



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

August 8, 2014

The Honorable Bill Sample
Arkansas Senate
State Capitol

The Honorable John C. Edwards
Arkansas House of Representatives
State Capitol

Re: Arkansas Forestry Commission monthly activity report for July 2014

Dear Senator Sample and Representative Edwards:

Per Act 434 of the 89th General Assembly, Section 48, the Arkansas Forestry Commission is to report monthly fiscal and agency activities to the Arkansas Legislative Council. Please find attached the report for July 2014.

Emerald ash borer (EAB) is a beetle that feeds on and kills ash trees in urban and rural forests. EAB was first discovered in southeastern Michigan in 2002. EAB probably arrived in the United States on solid wood packaging material originating in its native Asia. According to the USDA Forest Service, EAB has killed tens of millions of ash trees in 23 states and 2 Canadian provinces estimated to be worth multiple millions of dollars. Since little can be done to control the beetle, its spread has caused state regulatory agencies and the USDA to implement quarantines affecting the movement of ash.

EAB has been discovered in south central Arkansas. According to Forest Inventory Analysis statistics: ash trees comprise 1.9% of all the trees in Arkansas 5 inches diameter and larger. Ash is known to be a high valued wood and famously used for baseball bats. The AFC is working with the Plant Board, which regulates invasive pests, on a plan to address our EAB problem.

Respectfully yours,

ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe S. Fox", is written over a faint, larger signature.

Joe S. Fox

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



ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

July 2014 Activity and Fiscal Report

FIRE PROTECTION

Wildfires: During July, a total of 25 wildfires were suppressed for a total of 201 acres burned. Ten year average for the month of July is 167 wildfires for 2,246 acres burned.

Storm Damage Assistance: Howard County AFC personnel assisted county deputies and a crew from the state park in clearing Highway 278. Logan County AFC personnel assisted in clearing streets in the town of Magazine. Both assists were due to a July 23 storm event.

Search and Rescue Assistance: Yell County AFC personnel assisted with a search and rescue operation south of Blue Mountain Lake.

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 July, 72 rural fire departments (185 firefighters) were provided wildland fire training. 5,247 DOD Recycling Control Point (RCP) items (valued at \$88,932.21) were received for redistribution to VFD's such as fire hose, timers for self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA's) and chemical lights.

RFP provided 5 interest free loans (\$64,618.29) through the Rural Fire Revolving Loan Fund in July- Iron Mountain (Stone County) for \$10,398, Eureka Springs (Carroll County) for \$12,730, Compton (Newton County) for \$11,490, New DeRoche (Hot Spring County) for \$15,000, and East Pulaski (Pulaski County) for \$15,000.

The RFP shop completed maintenance on nine 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 July, Firewise staff assisted eight communities/fire departments with Firewise renewal efforts, assisted two communities with a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, conducted three initial presentations about the Firewise program, and conducted recognition ceremonies for two new Firewise communities in Norfolk and Imboden. Firewise staff worked on mitigation projects in Adona (Perry County) and Doddridge (Miller County). Firewise staff conducted one risk assessment training.

Firewise staff visited 10 AFC county and district offices to discuss Firewise programs in their area and met with 30 fire chiefs to provide information on Firewise. Firewise staff talked with 12 county Office of Emergency Management coordinators about Firewise. Firewise staff provided educational material for five Firewise events and attended the Arkansas EMT Association conference.

Firewise staff assisted with six media releases, responded to two media calls about fire prevention and fire danger and the Firewise plan, and updated Facebook site and www.arkansasfirewise.com. Firewise staff worked on a project to create a new Firewise conference display.

Firewise staff assisted in presentations with the Master Gardener's in Texarkana and Museum of Discovery in Little Rock.

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 forestry equipment theft and vandalism. AFC aggressively seeks prosecution of violators to deter such crimes. In July, AFC Investigators and district law enforcement officers opened 3 dumping, 1 equipment theft/vandalism related, 2 fire related and 7 timber theft cases.

An AFC Law Enforcement Officer attended staff meetings in districts 7 and 8 and discussed law enforcement activities with the county rangers.

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 forests. 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 4,618 landowners owning 851,926 acres that are enrolled in FSP. Landowners that implement practices under their FSP management plans become Forest Stewards. Arkansas has 1,310 Forest Stewards owning 282,193 acres.

