



ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

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Joe Fox, R.F.
State Forester

September 13, 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 July 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 August 2016.

In August, two Black Hawk helicopters and crews from the Arkansas Army National Guard at Camp Robinson trained with Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) planes from the AFC at the Malvern Airport. The aircraft were training for joint wildfire response by targeting water drops at a simulated wildfire nearby. Protocols for safety, dispatching, communicating, and making the actual water drops were the focus of the pilots and dozer operators. Gaining experience in working safely together is necessary before an active wildfire season occurs.

Arkansas's weather has been generous with rain and has therefore resulted in low fire danger and occurrence. However, properly trained partnerships, like this one, are key when drought conditions lead to high fire danger and occurrence. With practical and ground training, AFC and our partners stay prepared to keep Arkansans safe when the need arises.

ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

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

Joe S. Fox

cc: DFA Director Larry Walther
Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward



ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

August 2016 Activity and Fiscal Report

FIRE PROTECTION

Wildfires: During August a total of 11 wildfires were suppressed for a total of 27 acres burned. This was the third lowest number of fires and fourth lowest acres recorded in Arkansas in August in 80 years. Ten year average for the month of August is 169 wildfires for 2251 acres burned.

Search and Rescue Assistance: An AFC crew from Newton County searched for a lost woman who took a shortcut on the Glory Hole Hiking Trail between the communities of Fallsville and Swain; she was found safe, but dehydrated.

AFC crews assisted in a search for a missing woman around Black Bass Lake and Oil Springs Road in the Eureka Springs area.

AFC crews assisted in a search for a missing 2 year old in the Cross Bow Ranch area in Madison County.

AFC crews assisted in a search for a missing 12 year old in the Everton area in Boone County. The boy was found safe.

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 August 2016, 33 rural fire departments (114 firefighters) were provided wildland fire training. RFP received 2 Freightliners, 1 GMC pickup and 1 generator from Department of Defense (DOD) (Valued at \$376,622.00). There were 8 Department of Defense (DOD) vehicles and equipment issued to VFDs including 6 Freightliners, 1 Chevy truck, and 1 International truck (Valued at \$1,058,869.00). 423 DOD Recycling Control Point (RCP) items were received for redistribution to VFD's (Valued at \$31,002.66) including: fire hose, navigational lights, spotlights.

Rural Fire provided 1 interest free loan via the Rural Fire Revolving Loan Fund in August 2016.

- Horatio VFD 1984 Turnkey Chevy (DoD) with Water Skid Unit \$11,346.30 Sevier County

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

Firewise: Firewise staff and district personnel work with fire departments, civic organizations and individuals to make communities safer from the threat of wildfire through mitigation projects and

community education initiatives. Arkansas leads the nation with 157 active Firewise communities. Recognized communities display Firewise signs at the city limits.

In August Firewise achieved the following:

1. Taught two Risk Assessment Trainings.
2. Conducted eight initial presentations.
3. Visited 12 county and district offices and 25 offices of emergency management.
4. Attended a booth at AMETA Conference and presented Firewise to 500 attendees.
5. Attended OPM training.
6. Presented Firewise to 500 adults and youth at the Perry County Youth Hunt.

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 August, AFC Investigators and district law enforcement officers opened 7 timber theft and 2 dumping cases.

An AFC Law Enforcement Investigator was the instructor for the County Ranger Training for Districts 1 and 4 in El Dorado, and for District 5 in Malvern. He was the instructor for the County Ranger Training for District 5 in Malvern. This investigator represented the AFC Law Enforcement Officers at the Sebastian County Deputy's funeral.

Another AFC Law Enforcement Investigator assisted in County Ranger Training for Districts 1 and 4 in El Dorado and for District 5 in Malvern.

A third AFC Law Enforcement Investigator assisted with County Ranger Training for District 5 in Malvern.

All the AFC Law Enforcement Investigators attended the Southeast Arson Task Force Training in Jekyll Island, Georgia.

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 4,883 landowners owning 891,734 acres that are enrolled in FSP. Landowners that implement practices under their FSP management plans become Forest Stewards. Arkansas has 1,309 Forest Stewards owning 281,863 acres.

For August, 21 FSP plans were prepared on 2,713 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 107 rural forestry management plans on 5,406 acres. AFC personnel conducted 4 prescribed burns on 262 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.

Urban Forestry Staff provided a tour for the National Association of County Agriculture Agents who were meeting in the City of Little Rock for their annual conference. The agents requested an urban forestry tour within the City. The project involved low impact development with bioswales and raingardens filled with trees and plants. These features collect storm water run-off from the streets and filters the water prior to it reaching the City's wastewater treatment system.

