



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Help the Mississippi Forestry Commission Stop Wildfires at the Starting Line *Mississippian Tori Bowie, World's Fastest Woman, featured in Wildfire Prevention PSA*

JACKSON, Miss. – World's Fastest Woman (2017 IAAF World Champion), Olympic Gold Medalist, and Mississippi native Tori Bowie is featured in the [Mississippi Forestry Commission's](#) (MFC) new public service announcement video, [Stop Wildfires at the Starting Line](#), designed to heighten public awareness of wildfire prevention. Produced by the Jackson-based video production and advertising firm [Mad Genius](#), the series received grant funding made available by the U.S. Forest Service. Bowie is featured in the thirty-second video, which intends to remind the public of the destructive power of wildfires and how quickly they can spread.

Bowie is a native of Sand Hill, Mississippi; she attended Pisgah High School and the University of Southern Mississippi. Bowie competed in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games, where she won her first gold medal. The following year, Bowie would go on to win two more gold medals in London at the 2017 IAAF World Championships.

Wildfires in Mississippi are often human-caused

A small spark can start a large wildfire when conditions are dry and windy. The wind carries embers long distances, which can cause spot fires as far away as one-half mile from the burning area. Wildfires are known to move at speeds of up to 14 mph, which means they have the ability to spread quickly, potentially overtaking anything in their path - endangering life, property, and forestland.

“Nationwide, nearly 9 out of 10 wildfires are human-caused, which means 9 out of 10 wildfires could have been prevented with proper care,” said Charlie Morgan, State Forester, Mississippi Forestry Commission. “Sadly, debris burns that escaped control were the number one cause of wildfires in Mississippi last year.”

The best way to prevent devastating wildfire occurrences is never to let one start. 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](#) and [Twitter](#).

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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.



Tori Bowie, Olympic Gold Medalist, World's Fastest Woman, poses with Smokey Bear while filming Wildfire Prevention PSA