



# ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

3821 West Roosevelt Road Little Rock, AR 72204-6396

(501) 296-1940 fax: (501) 296-1949

Joe Fox, R.F.  
State Forester

March 7, 2014

The Honorable Larry Teague  
Arkansas Senate  
State Capitol

The Honorable Duncan Baird  
Arkansas House of Representatives  
State Capitol

Re: Arkansas Forestry Commission monthly activity report for February 2014

---

Dear Senator Teague and Representative Baird:

Per Act 434 of the 89<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, Section 48, the Arkansas Forestry Commission is to report monthly fiscal and agency activities to the Joint Budget Committee. Please find attached the report for February 2014.

On Wednesday, February 12, after a twelve day intensive search, AFC pilot Jake Harrell remains were recovered. Jake had flown wildfire detection flights for AFC since 2005. Jake was a dedicated AFC employee that knew his job not only included finding wildfires, but with his view from the sky he provided advice to firefighters on the ground that saved lives and property. During the search AFC was assisted by many different county, state and federal organizations. I appreciate the many words of support I have received from Legislators.

February was an active month for wildfires. Over 4,000 acres burned in February compared to the 10 year average of 1,838 acres burned. Historically March is the worse month for wildfires, so we will see.

Respectfully yours,

ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joe S. Fox".

Joe S. Fox

cc: DFA Director Richard A. Weiss  
Secretary of Agriculture Butch Calhoun



## **ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION**

### **February 2014 Activity and Fiscal Report**

#### **FIRE PROTECTION**

**Wildfires:** During February, a total of 260 wildfires were suppressed for a total of 4,187 acres burned. Ten year average for the month of February is 124 wildfires for 1,838 acres burned.

**Storm Damage Assistance:** AFC assisted in storm damage cleanup in Conway County on roads around Morrilton, Opello, and Overcup.

**Search and Rescue Operation:** Numerous AFC personnel and cooperating agencies conducted search efforts for the missing AFC plane and pilot.

**Rural Fire Protection:** Rural Fire Protection (RFP) assists rural volunteer fire departments with organization, training and equipment. RFP provides interest-free loans and administers federal grants to assist approximately 1,000 volunteer rural fire departments. The RFP shop provides maintenance to AFC equipment.

In February, 56 rural fire departments (206 firefighters) were provided wildland fire training. Eleven Department of Defense (DOD) trucks (valued at \$1,554,502.00) were picked up from military posts that will be refurbished and provided to fire departments for use as fire trucks, brush trucks, or tankers. 4,549 DOD Recycling Control Point (RCP) items- tires, hazmat pillows, battery chargers, medical field packs, floor jacks, and cargo nets- (valued at \$685,504.04) were received for redistribution to VFD's.

City of Humnoke (Lonoke County) received an 3 year interest free loan through the AFC Rural Fire Revolving Loan Fund for \$13,500 to purchase a 1989 E-One Hush Pumper (municipal-type fire truck).

The RFP shop completed maintenance on ten AFC vehicles and dozers.

**Firewise:** Firewise staff and district personnel work with fire departments and civic organizations to make communities safer from the threat of wildfire through mitigation projects and community education initiatives. Arkansas leads the nation with 131 active Firewise communities in 2013. Recognized communities display Firewise signs at the city limits.

In February, Firewise staff assisted 25 communities/fire departments with renewal efforts, assisted four communities with Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and conducted seven initial presentations about the Firewise program. Firewise staff conducted three risk assessment trainings and taught one wildland fire class.

Norphlet has been enrolled in the Arkansas Firewise Program since 2004. Norphlet was one of five communities that were recognized nationally by the National Fire Protection Association for the "1,000 Safer Places: The Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program Challenge." Norphlet received a

grand prize of \$5,000 from State Farm to be used for mitigation activities that will reduce wildfire hazards.

Firewise staff visited 17 AFC county and district offices to discuss Firewise programs in their area and met with 29 fire chiefs to provide information on Firewise. Firewise staff talked with four county Office of Emergency Management coordinators about Firewise. Firewise staff collaborated with Tree City USA and Arkansas State Parks on Community Wildfire Protection Planning and Wildland Urban Interface education efforts. Firewise staff provided educational material for three Firewise events and to all the Arkansas State Parks.