The tour group then shuttled to MacArthur Park to look at bioswales along Commerce Street, various tree planting projects and a discussion on how the City is using the canopy assessment previously funded in part by a grant from AFC. The plantings are part of the City's effort to replace tree canopy that was lost due to a tornado. One of the plantings was a partnership between the City, AFC and the Girl Scouts of America. AFC prepared a tree planting plan and the girls helped the City plant the trees.

From there the tour visited the Governor's Mansion grounds to learn about the tree inventory that AFC personnel implemented earlier this year. The spot chosen for discussion about the project was next to an Arkansas Oak which is rarely seen in this part of the state.

The last stop on the tour was at the University of Arkansas of Medical Sciences. AFC staff also did a tree inventory on their campus and worked with them to become a Tree Campus USA. The maintenance staff now uses the program to assist them in making decisions about protecting and planting trees related to new construction on the campus. The group had many questions and was very appreciative of the tour.

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.

- Plant Protection and Quarantine (USDA) confirmed the presence of emerald ash borer in Randolph County. AFC and other officials investigated the area; the beetle appears to be a recent introduction into that county. Randolph borders confirmed counties in Missouri that already have the beetle. A change to the quarantine is forthcoming, but it will not cause the entire state to be under quarantine regulations. Questions and concerns about the quarantine should go to the Arkansas State Plant Board.
- After several detection flights over western Arkansas counties, the Ips pine beetle infestation that devastated several thousand acres last year appears to have mostly subsided. Small outbreaks were recorded and information is being provided to landowners.

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

Seedling sales began on July 15. Through the end of August there were 145 on line seedling orders. Seedling sales through the end of August resulted in 1,519,025 pine compared with 286,925 last year during the same period. Last year at this time the total hardwoods sold were 1,324,275. This year we have sold 3,709,025 through the end of August.

During August, Baucum Nursery staff fertilized all hardwood and pine seedlings 3 times, made 2 applications of Goaltender on pines and 1 application of poast herbicide on all hardwoods and pines. Finished applying mulch; top- pruned hardwoods and pines; plowed middles in all fields and repaired fences in 4 locations around property perimeter.

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.

Fertilized production and scion bank orchards with bulk fertilizer dispersed through a fertilizer buggy which is pulled by a truck. Fertilized new orchards by hand. Removed stumps from rogued orchards with a track hoe. This cleanup will allow for a smooth transition for this ground to the next orchard expansion. Stumps which were removed by Reforestation Foreman were piled for burning with the assistance of District 4 personnel. Tree Improvement staff did all necessary weeding of crops in greenhouse and containers being grown outside the greenhouse. Final aerial application of insecticide was applied to all production orchards.

Reforestation Manager attended the UAPB Agriculture Field Day at Lonoke. Through display and presentation he explained the partnership between UAPB Farm and AFC, described the tree improvement process and the value of the testing AFC has computed on UAPB land over the past 20 years.

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 BMP courtesy exam with two landowners in Saline County.

The BMP Coordinator conducted one technical logger training session in Waldron for 30 participants that included foresters, loggers and contractors.

The BMP Coordinator represented AFC at the Arkansas Timber Producers Association's In-Woods Expo planning meeting. The AFC will provide communications and security, display AFC firefighting equipment, and provide information on BMP's for timber harvesting.

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 59 plots for the month of August.

COMMUNICATIONS

Media Update

- Distributed “Arkansas State Plant Board Confirms Emerald Ash Borer in Randolph County” release to statewide media on Aug 9th (AFC plays a vital role to the Arkansas State Plant Board in detecting and confirming the presence/spread of EAB).
- Distributed “Razorback Crew sent to Rey Fire to Assist in Wildfire Suppression” release to statewide media on Aug 22 (this warranted a press release as this is the largest single group of wildland firefighters from the AFC to go out west as a firefighting crew).
- Distributed “Aircraft Participate in Joint Training for Arkansas Wildfire Response,” to local media (in the Malvern area) following training between AFC Single Engine Air Tankers and Black Hawks from Camp Robinson, Aug 26.

