



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

December 9, 2016

The Honorable Bill Sample
Arkansas Senate
State Capitol

The Honorable David L. Branscum
Arkansas House of Representatives
State Capitol

Re: Arkansas Forestry Commission monthly activity report for November 2016

Dear Senator Sample and Representative Branscum:

Per Act 59 of the 89th General Assembly, Fiscal Session, 2014, Section 48, the Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC) is to report monthly fiscal and agency activities to the Arkansas Legislative Council. Please find attached the report for November, 2016.

In the month of November, all eyes were turned to the eastern U.S. watching news of the devastating wildfires, especially the wildfire that burned through Gatlinburg, TN.

Even with drought conditions, high wildfire danger and an abnormally high wildfire occurrence in Arkansas, the AFC was able to send four firefighters to help our neighbors. Three were sent to North Carolina and one was sent to Tennessee.

Here in Arkansas, fire fighters responded to 183 wildfires that burned 3,194 acres. The largest occurred in the Charleston community area and burned 1,001 acres before being contained. The suppression of the wildfire was a joint effort between AFC, US Forest Service and local Fire Departments.

As you can see, AFC strives to keep Arkansans safe from wildfires by helping our neighbors protect their lives and property.

Respectfully yours,

ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

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

Joe S. Fox

cc: DFA Director Larry Walther
Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward



ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION November 2016 Activity and Fiscal Report

FIRE PROTECTION

Wildfires: During November a total of 183 wildfires were suppressed for a total of 3194 acres burned. Ten year average for the month of November is 82 wildfires for 1310 acres burned.

Rural Fire Protection: Rural Fire Protection (RFP) assists rural volunteer fire departments (VFDs) 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 November 2016, 53 rural fire departments (110 firefighters) were provided wildland fire training. RFP received 4 Freightliners (valued at \$283,328.00) from Department of Defense (DOD). There were 3 Department of Defense (DOD) vehicles and equipment issued to VFDs including 1 Freightliner, 1 Generator and 1 Chevy Pickup (Valued at \$210,399.00). 34 DOD Recycling Control Point (RCP) items were received for redistribution to VFD's (Valued at \$11,764.70) including: Spotlights and 1.5" fire nozzles.

The RFP shop completed maintenance on 12 AFC vehicles and equipment.

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 160 active Firewise communities. Recognized communities display Firewise signs at the city limits.

In November Firewise achieved the following:

- Conducted two Initial Presentations
- Worked with 25 Chiefs and visited 10 communities to help with renewal paperwork
- Worked on 40 Firewise renewals
- Have renewed 160 active Firewise communities
- Ordered and delivered Firewise Stickers for VFD's with designated Firewise Vehicles

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 November, AFC Investigators and district law enforcement officers opened 5 dumping, 1 equipment theft/vandalism, 13 fires, and 5 timber cases.

An AFC Law Enforcement Investigator attended the Arkansas Agricultural Department board meeting.

AFC Law Enforcement Investigators patrolled the Poison Springs State Forest during deer season.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Forest Stewardship/Rural Forestry Assistance Programs: AFC 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 4,907 landowners owning 897,661 acres that are enrolled in FSP. Landowners that implement practices under their FSP management plans become Forest Stewards. Arkansas has 1,312 Forest Stewards owning 284,460 acres.

For November, 10 FSP plans were prepared on 738 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 40 rural forestry management plans on 4,219 acres. AFC personnel conducted 7 prescribed burns on 238 acres.

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 Northwest Arkansas Land Trust recently completed their urban forestry grant project which was funded through a grant from the USDA Forest Service. The funding was used to build the Kessler Mountain Outdoor Classroom & Nature Center which involved hiring staff, developing an outdoor classroom trailhead and trail and creating a nature center. The outdoor classroom consists of a trailhead with a kiosk, a native plant garden, an arboretum, a picnic area, and a gazebo. The trail is composed of a ½ mile interpretive loop with bridges, stairs, and interpretive signage about the trees at learning stations. The grant funded a variety of exhibits and displays in the nature center. The displays include "Tools of the Trade" for geologists, wildlife biologists, botanists, foresters and entomologists. Another exhibit is the "Window to the Woods" which is a display featuring pictures of wildlife on Kessler Mountain, taken by game cameras that are placed on the mountain. A tree identification display uses bark segments and pressed leaves to teach how to identify native trees. To date over 700 students from 8 schools have visited the center.