Firewise staff assisted with eight media releases, responded to 10 media calls about fire prevention and fire danger and the Firewise plan, and updated Facebook site. Firewise staff attended the Fallen Firefighter's Memorial Committee meeting.

**Law Enforcement:** AFC has the authority to enforce the laws of the State of Arkansas, but focuses primarily on unlawful dumping, timber theft, forest fires, and equipment theft and vandalism. AFC aggressively seeks prosecution of violators to deter such crimes. In February, AFC Investigators and district law enforcement officers have opened 3 dumping, 37 fire related and 7 timber theft cases.

Two AFC Law Enforcement officers assisted in the search and rescue mission for missing AFC pilot. One officer served as Incident Commander and another officer served as head of airport security.

## **FOREST MANAGEMENT**

**Forest Stewardship/Rural Forestry Assistance Programs:** Forestry Commission works with a diverse group of partners and professionals to conserve, protect, and enhance Arkansas's forest. The Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) is an opportunity for non-industrial private forest landowners who are interested in managing their property for wildlife, recreation, soil and water conservation, agro-forestry and/or for timber production to get a comprehensive multiple use forest management plan that is prepared by private consulting or AFC foresters, private consulting or AGFC private lands wildlife biologists, and USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service soil and water professionals. Arkansas has 4,515 landowners owning 830,603 acres that are enrolled in FSP. Landowners that implement practices under their FSP management plans become Forest Stewards. Arkansas has 1,276 Forest Stewards owning 277,459 acres.

For February, 7 FSP plans were prepared on 556 acres. In addition, AFC personnel provide technical assistance through the rural forestry program to landowners that are enrolled in USDA tree planting and forest management programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wetland Reserve Program, and AFC Southern Pine Beetle Prevention and Restoration Program. AFC foresters prepared 58 rural forestry management plans on 4,213 acres. In addition, AFC personnel conducted prescribed burns on 18 tracts for 896 acres and constructed 80,474 feet of fire lane.

AFC assists landowners with reforestation projects. In February, 37 tracts totaling 1,576 acres were planted in trees.

**Forest Health:** The tree damage by the ice storms in December 2013 and February 2014 will have long term impacts due to broken tops and limbs opening trees to decay and insect attack leading to product

degrade. AFC staff will monitor the two ice storms' impacts to rural and urban forests and work with landowners and communities to mitigate the damage.

**Urban forestry assistance:** Urban Forestry Program staff provides assistance and training to communities, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, developers and homeowners on urban tree care, inventory and management.

A water quality demonstration and education project for the Illinois River watershed in urban riparian forest buffers is in progress through a water quality grant AFC received. This Urban Riparian Project with the Illinois River Watershed Partnership (IRWP) will implement recommendations from the approved Upper Illinois River Watershed Based Management Plan to include riparian forest buffers and underground systems planters to improve water quality. As implementation of this green infrastructure project and tree canopy and water quality improvements are demonstrated, the IRWP will educate and involve the community through public meetings, an educational program to be produced and aired on local cable TV, and riparian forest buffer zones with educational signage installed along a 36-mile urban trail. Project implementation will be along the Northwest Arkansas Razorback Greenway beginning at the northern point of Bentonville and extending to south Fayetteville. Riparian forest buffer zones that will be planted along the major urban tributaries to the Illinois River include: Townbranch, Osage Creek, Spring Creek, Clear Creek and Cave Springs Lake.

**Baucum Nursery:** AFC's Baucum Nursery produces hardwood and pine seedlings for reforestation and afforestation efforts.

Baucum Nursery hosted the Director and a Research Fellow of the Southern Forest Nursery Management Cooperative from Auburn University. The coop provides nurserymen in the South with research and technical support for producing the best bare root forest tree seedlings possible. One of the primary topics of discussion during their visit was the implementation of a new seed treatment which is very conducive to use with precision seed sowers. We have a new precision seed sower on order at this time and are hopeful that it will be completed and delivered before the upcoming planting season.