Meetings and Events

- Presented at the AFC District Forester and Program Managers meeting in Little Rock, Aug 2
- Attended Prescribed Fire Council Meeting at Camp Robinson, Aug 18.
 - As a follow-up to that meeting, created invitations for media and VIPs to Prescribed Fire School training event, Oct. 3-7. Those are pending approval from Camp Robinson Public Affairs Staff and will be distributed to state leaders upon approval.
- Attended Arkansas Dept. of Emergency Management Conference in Rogers, Aug 31-Sept 2

General

- Included forestry updates in Arkansas Agriculture Department monthly Newsletter, August 4
- Helped to reorganize, edit, and launch new Prescribed Fire Network website (www.arfirenetwork.org). This website is meant to provide information and resources about the benefits and application of prescribed fire as a management tool. Updates will be final before the 2016 Prescribed Fire School training event at Camp Robinson, Oct 3-7.
- Supported Seed2Sawmill Tour (hosted by Senator Boozman and Representative Westerman to highlight forest industry across Arkansas) via social media posts and contact with tour staff members.
 - Also highlighted participation of State Forester Joe Fox on the tour.
- Completed final edits to the Jr. Arkansas Wildland Firefighter Guide and badge design. Working now with the Arkansas Forestry Association to use Project Learning Tree lessons in coordination with the guide in classrooms – to inform material included in the Instructor’s Manual for the program.

Rural Fire Show Planning

- Attended Rural Fire Show Planning meeting at Greenbrier, Aug 23
- Distributed invitations to statewide fire department (via list of e-mail contacts from Rural Fire Headquarters) on Aug 30
- Distributed vendor invitations to list of partners and vendors Aug 31

August AFC Social Media Update

- Facebook – 14,784 Likes (up from 14,733 in July)
- Twitter – 6,323 Followers (up from 6,270 Followers in July)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

August 2016

	Balance	
4020014000 Timber Severance	(330,405.37)	
** SR (3.0) - Taxes	(330,405.37)	
4030002000 Acreage Tax	(45,748.98)	
** SR (1.5) - Taxes	(45,748.98)	
4038003000 Seedling Sales	(91,303.00)	
** SR (1.5)- Sales of Agency Produce	(91,303.00)	
4040008000 FIRE PROTECTION TAX	(1,694.89)	Fire suppression fine
** OR - Taxes	(1,694.89)	
4042001000 FINES	0.00	
** OR - Fines and Penalties	0.00	
4044002000 FACILITIES RENT	(500.00)	
** OR - Rents	(500.00)	
4047002000 OTHER SALES	(11,348.30)	
6200003000 Other Donations	(2,500.00)	Donated Trailer
** OR - Miscellaneous	(13,848.30)	
4047001600 Payment for Services	(13,119.00)	Prescribed Burns
		Firelane construction
4048001000 Sales Copies Pubs	(1,750.75)	Trees of Arkansas
4048019000 Resales	(41,489.42)	Firefighting Equipment
		VFD's
** OR - Sales of Goods and Services	(56,359.17)	
4049003000 Interest Distrib	(0.19)	
** OR - Investment Revenue	(0.19)	
4050003000 Oth Refunds/Reimb	(299.01)	Travel Card Reimbursement
** OR - Grants and Reimbursements	(299.01)	
4050004000 Fed Grants/Reimburse	(42,463.47)	
** Federal Grants and Reimbursements	(42,463.47)	
4090010000 3% SPECIAL REV FEES	9,912.16	
4090020000 1.5% SPL REV FEES	2,205.78	
4090030000 ADDITIONAL SR FEES	807.86	
** Treasury Charges	12,925.80	
5010001000 00 Regular Salaries	767,484.72	
5010002000 01 Extra Help Sal	7,190.89	
5010003000 06 Overtime Salaries	860.44	
5010005000 03 FICA & Medic Exp	55,060.82	
5010006000 03 Ben Ins Exp HAL	122,430.00	
5010006500 Agency Cost of ARCAP	4,288.82	
5010007000 03 Retirement Exp	111,240.48	
5010011000 16 Fixed Uniform All	1,600.00	
** Salary Expense	1,070,156.17	