Forest Health: The Forest Health Specialist, Chandler Barton, assists AFC personnel statewide in efforts to maintain healthy, productive forest ecosystems by preventing, detecting, monitoring, and suppressing damaging insects and diseases. AFC offers technical assistance to landowners who encounter forest health issues.

- The Forest Health Specialist gave a presentation titled "Plant Disorder Diagnosis and Treatment" at the certified arborist exam prep. He also assisted in an emerald ash borer training for University of Arkansas county extension agents.
- Emerald ash borer was confirmed in Hempstead and Lafayette Counties (now 14 total counties in AR). The beetle continues to be found by observant landowners and forest health specialists in new areas outside of the known infestation.
- The forest health specialist participated in an Arkansas working group dedicated to restoring monarch and pollinator habitat. The group is sparking discussion between state agencies to address concerns over pollinator habitat loss in the state. Pollinators, such as the monarch

butterfly, are ecologically important, and their conservation should receive more attention when we manage our properties. As stewards of sustainable land management, foresters will learn how pollinator habitat can be incorporated with the objectives of forest landowners.

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

Seedling sales began on July 15. Through December 2nd, there were 389 on line seedling orders. Seedling sales through December 2nd resulted in 2,284,700 pine compared with 974,125 this time last year; and 4,706,225 hardwood compared to 2,611,200 this time last year.

During the month of November, Baucum Nursery staff harvested seed from improved cherrybark oak and improved nuttall oak orchards. The Nursery received the following seed for planting FY18 crop: 1559 lbs. of white oak, 7345 lbs. of swamp chestnut oak, 400 lbs. nuttall oak from Mid-South Forest Seed; 878 lbs. of Overcup oak, 2720 lbs. of water hickory and 50 lbs. of persimmon from M&C Forest Seeds; 1500 lbs. of Shumard oak from Barron's Inc. The Nursery ordered seed for blackgum, cedar elm, dogwood, hackberry, mayhaw, redbud, sugarberry, sweetgum, sycamore, water tupelo, mulberry and red maple for FY18 crop and planted 4,000 lbs. of black walnut, 5,500 lbs. of white oak, 2,900 lbs. of sawtooth oak, 500 lbs. of Chinkapin oak, and 2,750 lbs. of water hickory. Implementation of the new system of seed germination testing of all stored pine seed began with collection of samples from all lots of pine seed and sending to the US Forest Service Seed Testing Lab.

Tree Improvement: AFC's tree improvement program strives to provide landowners with the highest possible genetic gain in pine and hardwood seed. One method AFC employs to achieve this objective is by establishing the highest genetic gain material in our newest pine and hardwood seed orchards. AFC Baucum Nursery then makes available to landowners the improved varieties of pine and hardwood, which are the net result of the tree improvement program.

During the month of November the Tree Improvement staff moved trees out of the greenhouse to harden them off for planting, weeded all pots and trays outside, repaired irrigation lines, treated seed orchards for gopher prevention, began pruning top grafts, continued to pick up roots from removal of old seed orchards and began wiring the new shop. Site prep was completed for a new loblolly pine test near Rosston and the hardwood growth and yield test at the Dr. Parkes site near Dover.

Reforestation Manager attended the Southern Forest Nursery Management Cooperative Advisory Meeting at Auburn University. The purpose of this meeting is to review accomplishments by the research staff during the previous year and to approve, deny, modify and make recommendations for research projects for the upcoming year.

Best Management Practices: Forestry Commission 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 two courtesy exams. One was conducted in Van Buren County with 3 participants consisting of two Landowners and the AFC's BMP coordinator. The second exam was in Garland County with 3 participants consisting of two Industry Foresters and the AFC's BMP coordinator.

The exams addressed the Arkansas Forestry Commission's BMP Program. The BMP Coordinator provided copies of Arkansas' BMP Implementation Reports, AFC's manual "BMPs for Water Quality Protection", the water quality complaint process and MOU with ADEQ. The BMP coordinator provided an overview of the entire program and offered technical assistance and training to help with their SFI program and audits.

The BMP Coordinator conducted one technical logger training session for Foresters, Loggers and Contractors. The training was held in conjunction with the Arkansas Timber Producers Association (ATPA) and was held in Crossett, AR., attended by 48 participants.

The BMP coordinator participated in the second of five Unpaved Roads Program Trainings/workshops. The training was led by The Nature Conservancy for County Judges, County Highway Department Road Superintendents, and other Agencies. The training was well attended with approximately 40 participants.