AFC began accepting orders for the 2013-2014 planting season on July 16, 2013. Sales through the end of February resulted in 2,421,450 pine, 2,773,975 oaks and 1,184,475 other hardwoods.

**Tree Improvement:** AFC's tree improvement program provides landowners with the highest possible genetic gain in pine and hardwood seed. One of AFC's objectives in tree improvement is establishing the highest genetic gain material in our newest pine and hardwood seed orchards. AFC Baucum Nursery makes available to landowners the improved varieties of pine and hardwood, which is the result of the tree improvement program.

During the month of February, the Texas A&M Forest Service geneticist for the Western Gulf Forest Tree Improvement Cooperative and the AFC Tree Improvement staff made one 3<sup>rd</sup> generation selection from one of our block plots near McNeal. On the same site, we also collected core samples from 5 additional wood quality elite families, which are specifically being breed for higher wood density. The results of the specific gravity tests that will be conducted from these cores will provide the necessary data to make 5 additional 3<sup>rd</sup> generation selections. The Tree Improvement staff with the help of 2 AFC district personnel from Malvern replanted some hardwoods at a test in Donaldson.

The Reforestation Manager conducted a tree improvement and nursery training session at ArborGen Nursery at Bluff City for the Society of American Foresters, Southwest Arkansas Chapter. There were a total of 21 in attendance. The same training was conducted at our AFC Greenbrier office where 21 AFC employees and 1 landowner attended.

**Best Management Practices:** AFC provides BMP training to loggers and timber companies, conducts courtesy exams prior or during timber harvest operations and addresses logging complaints.

The BMP Coordinator conducted one courtesy exam with 5 participants. Participants consisted of AFC personnel, industry forester, and private non-industrial forest landowners. During the meeting the BMP Coordinator addressed on-site BMP recommendations as in relation to BMP guidelines.

The BMP coordinator resolved one logger complaint in Ouachita County. The complaint involved water quality impairment problems with temporary on-site haul roads.

The BMP Coordinator conducted one technical logger training session for foresters, loggers and contractors in Hamburg. The workshops were held in conjunction with the Arkansas Timber Producers Association (ATPA).

The BMP Coordinator attended and participated in the Plum Creek district meeting held in Monticello. Meeting was attended by 50 contractors and company foresters. A portion of the program highlighted skidder bridges for intermittent and perennial stream crossings.

Provided BMP update and highlighted water bars to be used on firebreaks at the AFC District 7 meeting.

The BMP coordinator represented AFC at the Arkansas Rural Water Annual meeting in Lonoke, Arkansas.

The BMP coordinator attended and participated in the second Conway Lake Point Remove watershed meeting. The meetings focus was to organize a leadership structure and mission statement. These would be the first steps in putting together an EPA watershed plan. This would allow the watershed group to participate in 319 grant money.

**Forest Inventory and Analysis:** AFC in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station is responsible for collecting scientific data from permanently established plots located all over the state. The plots, each representing 5,937 acres, are strategically located on a three-mile by three-mile grid. The inventory plots have been generating data since they were established in the 1950's. Natural resource managers use the data to make management decisions and follow Arkansas' natural resource trends through time.

For February, FIA personnel have measured and submitted data on 49 plots.

## **INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

With high wildfire danger and active wildfire frequency over most of the state in January, the AFC was in the prime spotlight for most of February.

The search operation for Jake Harrell and his AFC plane, which began on January 31<sup>st</sup>, also created a very news-heavy environment over the month. Press releases were distributed on every day of the search operation (January 31-February 11<sup>th</sup>), and in the days immediately following. A total of 23 releases were distributed to statewide news media during the search alone (usually two were circulated, each day, as information was available).

Five releases were circulated concerning Burn Bans, and wildfire danger – especially over President's Day Weekend.

Press release templates and fact sheets were developed for statewide AFC staff concerning the following topics: 1) Volunteer Fire Assistance Matching Grants from the Rural Fire Program; 2) AFC Career Day Fact Sheets; and 3) Seedling Care Fact Sheets. These resources are used by AFC foresters and rangers to encourage local news media in emphasizing the role that the AFC plays at a very local, personal level amid volunteer fire departments, private landowners, public education programs, conservation programs, and the like.