For July, 20 FSP plans were prepared on 3,121 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 37 rural forestry management plans on 1,788 acres. AFC personnel constructed 85,337 feet of fire lane.

Forest Health: Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), a beetle native to Asia that is becoming a prominent invasive pest for forests in the United States has been positively identified in trapping efforts in south-central Arkansas. The pest which until this year had encroached southward stalling just north of the Missouri border has been positively identified in Clark, Columbia, Dallas, Hot Spring and Nevada Counties. Howard and Ouachita Counties are awaiting positive identification of suspected beetles.

This pest has a decimating impact on Ash trees it infests by destroying the thin layer of tissues directly below the bark that transport nutrients and water up and down the tree. EAB has infested Ash trees in urban and residential settings as well as rural forests.

The Arkansas State Plant Board has regulatory authority over issues related to control of the EAB. AFC, along with other agencies, is assisting Plant Board in developing a response plan.

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.

The Arkansas Urban Forestry Council and the AFC partnered with the Illinois River Watershed Partnership (IRWP) for the first Sustainable Communities Summit which was held in June at the Historical Museum in Rogers. The summit featured representatives from the EPA Region 6 and the U.S. EPA Water Quality Protection Division NPDES Permits & TMDLs Branch along with local speakers. The IRWP highlighted projects and provided information and resources for local communities working to improve and protect their watersheds.

Topics for the summit focused on green infrastructure and low impact development. These practices are usually built systems like rain gardens, bioswales, pervious paving and water harvesting that help to infiltrate, capture, and reuse stormwater to reduce polluted runoff.

Attendees included mayors from Rogers, Bentonville, Siloam Springs, Fayetteville and Springdale, as well as state agencies, city planners, engineers, conservation groups, teachers and the general public interested in learning more about watershed conservation.

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

Seedling sales for FY15 began on July 15. Sales through the end of July are 174,000 pine; 43,200 oak and 23,175 other hardwood. Sales of ash seedlings are paused until the Plant Board EAB response plan is finalized.

Baucum Nursery crew continues to provide necessary cultural practices to the pine and hardwood crops; especially top pruning, fertilization, irrigation and mulching. The extra space created between rows by changing hardwood production from 5 rows to 4 rows has allowed more sun light to reach the ground which is generating more heat. The application of mulch is a great solution to this problem and can also aid in the reduction of weeds as well as retaining moisture.

The Reforestation Manager and Nursery Manager attended a joint annual meeting of the Southern Forest Nursery Association and the Northeast Forest & Conservation Nursery Association, held in Williamsburg, Virginia. There were over 20 presentations by industry professionals. The focus of this meeting was seedling production in containers.

Prior to the opening of seedling sales we made some updates to the website which included a change with the pickup dates of wildlife and beautification bundles. Previously those bundles were only offered for pickup between March 1 and April 15. As a result of increased volume we are able to adjust our packing schedule for these bundles to cover the entire lifting season which begins the first of January. Provided tours of the nursery to two organizations- the University of Georgia representing the shortleaf pine restoration program and Weyerhaeuser Nursery's new assistant nursery manager.

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 July, water line installation for the new breeding and preservation orchards as well as the new shortleaf production orchard was completed. Tree Improvement personnel potted grafts for the shortleaf production orchard were transplanted. Tree Improvement personnel removed all non-grafted trees from the improved Nuttall orchard at Baucum Nursery. AFC sold \$39,000 worth of loblolly pine seed from AFC's reserve seed stock.

Tree Improvement personnel arranged for removal of loblolly pine orchards that are below our desired genetic potential. With assistance from the Poison Springs State Forest Manager arrangements were made for the removal of these trees by a professional logging crew.

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 a courtesy exam with 2 private landowners. The BMP Coordinator provided copies of Arkansas' BMP Implementation Report, AFC's manual "BMPs for Water Quality Protection", and a technical assistance summary report of recommendation to the participants.

The BMP Coordinator responded to one logger complaint in Stone County.

The BMP Coordinator conducted one technical logger training session for foresters, loggers and contractors in conjunction with the Arkansas Timber Producers Association (ATAP). The training was held in Marshall and attended by 23 participants.

The BMP Coordinator represented AFC at the Sustainable Forestry Committee meeting and provided the AFC BMP report.