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.

The FIA crew completed 34 plots for the month of November.

COMMUNICATIONS

Arkansas Forestry Commission Communications Update: November, 2016

Media Update

- Hosted Press Conference in Bella Vista with partners at Bentonville Fire Department and City of Bentonville concerning prescribed burn scheduled for Bella Vista Lake public area and trail, Nov 5.
 - This led to a follow-up story in the NWA Dem Gaz and the Bella Vista newspaper.
 - Television contacts have been set up for live coverage when the prescribed burn takes place.
- Circulated News Release: Arkansas State Plant Board Confirms Emerald Ash Borer in Lafayette and Hempstead Counties, Nov. 10.
 - This led to a follow-up front page feature story in the Dem Gaz over Emerald Ash Borer.
- Circulated News Release: November 17 Highest Wildfire Frequency Day of 2016: Arkansans Should Continue to Use Caution with Outdoor Burning, Nov 18.
 - Provided 3 radio interviews (for KUAR, KARN, and the Arkansas River Valley Network, worked with 4 newspapers (local papers in Fort Smith, Fayetteville, and Alma and the Dem Gaz), and worked with 2 television stations (KARK 4 and KTHV 11) to give updates on the Charleston wildfire near Fort Smith and the information provided in this press release.
 - Worked with the Governor's Office to coordinate social media messages from the Governor concerning the Charleston wildfire and Arkansas wildfire danger, Nov. 18.
- Coordinated interview for Joe Fox and KTHV 11 News comparing Arkansas wildfire activity to the Gatlinburg, Tennessee wildfire incidents, Nov 30.

- Numerous hours were spent keeping social media updated (see numbers below) concerning Burn Bans and Wildfire Danger throughout November. Numbers of followers and likes increased by more than 100 for both Twitter and Facebook during this very busy period of wildfire activity and changing news on wildfire danger/risk across Arkansas.

Meetings and Events

- Attended District 5 Meeting in Malvern Nov. 9 (to discuss new Arkansas Agriculture Department Media Policy and the Jr. Wildland Firefighter Guide).
- Attended meeting for Project Learning Tree planning at the Arkansas Forestry Association, Nov 15.

General

- Included forestry updates in Arkansas Agriculture Department monthly Newsletter, Nov. 6.
- Ordered Smokey Bear materials for half the AFC Districts.

SGSF Planning

- Distributed update to SGSF team and sponsorship letter, Nov 22. We can now begin soliciting sponsors and donors for the 2017 event.

AFC Social Media Update

- Facebook – 15,530 Likes (up from 14,939 in October)
- Twitter – 6,578 Followers (up from 6,470 Followers in October)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

November 2016

	Balance
4020014000 TIMBER SEVERANCE	(387,206.42)
** SR (3.0) - Taxes	(387,206.42)
4030002000 ACREAGE TAX	(723,537.48)
4031076000 FIRE PROTECT/SUPP	(3,855.55)
** SR (1.5) - Taxes	(727,393.03)
4038001000 TIMBER SALES	(655.00)
4038003000 SEEDLING SALES	(48,986.24)
** SR (1.5)- Sales of Agency Produce	(49,641.24)
4040008000 FIRE PROTECTION TAX	0.00
** OR - Taxes	0.00
4042001000 FINES	0.00
** OR - Fines and Penalties	0.00
4043002100 NBR LICENSE & PERMIT	0.00
** OR - Licenses and Permits	0.00
4044002000 FACILITIES RENT	(400.00)
** OR - Rents	(400.00)