Television media has featured the AFC for in-depth interviews, weather mentions, and wildfire stories and follow-ups in over 20 stories over January – February, entirely separate from the search operation.

The AFC Facebook and Twitter page (the live Twitter feed also automatically updates the main page of our website) are updated 5-6 times, daily concerning topics that span all activities and responsibilities of the AFC and partner agencies. Total Facebook followers is up to 11,305 individuals and Twitter followers is up to 3,473 – and, both continue to grow.

The premier of the AETN Arkansas Champion Trees Documentary was hosted at the Clinton Library in February. Urban Forestry staff, AFC Executive Staff, and AFC Forester, Matthew Voskamp (featured in the movie) all attended. The reception was extremely formal with personalized “thanks” and recognition to the AFC from Governor Mike Beebe. AETN will continue to air the documentary about the AFC Champion Trees Program. Efforts are also underway to begin a full Champion Tree update on the AFC website and an update of procedures for adding more Champion Trees to the Arkansas list later in 2014.

During February, the districts reported participating in 1 radio interview, 29 news articles and 35 presentations to schools or civic organizations.

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

February 28, 2014

	Balance	
4020014000 Timber Severance	(275,612.59)	
** SR (3.0) - Taxes	(275,612.59)	
4030002000 Acreage Tax	(8,481.93)	
4031076000 Fire Protect/Supp	1,573.88	
** SR (1.5) - Taxes	(6,908.05)	
4034001000 Rents	(400.00)	Rental of State Owned Housing
** SR (1.5) - Rents, Royalties, Leas	(400.00)	
4038001000 Timber Sales	(373,804.46)	
4038003000 Seedling Sales	(89,390.00)	
** SR (1.5)- Sales of Agency Produce	(463,194.46)	
4042001000 Fines	0.00	
** OR - Fines and Penalties	0.00	
4047002000 Other Sales	(10,125.00)	
4047099000 Misc Revenue	(51,653.64)	Prescribed Burning, Trees of Arkansas Books
4047099600 NBR - Other	0.00	
** OR - Miscellaneous	(61,778.64)	
4048019000 Resales	(34,028.26)	
** OR - Sales of Goods and Services	(34,028.26)	Firefighting Equipment of Volunteer Fire Depts.
4049003000 Interest Distrib	(0.09)	
** OR - Investment Revenue	(0.09)	Interests
4050001000 NonFed Grants/Reimb	0.00	
4050003000 Oth Refunds/Reimb	(6.72)	