The BMP Coordinator continues to work on the USDA Forest Service competitive grant that will provide funds for AFC to design and implement a BMP demonstration area on the Poison Springs State Forest.

The AFC purchased two portable bridges to be used as stream crossings on harvest operations. The BMP Coordinator is making the portable bridges available for loan to timber and independent logging companies.

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 July, FIA personnel have measured and submitted data on 75 plots.

COMMUNICATIONS

During July, the Public Information Coordinator (PIC) represented AFC at the Arkansas EMS Convention, Hot Springs.

PIC served as a speaker for two culmination ceremonies at the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Leadership Camps at Camp Couchdale (Garland County).

PIC presented SouthWRAP (Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal) to the Pulaski County Association of Fire Chiefs meeting.

PIC distributed statewide news releases, announcing SouthWRAP and its application to Arkansans, and the upcoming Smokey Bear 70th Birthday Celebration Poster Contest for statewide 3rd-4th graders.

PIC helped coordinate and plan the Smokey Bear 70th Birthday Celebration in Clarksville, on August 9th, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service.

PIC helped coordinate and attended two Congressional Staff Field Tours in the Ouachita National Forest and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest.

PIC completed index for final draft of updated/color version of the *Trees of Arkansas* book.

PIC published photos and updates concerning the 10 AFC personnel that deployed to Washington (for the Carlton Complex Wildfire). Several media calls and many social media “shares” resulted in this publicity effort.

AFC districts reported participating in 1 news article, 17 presentations to school and civic groups, and 2 festivals or event exhibits.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

July 31, 2014

	Balance	
4020014000 Timber Severance	(400,766.65)	
** SR (3.0) - Taxes	(400,766.65)	
4030002000 Acreage Tax	(114,139.80)	
** SR (1.5) - Taxes	(114,139.80)	
4034001000 Rents	(500.00)	Rental of State Owned Housing
** SR (1.5) - Rents, Royalties, Leas	(500.00)	
4038001000 Timber Sales	(12,818.40)	
4038003000 Seedling Sales	(51,017.80)	
** SR (1.5)- Sales of Agency Produce	(63,836.20)	
4042001000 Fines	(565.00)	
** OR - Fines and Penalties	(565.00)	
4047002000 Other Sales	(32,346.22)	Misc. Fire Equipment (Radios, Pagers, Etc...) Fire Truck
4047003000 Contributions/Donate	(100.00)	
4047099000 Misc Revenue	(3,386.51)	Prior Yr Refunds, Acreage Tax
** OR - Miscellaneous	(35,832.73)	
4048019000 Resales	(9,918.76)	

** OR - Sales of Goods and Services	(9,918.76)	Firefighting Equipment of Volunteer Fire Depts.
4049003000 Interest Distrib	(0.11)	
** OR - Investment Revenue	(0.11)	Interests
4050003000 Oth Refunds/Reimb	(1,195.20)	
4057003000 Utility Reimburs	(253.66)	
** OR - Grants and Reimbursements	(1,448.86)	
4050004000 Fed Grants/Reimburse	(130,643.79)	
** Federal Grants and Reimbursements	(130,643.79)	
4090010000 3% Special Rev Fees	12,023.00	
4090020000 1.5% Spl Rev Fees	2,677.14	
4090030000 Additional Sr Fees	980.01	
** Treasury Charges	15,680.15	Special Revenue Treasury Charges
5010001000 00 Regular Salaries	787,683.19	
5010002000 01 Extra Help Sal	2,861.30	
5010003000 06 Overtime Salaries	197.14	
5010005000 03 FICA & Medic Exp	55,912.01	
5010006000 03 Ben Ins Exp HAL	118,080.00	
5010006500 Agency Cost of ARCAP	4,566.42	
5010007000 03 Retirement Exp	115,789.38	
5010008000 03 Unemploy Comp Exp	13,289.66	
5010009000 03 Worker Comp Exp	22,652.86	
** Salary Expense	1,121,031.96	General Operation & Federal Programs
5020001000 Postage	2,092.90	
5020002000 Telecomm Wired	14,255.35	
5020003000 Telecomm Wireless	9,164.21	
5020004000 Network Services Exp	1,637.82	
5020005000 Freight	24.00	
** Communication & Transp. of Commod	27,174.28	General Operation & Federal Programs
5030001000 Printing	0.00	
5030004000 Film Processing	58.05	
** Printing & Advertising	58.05	
5030005000 02-Bldg & Grds Maint	5,063.92	
5030005100 Pest Control CI 02	142.68	
5030010000 Pub Safety Eq Maint	2,399.17	
5030011000 Ind Inst Equip Maint	5,194.87	
5030012000 02 - Vehicle Maint	13,593.27	
5030014000 Mar Avi Equip Maint	167.80	
** Repairing & Servicing	26,561.71	General Operation & Federal Programs
5040001000 Electricity	13,411.71	
5040003000 Water & Sewage	1,838.79	
5040004000 Natural Gas Propane	681.89	
5040005000 Rent of Facilities	21,823.84	
5040006000 Lease Private Land	1,290.00	
5040007000 Rent of Office Equip	2,063.91	
5040011000 Other Rent & Leases	250.00	
5040013000 Satellite/cable Serv	976.89	
** Utilities & Rent	42,337.03	Annual/Semi Annual/Quarterly rent payments paid for new FY
5050001000 02 Mileage	15.12	
5050002000 09 Mileage	73.92	
5050003100 02 - Meals	77.07	
5050003200 02 - Lodging	194.08	
5050017000 02 Conf Seminar Fees	760.00	
5050018000 09 Conf Seminar Fees	635.00	

