



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

660 North Street, Suite 300
Jackson, MS 39202

www.mfc.ms.gov

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Brighton Forester
Public Relations Director
(601) 500-0489 cell
bforester@mfc.ms.gov

Stop Wildfires at the Starting Line PSA Wins Silver ADDY Award *MS Forestry Commission's Wildfire Prevention Month Campaign Recognized*

JACKSON, Miss. – The [Mississippi Forestry Commission's](#) (MFC) public service announcement video, *Stop Wildfires at the Starting Line*, won a silver ADDY at the American Advertising Federation (AAF) Jackson awards in the category of Public Service Television Commercial. The award-winning public service announcement was produced by the Jackson-based video production and advertising firm [Mad Genius](#) and received grant funding from the U.S. Forest Service. World's Fastest Woman, Olympic Gold Medalist Tori Bowie is featured in the thirty-second public service announcement, which intends to remind the public of the destructive power of wildfires and how quickly they can spread.

The American Advertising Awards, formerly the ADDYs, is the advertising industry's largest and most representative competition, attracting over 40,000 entries annually. The mission of the American Advertising Awards competition is to recognize and reward the creative spirit of excellence in the art of advertising. Silver ADDYs are given to entries that are considered outstanding and worthy of recognition in their respective categories.

"We are proud of the collaborative effort between our Public Information Department and Mad Genius to create this outstanding public service announcement," said Charlie Morgan, State Forester, Mississippi Forestry Commission. "Our hope is that it will help people realize the best way to prevent devastating wildfire occurrences is never to let one start."

Wildfire prevention month

Governor Phil Bryant proclaimed March as Wildfire Prevention Month in Mississippi. Historically, March has one of the highest wildfire occurrence rates of the year due to the weather transition from winter to spring, dry vegetation, and windy conditions. Since January 1, 2018, the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) responded to and suppressed 440 wildfires that burned 6,231 acres. MFC Wildland Firefighters saved 799 homes and structures. Wildfire activity destroyed or damaged 23 homes and structures. Help the MFC Stop Wildfires at the Starting Line. To learn more about how to prevent wildfires, visit: www.mfc.ms.gov/wildfire-prevention

To view more wildfire prevention public service announcements, visit the Mississippi Forestry Commission's [YouTube](#) channel and follow them on [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.



From left: Bill Kitchings (Outreach Officer, MFC), Brighton Forester (Public Relations Director, MFC), Smokey Bear, and Chip Sarver (President, Mad Genius)