<b>** OR - Grants and Reimbursements</b>	<b>(6.72)</b>	
4050004000 Fed Grants/Reimburse	(459,347.82)	
4050004100 NBR - Grant Rev.	0.00	
<b>** Federal Grants and Reimbursements</b>	<b>(459,347.82)</b>	
4090010000 3% Special Rev Fees	8,268.38	
4090020000 1.5% Spl Rev Fees	6,648.79	
4090030000 Additional Sr Fees	1,491.72	
<b>** Treasury Charges</b>	<b>16,408.89</b>	Special Revenue Treasury Charges
5010001000 00 Regular Salaries	808,711.36	
5010001100 NBR - Personal Svs.	0.00	
5010001600 NBR - Emp Benefits	0.00	
5010002000 01 Extra Help Sal	14,264.79	
5010003000 06 Overtime Salaries	2,070.32	
5010005000 03 FICA & Medic Exp	58,529.87	
5010006000 03 Ben Ins Exp HAL	117,260.00	
5010006500 Agency Cost of ARCAP	4,570.11	
5010007000 03 Retirement Exp	118,849.05	
5010008000 03 Unemploy Comp Exp	0.00	
5010009000 03 Worker Comp Exp	0.00	
5010010000 03 Work Comp Prem Tx	0.00	
5010011000 16 Fixed Uniform All	0.00	
5010014000 02 Fixed Uniform All	0.00	
<b>** Salary Expense</b>	<b>1,124,255.50</b>	General Operation & Federal Programs
5020001000 Postage	1,268.53	
5020002000 Telecomm Wired	8,766.19	
5020003000 Telecomm Wireless	11,109.56	
5020004000 Network Services Exp	7,030.37	
5020004200 Internet Serv-Tech	111.32	
5020005000 Freight	0.00	
5020006000 NBR Com & Trans Com	0.00	
<b>** Communication &amp; Transp. of Commod</b>	<b>28,285.97</b>	General Operation & Federal Programs
5030001000 Printing	0.00	
5030001200 Legal/Medical Copying	0.00	
5030003000 Advertise Clip Svc	200.68	Camden News Publishing Company
5030004000 Film Processing	0.00	
5030004100 NBR Printing & Adv.	0.00	
<b>** Printing &amp; Advertising</b>	<b>200.68</b>	General Operation & Federal Programs
5030005000 02-Bldg & Grds Maint	6,917.33	
5030005100 Pest Control CI 02	250.70	
5030006000 Pub Facility M&O	0.00	
5030008000 Office Equip Maint	0.00	
5030010000 Pub Safety Eq Maint	2,054.32	
5030011000 Ind Inst Equip Maint	8,271.01	
5030012000 02 - Vehicle Maint	16,926.51	
5030013000 Auto Collision Rep	446.20	
5030014000 Mar Avi Equip Maint	31,880.11	
5030016000 DP Equip Maint	87.80	
5030018000 Oth Repair Servicing	132.89	
5030021000 NBR - Repair & Serv.	0.00	
<b>** Repairing &amp; Servicing</b>	<b>66,966.87</b>	General Operation & Federal Programs
5040001000 Electricity	13,000.25	

5040002000 Electric Special Use	0.00	
5040003000 Water & Sewage	1,689.29	
5040003100 02 Water	0.00	
5040004000 Natural Gas Propane	9,137.88	
5040005000 Rent of Facilities	4,475.00	
5040006000 Lease Private Land	0.00	
5040007000 Rent of Office Equip	2,060.34	
5040009000 Rent Transportation	0.00	
5040011000 Other Rent & Leases	2,757.00	
5040012000 NBR -Utilities & Ren	0.00	
5040013000 Satellite/cable Serv	0.00	
<b>** Utilities &amp; Rent</b>	<b>33,119.76</b>	General Operation & Federal Programs
5050001000 02 Mileage	1,169.01	
5050003100 02 - Meals	9,236.02	
5050003200 02 - Lodging	13,278.36	
5050004100 09 - Meals	0.00	
5050004200 09 - Lodging	0.00	
5050005000 02 Common Carrier	775.60	
5050006000 09 Common Carrier	(359.69)	
5050009000 02 Ground Transport	98.00	
5050011000 02 Parking Fees	194.82	
5050012000 09 Parking Fees	7.00	
5050013000 02 Other Travel Exp	0.00	
5050017000 02 Conf Seminar Fees	550.00	
5050018000 09 Conf Seminar Fees	0.00	
5050019100 Board Member Expense	0.00	
5050021000 02 NonStateEmp Trav	0.00	
5050025000 02 Gas Purch-Travel	0.00	
5050027000 09 Ag Sponsored Conf	0.00	
<b>** Travel &amp; Subsistence</b>	<b>24,949.12</b>	General Operation & Federal Programs
5060001000 Professional Adm Fee	49,769.00	
5060002000 Eng & Architect Fees	0.00	
5060016000 NBR ProSvs,Fees CI10	0.00	
5080015000 Misc. Technical Serv	81.25	
<b>** Professional Services &amp; Fees</b>	<b>49,850.25</b>	General Operation & Federal Programs
5070002000 Vehicle Insurance	0.00	
5070003000 Bld Contents Ins	0.00	
5070007000 Other Insurance	0.00	
<b>** Insurance &amp; Bonds</b>	<b>0.00</b>	
5080006000 Assoc Member Dues	205.00	
5080009000 Janitorial Service	452.35	
5080011000 02-Contract Food Ser	0.00	
5080013000 Security Services	0.00	
5080014000 Trash Pickup Service	648.39	
5080016000 Temp Employ Svc	14,878.94	
5080019000 Veh Lic Title Fees	1,267.50	
5080020000 Enforce Invest Exp	44.00	
5080022000 Other Expenses Svc	0.00	
5080029000 NBR - Other Exp, Svs	0.00	
5120011000 Loans to Individuals	56,366.56	Refurbishment Costs Billed to Volunteer Fire Depts.
<b>** Other Expenses &amp; Services</b>	<b>73,862.74</b>	General Operation & Federal Programs