5050019100 Board Member Expense	624.46	
** Travel & Subsistence	2,379.65	General Operation & Federal Programs
5060001000 Professional Adm Fee	6,556.00	
5060001400 02 WC Admin Fee Exp	2,333.14	
5080015000 Misc. Technical Serv	510.75	
** Professional Services & Fees	9,399.89	
5070002000 Vehicle Insurance	87,330.00	
5070003000 Bld Contents Ins	26,802.00	
5070007000 Other Insurance	0.00	
** Insurance & Bonds	114,132.00	Annual insurance premiums paid for new FY
5080011000 02-Contract Food Ser	998.42	
5080014000 Trash Pickup Service	957.13	
5080016000 Temp Employ Svc	0.00	
5080019000 Veh Lic Title Fees	86.00	
5080020000 Enforce Invest Exp	88.00	
5120011000 Loans to Individuals	50,959.39	Loans to rural fire departments
** Other Expenses & Services	53,088.94	
5090003000 Special Purpose Supp	211.83	
5090004000 Tires	4,872.84	
5090005000 02 Gasoline Purchase	33,663.50	
5090005100 02 Diesel Fuel Purchase	9,767.96	
5090005200 02 Aviation Fuel	571.85	
5090006000 Office Supplies	3,160.60	
5090007000 Educ Supplies Mats	1,944.45	
5090011000 Photo Supps Mats	285.67	
5090013000 02-Pub Safe,Mil Sups	10.45	
5090016000 Shop Indust Supps	7,578.83	
5090019000 Food Purchases	286.29	
5090022000 02-Kit,Jan,House Sup	1,385.67	
5090023000 Seed Fert Cont Agent	259.61	
5090025000 Agri Hort WL Supps	5.96	
5090026000 DP Supps	2,308.87	
5090027000 Software/Licenses	29.99	
** Commodities, Materials & Supplies	66,344.37	General Operation & Federal Programs
5100001000 04 Assist Grants Aid	34,126.87	
** Assistance, Grants & Aids	34,126.87	
5110002000 02 Other Refunds	0.00	
** Refunds, Taxes & Claims	0.00	
5900003000 Capital Outlay	37,518.81	Land Acquisition
** Capital Outlay	37,518.81	
5901020000 Depr Expense (Full)	149,605.47	
** Depreciation/Amortization	149,605.47	
6100002000 GainLoss FA(Full)	7,610.44	
** Gain/Loss on Fixed Assets	7,610.44	
6060003000 Inter-Agy Xfers In	(40,516.00)	
6060004500 IntraAgy GR Tran-In	(734,000.00)	
6060007200 M & R Transfers In	(4,447.98)	
6061003000 Inter-Agy Xfers Out	25,000.00	
** Transfers In/Out	(753,963.98)	
6990002000 Prior Yr Warr Cancel	(248.12)	
6990003000 Prior Yr Ref to Exp	(8,159.84)	
** Prior Year Adjustment	(8,407.96)	
*** BALANCE	0.00	