEQ)</td>
<td>421,755</td>
<td>(421,755)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43510000 Transfer from Other Funds</td>
<td>421,755</td>
<td>421,755</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43510000 Transfer from Other Funds</td>
<td>29,901</td>
<td>29,636</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Revenue</td>
<td>$24,200,546</td>
<td>$26,202,382</td>
<td>(1,997,836)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accounts Receivable:

| Net A/R | $1,602,913 | $355,869 | 1,247,044 |

Total Encumbrances thru November 2015:

(cash not expended, only authority reserved)

| TOTAL ENCUMBRANCES | $25,041,342 | $27,284,759 | (2,243,417) |

Net:

| NET | 3,962,085 | (83,947) | 4,046,032 |

NOTE: AR now reflects current monthly billing as well as past due balances.
FY2015 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
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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

Larry Homan
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Fulton, MS 38843
Office Phone: (662) 862-2125
Cell Phone: (662) 891-2208
Email: tristate@intop.net
*Term Expires: June 30, 2018
Representing: 1st Congressional District

James Cummins
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Stoneville, MS 38776
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Fax Number: (662) 666-4700
Home Phone: (662) 866-4592
Cell Phone: (662) 820-5703
Email: jcummins@wildlifemiss.org
*Term Expires: non-expiring
Representing: Ex-officio

Mike Mikell
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Port Gibson, MS 39150
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Email: mike1fpsi@hotmail.com
*Term Expires: June 30, 2019
Representing: 2nd Congressional District

Dr. George Hopper
Mississippi State University
Box 9680
Mississippi State, MS 37962
Office Phone: (662) 325-2953
Fax Number: (662) 325-0015
Email: ghopper@msstate.edu
*Term Expires: non-expiring
Representing: Ex-officio

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

Jim Luckett
5187 Dogwalk Road
Tutwiler, MS 38963
Home Phone: (662) 627-3882
Cell Phone: (662) 982-7348
Email: jluckett@nwosolutions.us
*Term Expires: June 30, 2018
Representing: At Large

Ken Martin
951 Cato Road
Mendenhall, MS 39114
Phone: (601) 942-7313
Email: kmartin951@aol.com
*Term Expires: June 30, 2020
Representing: 3rd Congressional District

For a complete list of district offices & program areas please visit our website www.mfc.ms.gov.