5090002000	Natural Res Supps	0.00	
5090003000	Special Purpose Supp	0.00	
5090004000	Tires	5,981.53	
5090005000	02 Gasoline Purchase	53,414.81	
5090005100	02 Diesel Fuel Purchase	25,532.84	
5090005200	02 Aviation Fuel	17,241.36	
5090006000	Office Supplies	7,392.47	
5090007000	Educ Supplies Mats	344.90	
5090011000	Photo Supps Mats	0.00	
5090013000	02-Pub Safe,Mil Sups	132.30	
5090014000	Drugs & Medicines	63.60	
5090015000	Health Lab Supps	23.94	
5090016000	Shop Indust Supps	9,537.06	
5090018000	Subscriptions Pubs	562.50	
5090019000	Food Purchases	443.01	
5090020000	02-Clothing,Rel Item	0.00	
5090022000	02-Kit,Jan,House Sup	1,200.89	
5090023000	Seed Fert Cont Agent	66,505.70	
5090025000	Agri Hort WL Supps	39,876.34	
5090026000	DP Supps	1,324.80	
5090027000	Software/Licenses	2,658.00	
5090030000	Other Comm Mat Supp	0.00	
5090036000	NBR - Comm, Mat, Sup	0.00	
5900004000	LVA Exp (Modified)	0.00	
5901070000	LVA Exp Full	0.00	
**	Commodities, Materials & Supplies	232,236.05	General Operation & Federal Programs
5100001000	04 Assist Grants Aid	55,753.34	
5100008000	NBR Asst Grants, Aid	0.00	
**	Assistance, Grants & Aids	55,753.34	
5110002000	02 Other Refunds	0.00	
5110008000	License & Permits	244.30	
**	Refunds, Taxes & Claims	244.30	
6080001000	Ref To Exp-Curr Year	(69.75)	
6080001300	RefExpSlesTaxRebate	0.00	
6080001301	RefExpUseTaxRebate	0.00	
**	Refunds	(69.75)	
5900003000	Capital Outlay	203,458.82	Fire plow (dozer) and transport trailer
**	Capital Outlay	203,458.82	
5901020000	Depr Expense (Full)	142,478.61	
**	Depreciation/Amortization	142,478.61	
6100002000	GainLoss FA(Full)	0.00	
**	Gain/Loss on Fixed Assets	0.00	
6060003000	Inter-Agy Xfers In	0.00	
6060003100	Inter XFER IN REBATE	0.00	
6060004500	IntraAgy GR Tran-In	(640,940.00)	General Revenue Distribution
6060006800	FS Adj Op Trans In	0.00	
6060006850	FA Transfers In	37,219.70	
6060007200	M & R Transfers In	0.00	
6061002000	Intra-Agy Xfers Out	0.00	
6061003000	Inter-Agy Xfers Out	0.00	
6061004100	GR RECLAIM XFER		
OUT		0.00	
6061004299	NBR Fed Rev XFR Out	0.00	
6061006800	FS Adj Op Trans Out	0.00	

6061006850 FA Transfers Out	(37,219.70)
6061007300 Surety Prem. Tr. Out	0.00
6061007500 WC Ad. Cost Tr. Out	0.00
6061008400 Claims Com. Tr. Out	0.00
<b>** Transfers In/Out</b>	<b>(640,940.00)</b>
6990001000 Prior Yr Warr Outlaw	0.00
6990002000 Prior Yr Warr Cancel	0.00
6990003000 Prior Yr Ref to Exp	0.00
<b>** Prior Year Adjustment</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>*** BALANCE</b>	<b>0.00</b>