4047002000 OTHER SALES	(7,762.50)	Fire equipment
4047003000		
CONTRIBUTIONS/DONATE	(200.00)	Fire Show Donations
4047021000 OPERATING		
DONATIONS	0.00	
6200003000 Other Donations	(36,000.00)	1995 Freightliner
** OR - Miscellaneous	(43,962.50)	
4047001600 PAYMENT FOR		Prescribed Burn/Fire
SERVICES	(19,943.00)	Lane
		Trees of
4048001000 SALE COPIES PUBS	(604.00)	AR
4048019000 RESALES	(65,835.44)	Fire Equipment
4053001200 NBR SALE OF GDS & SV	0.00	
** OR - Sales of Goods and Services	(86,382.44)	
4049003000 INTEREST DISTRIB	(0.13)	
** OR - Investment Revenue	(0.13)	
		Cell Phone Overage/PSSF Misc
4050003000 OTH REFUNDS/REIMB	(281.30)	Refund
4057003000 UTILITY REIMBUR	(406.57)	
** OR - Grants and Reimbursements	(687.87)	
4050004000 FED		
GRANTS/REIMBURSE	(517,842.32)	
4050004100 NBR - Grant Rev.	0.00	
** Federal Grants and Reimbursements	(517,842.32)	
4090010000 3% SPECIAL REV FEES	11,616.20	
4090020000 1.5% SPL REV FEES	11,947.27	
4090030000 ADDITIONAL SR FEES	1,570.89	
** Treasury Charges	25,134.36	
5010001000 00 Regular Salaries	779,243.63	
5010001100 NBR - Personal Svs.	0.00	
5010001600 NBR - Emp Benefits	0.00	
5010002000 01 Extra Help Sal	14,114.24	
5010003000 06 Overtime Salaries	144.24	
5010005000 03 FICA & Medic Exp	56,323.17	
5010006000 03 Ben Ins Exp HAL	120,435.00	
5010006500 Agency Cost of ARCAP	4,400.46	
5010007000 03 Retirement Exp	112,080.43	
5010009000 03 Worker Comp Exp	0.00	
5010011000 16 Fixed Uniform All	400.00	
** Salary Expense	1,087,141.17	
5020001000 Postage	367.07	
5020002000 Telecomm Wired	22,594.75	
5020003000 Telecomm Wireless	405.65	
5020004000 Network Services Exp	2,617.40	
5020004200 Internet Serv-Tech	111.32	
5020005000 Freight	230.20	
5020006000 NBR Com & Trans Com	0.00	
** Communication & Transp. of Commod	26,326.39	
5030001000 Printing	0.00	
5030001100 02-Print-AgenPub	0.00	
5030002000 Bind Copy Collate	20.77	
5030003000 Advertise Clip Svc	221.25	
5030004100 NBR Printing & Adv.	0.00	
** Printing & Advertising	242.02	

5030005000	02-Bldg & Grds Maint	123,071.96	Baucum/D5/D7
5030005100	Pest Control CI 02	0.00	
5030008000	Office Equip Maint	0.00	
5030010000	Pub Safety Eq Maint	11,805.66	
5030011000	Ind Inst Equip Maint	14,017.58	
5030012000	02 - Vehicle Maint	14,332.18	
5030014000	Mar Avi Equip Maint	8,860.13	
5030016000	DP Equip Maint	751.59	
5030021000	NBR - Repair & Serv.	0.00	
** Repairing & Servicing		172,839.10	
5040001000	Electricity	10,875.62	
5040003000	Water & Sewage	2,382.51	
5040003100	02 Water	28.11	
5040004000	Natural Gas Propane	1,718.24	
5040005000	Rent of Facilities	9,594.20	Equipment and Offices
5040006000	Lease Private Land	90.00	
5040007000	Rent of Office Equip	2,170.41	Copiers & Stamp machines for offices
5040011000	Other Rent & Leases	0.00	
5040012000	NBR -Utilities & Ren	0.00	
5040013000	Satellite/cable Serv	0.00	
** Utilities & Rent		26,859.09	
5050001000	02 Mileage	1,044.22	
5050003100	02 - Meals	779.05	
5050003200	02 - Lodging	3,193.26	
5050004100	09 - Meals	0.00	
5050004200	09 - Lodging	0.00	
5050005000	02 Common Carrier	0.00	
5050009000	02 Ground Transport	163.95	
5050011000	02 PRKNG FEES	122.38	
TRAVEL			
5050012000	09 PRKNG FEES	0.00	
TRAVEL			
5050013000	02 Other Travel Exp	0.00	
5050017000	02 Conf Seminar Fees	455.00	
5050018000	09 Conf Seminar Fees	275.00	
5050020200	02Bd Mmbr Trav Lodg	0.00	
5050020400	02BdMbr Trvl Mileage	0.00	
5050023000	NBR Travel/Sub CI 02	0.00	
5050024000	NBR Travel/Sub CI 09	0.00	
5050025000	02 GAS PURCH-TRAVEL	15.00	
** Travel & Subsistence		6,047.86	
5060001000	Professional Adm Fee	10,596.39	Stewardship; Architectural-Baucum
5060001100	Reimb Prof & Adm	42.10	
5060001400	02 WC ADMIN FEE EXP	0.00	
5060006000	Lab Diagnostic Svc	0.00	
5060016000	NBR PROSVS & FEES	0.00	
5080015000	02 MiscTech SrvNonIT	228.75	
** Professional Services & Fees		10,867.24	
5070001000	Surety Perform Bonds	0.00	
5070002000	Vehicle Insurance	0.00	
5070003000	Bld Contents Ins	0.00	
** Insurance & Bonds		0.00	
5080001000	M&R Service Fees	0.00	