5020001000 Postage	2,093.13	
5020002000 Telecomm Wired	13,608.59	
5020003000 Telecomm Wireless	140.86	
5020004000 Network Services Exp	3,025.72	
5020004200 Internet Serv-Tech	111.32	
5020005000 Freight	170.40	
** Communication & Transp. of Commod	19,150.02	
5030001000 Printing	624.96	Snap - Out Form
5030002000 Bind Copy Collate	65.88	
5030003000 Advertise Clip Svc	119.37	
** Printing & Advertising	810.21	
5030005000 02-Bldg & Grds Maint	74,995.77	Sline County Workcenter A/C Unit
5030005100 Pest Control Cl 02	147.07	
5030008000 Office Equip Maint	291.04	
5030010000 Pub Safety Eq Maint	6,148.82	
5030011000 Ind Inst Equip Maint	21,311.61	
5030012000 02 - Vehicle Maint	21,987.15	
5030014000 Mar Avi Equip Maint	27,687.82	
5030016000 DP Equip Maint	0.00	
** Repairing & Servicing	152,569.28	
5040001000 Electricity	14,395.89	
5040003000 Water & Sewage	1,753.91	
5040003100 02 Water	470.48	
5040004000 Natural Gas Propane	599.47	
5040005000 Rent of Facilities	14,703.40	
5040006000 Lease Private Land	290.00	
5040007000 Rent of Office Equip	2,501.10	
5040011000 Other Rent & Leases	666.00	
5040013000 Satellite/cable Serv	1,200.00	
** Utilities & Rent	36,580.25	
5050001000 02 Mileage	548.33	
5050003100 02 - Meals	3,183.65	
5050003200 02 - Lodging	6,557.65	
5050004100 09 - Meals	0.00	
5050004200 09 - Lodging	101.47	
5050005000 02 Common Carrier	443.20	
5050011000 02 PRKNG FEES		
TRAVEL	82.92	
5050012000 09 PRKNG FEES		
TRAVEL	10.00	
5050013000 02 Other Travel Exp	30.00	
5050017000 02 Conf Seminar Fees	3,385.00	
5050018000 09 Conf Seminar Fees	5,716.35	
5050020200 02Bd Mmbr Trav Lodg	0.00	
5050020400 02BdMbr Trvl Mileage	849.24	
** Travel & Subsistence	20,907.81	
5060001000 Professional Adm Fee	31,735.35	Western Pilot; Stewardship; Baucum Shed \$1,470
5060001100 Reimb Prof & Adm	600.43	
5060001400 02 WC ADMIN FEE EXP	0.00	
5060006000 Lab Diagnostic Svc	0.00	
5080015000 02 MiscTech SrvNonIT	1,366.00	

** Professional Services & Fees	33,701.78	
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	22.93	
5080009000 Janitorial Service	692.10	
5080011000 02-CONTRACT FOOD SER	0.00	
5080014000 Trash Pickup Service	911.75	
5080016000 Temp Employ Svc	21,431.32	Baucum
5080019000 Veh Lic Title Fees	273.00	
5080020000 Enforce Invest Exp	203.89	
5120011000 Loans to Individuals	10,350.00	VFD loan
** Other Expenses & Services	33,884.99	
5090001000 Road Pub Area Mats	32.35	
5090003000 Special Purpose Supp	0.00	
5090004000 Tires	4,374.50	
5090005000 02 GASOLINE PURCH	18,366.75	
5090005100 02 DIESEL FUEL PURCH	11,924.05	
5090005200 02 AVIATION FUEL	2,101.16	
5090006000 Office Supplies	6,017.85	
5090007000 Educ Supplies Mats	219.30	
5090011000 Photo Supps Mats	0.00	
5090013000 02-Pub Safe,Mil Sups	272.29	
5090016000 Shop Indust Supps	10,209.87	
5090018000 Subscriptions Pubs	225.98	
5090019000 Food Purchases	1,203.62	
5090020000 02-Clothing,Rel Item	1,231.36	
5090022000 02-Kit,Jan,House Sup	1,428.88	
5090023000 Seed Fert Cont Agent	17,438.21	
5090025000 Agri Hort WL Supps	286.32	
5090026000 DP Supps	2,904.06	
5090027000 Software/Licenses	359.59	
5090037000 Equip Fire Vehicles	28,321.96	VFD equipment
5900004000 LVA Exp (Modified)	7,549.75	Generator,Shop Van,Laptop
5901070000 LVA Exp Full	7,549.75	
** Commodities, Materials & Supplies	122,017.60	
5100001000 04 Assist Grants Aid	31,050.00	
** Assistance, Grants & Aids	31,050.00	SPB and Mitigation
5110002000 02 Other Refunds	600.00	
** Refunds, Taxes & Claims	600.00	
6080001300 RefExpSlesTaxRebate	0.00	
** Refunds	0.00	
5900003000 Capital Outlay	2,472.50	
** Capital Outlay	2,472.50	
5901020000 Depr Expense (Full)	91,587.62	
** Depreciation/Amortization	91,587.62	
6100002000 GainLoss FA(Full)	(2.11)	
** Gain/Loss on Fixed Assets	(2.11)	
6060004200 InterAgy FedRev X In	(29,560.53)	
6060004500 IntraAgy GR Tran-In	(629,541.18)	

6060007200 M & R Transfers In	(4,268.16)
6061003000 Inter-Agy Xfers Out	0.00
6061004100 GR RECLAIM XFER OUT	610.60
** Transfers In/Out	(662,759.27)
6990001000 Prior Yr Warr Outlaw	(650.85)
6990003000 Prior Yr Ref to Exp	(2,229.88)
** Prior Year Adjustment	(2,880.73)
*** BALANCE	0.00