5080005000	Cash Fund Svc Chg	0.00	
5080006000	Assoc Member Dues	70.00	
5080009000	Janitorial Service	457.80	
5080010000	Laundry Uniform Svc	0.00	
5080011000	02-CONTRACT FOOD		
SER		0.00	
5080014000	Trash Pickup Service	414.08	
5080016000	Temp Employ Svc	9,976.25	Baucum and Bluff City
5080019000	Veh Lic Title Fees	620.89	
5080020000	Enforce Invest Exp	22.00	
5080029000	NBR - Other Exp, Svs	0.00	
5120011000	Loans to Individuals	0.00	
**	Other Expenses & Services	11,561.02	
5090001000	Road Pub Area Mats	0.00	
5090002000	Natural Res Supps	497.74	
5090003000	Special Purpose Supp	1,621.72	
5090004000	Tires	9,177.09	
5090005000	02 GASOLINE PURCH	22,548.28	
5090005100	02 DIESEL FUEL PURCH	13,755.11	
5090005200	02 AVIATION FUEL	8,146.79	
5090006000	Office Supplies	5,559.78	
5090007000	Educ Supplies Mats	8,908.24	
5090011000	Photo Supps Mats	6.02	
5090013000	02-Pub Safe,Mil Sups	3,008.75	
5090014000	Drugs & Medicines	2.18	
5090016000	Shop Indust Supps	4,717.05	
5090018000	Subscriptions Pubs	0.00	
5090019000	Food Purchases	2,564.88	
5090020000	02-Clothing,Rel Item	974.92	
5090022000	02-Kit,Jan,House Sup	1,546.58	
5090023000	Seed Fert Cont Agent	118,020.63	Baucum
5090025000	Agri Hort WL Supps	17,211.30	
5090026000	DP Supps	2,428.71	
5090027000	Software/Licenses	495.00	
5090030000	Other Comm Mat Supp	348.16	
5090036000	NBR - Comm, Mat, Sup	0.00	
5090037000	Equip Fire Vehicles	26,929.78	
5900004000	LVA Exp (Modified)	4,093.96	Computer; Radio's
5901070000	LVA Exp Full	4,093.96	
**	Commodities, Materials & Supplies	256,656.63	
5100001000	04 Assist Grants Aid	195,567.87	Urban; Vol Fire Dept Equipment and Southern Pine Beetle
5100005100	02-SPONSORSHIPS	121.13	
5100008000	NBR Asst Grants, Aid	0.00	
**	Assistance, Grants & Aids	195,689.00	
5110002000	02 Other Refunds	3,710.00	Seedling Refund; GreenBay Bond Refund
**	Refunds, Taxes & Claims	3,710.00	
6080001300	RefExpSlesTaxRebate	0.00	
**	Refunds	0.00	
5900003000	Capital Outlay	38,000.00	Freightliner; Fema Trailer
**	Capital Outlay	38,000.00	
5901020000	Depr Expense (Full)	92,290.30	

** Depreciation/Amortization	92,290.30
6100002000 GainLoss FA(Full)	0.00
** Gain/Loss on Fixed Assets	0.00
6060004200 InterAgy FedRev X In	(1,104.62)
6060004299 NBR Fed Rev XFER In	0.00
6060004500 IntraAgy GR Tran-In	(762,699.92)
6060006800 FS Adj Op Trans In	0.00
6060007200 M & R Transfers In	(86.25)
6061003000 Inter-Agy Xfers Out	0.00
6061004100 GR RECLAIM XFER OUT	0.00
6061006800 FS Adj Op Trans Out	0.00
6061008400 Claims Com. Tr. Out	343.58
** Transfers In/Out	(763,547.21)
6990001000 Prior Yr Warr Outlaw	0.00
6990003000 Prior Yr Ref to Exp	(57.26)
** Prior Year Adjustment	(57.26)
*** BALANCE	0.00