



ALABAMA  
FORESTRY  
COMMISSION

*protect*



*sustain*



*educate*

2012 Annual Report





Robert Bentley  
Governor of Alabama



The Alabama Forestry Commission is a state agency governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners.  
Each commissioner, appointed by the Governor of Alabama, serves a five-year term.

Commissioners



Johnny McReynolds  
Chairman



Tommy Thompson  
Vice Chairman



C. Irvin Eatman, Jr.



Don Heath



Kenneth Real



Salem Saloom



Jerry Smith

Linda S. Casey  
State Forester

Dan Jackson  
Forest Operations Division Director

Walter Cartwright  
Administrative Division Director

Hank McKinley  
Northwest Regional Forester

Terry Ezzell  
North Regional Forester

Jason Dockery  
Northeast Regional Forester

Gary Cole  
Southwest Regional Forester

Bruce Springer  
East Central Regional Forester

Otis French  
Southeast Regional Forester

Our Mission:

We will serve Alabama by protecting and sustaining our forest resources using professionally applied stewardship principals and education. We will ensure that Alabama's forests contribute to abundant timber and wildlife, clean air and water, and a healthy economy.

# PROTECT

Through our Forest Protection, the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) oversees statewide fire suppression and mitigation, law enforcement activities, emergency disaster assistance, wildland urban interface and fire prevention, central dispatch, communications for both AFC and rural community fire protection, as well as forest health.

## FIRE SUPPRESSION

Alabama Forestry Commission wildland firefighters provide forest landowners and citizens with wildfire protection 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These men and women often face difficult environmental factors and adverse weather conditions, as well as all types of terrain and unknown hazards, in the course of responding to, suppressing, and returning from wildfires. They not only protect the forest from wildfires, but also assist when other natural disasters strike.

Alabama experienced an average wildfire season due to frequent rainfall across the state. In the 2012 Fiscal Year, 1,549 wildfires were reported and suppressed, burning 29,545 acres. Average fire size was 19.07 acres. While wildfires destroyed or damaged 30 structures, wildland firefighters saved 370 homes. Additional fire statistics include 106 structures (other than homes) and 37 vehicles either destroyed or damaged, while 247 structures and 121 vehicles were saved.

## HAZARD MITIGATION

Completing approximately 12,354 acres of prescribed burning across the state, Commission employees continued to assist landowners in protecting their lands from wildfires. Total prescribed fire for the state (conducted by private landowners and contractors, as well as AFC associates) was comprised of 13,339 burns on 844,024 acres, which was below average. The number of “good” burning days was reduced by frequent rainfall.

Again this year, in an effort to increase prescribed burning in the state, the Commission supported a series of Certified Prescribed Burn Manager (CPBM) training courses. While 56 new “burners” were certified, the AFC also provided recertification continuing education courses for 107 existing CPBMs, with an emphasis on prescribed burn planning and fuel management.

## WILDLAND/URBAN INTERFACE & FIRE PREVENTION

Through promotion of Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) and wildfire prevention, the Alabama Forestry Commission complies with its legislative mandate to educate citizens about the importance of protecting the forest. Two AFC associates are dedicated full time to coordination of this program, funded in part by a hazard mitigation grant from the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Additionally, WUI specialists are assigned in the agency’s regions and work units to provide program delivery to our customers in the field. The goals of the WUI program are the same as the goals of the National Fire Plan:

- Ensure sufficient firefighting resources for the future.
- Reduce hazardous fuels in forests, especially near communities.
- Work with volunteer fire departments and local residents to improve fire protection.
- Encourage post-fire mitigation to restore fire-damaged ecosystems.

In FY 2012, the AFC continued a public information campaign reaching thousands of citizens across the state through participation in public and private gatherings using table-top exhibits that illustrate challenges and opportunities in the Wildland Urban Interface. Major venues included the Annual Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival in Foley, the Annual World Deer and Turkey Expo in Birmingham, the Annual Buckmasters Expo in Montgomery, ADEM’s Non-point Source Pollution Conference, “Your Town Alabama” planning workshop, Soil & Water Conservation Society, Certified Prescribed Burn Manager training, county fairs, home and garden shows, as well as other outdoor expos.

### Quick Facts

1,549 wildfires burned  
29,545 acres

Avg fire size: 19.07 acres

370 homes saved

12,354 acres of prescribed  
burning completed by AFC  
to reduce threat of wildfires

Total of 13,339 prescribed  
burns conducted on 844,024  
acres across the state

290 Homeowner Wildfire  
Hazard Assessments and  
Mitigation Plans written

48 Firewise Communities  
nominated or recertified

protect

## Quick Facts

837 volunteer firefighters trained in wildland firefighting

Over \$1.4 million administered in VFD grant funds

37 fire suppression vehicles transferred to VFDs by the AFC through FEPP program

## VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE

The Alabama Forestry Commission continues to be committed to providing all possible assistance to volunteer fire departments (VFDs) to better provide fire protection for citizens throughout the state. A strong partnership between VFDs and AFC personnel is key to our fire suppression efforts. This assistance includes pursuing funding opportunities available to VFDs, as well as providing training and equipment to these departments.

The 13-member Rural Community Fire Protection (RCFP) Steering Committee met three times during Fiscal Year 2012. The steering committee is comprised of ten volunteer firefighters appointed by the State Forester from ten districts across the state, one member of the Alabama Association of Volunteer Fire Departments (AAVFD), one member of the Alabama Firefighters Association, and one member of the Alabama Association of Fire Chiefs. The purpose of this committee is to make recommendations to the State Forester regarding how to improve the rural community fire program and solve immediate problems including parts exchange, training, and financial assistance through federal grants.

Again this year, the Commission assisted the state's volunteer fire departments by continuing several beneficial programs:

- Administered \$1,147,508 in grant money, appropriated by the Alabama Legislature, to 1,000 qualifying volunteer fire departments, equaling \$1,147.50 per department.
- Worked jointly with the RCFP Steering Committee to administer \$134,700 in U.S. Forest Service grant monies to VFDs across Alabama to fund purchases of computer-based "Fire in the Field" Wildland Firefighter Training, wildland personal protective equipment (PPE), and other wildland firefighting equipment.
- Administered \$110,000 in U.S. Forest Service Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant funds to allow AFC instructors to provide traditional classroom-style wildland firefighter training to volunteer firefighters, at no cost to VFDs.
- Administered \$28,682 in U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) grant funds to allow AFC instructors to provide traditional classroom-style wildland firefighter training to members of specific fire departments identified as U.S. Department of Interior "cooperators," at no cost to these VFDs.
- Maintained a list of volunteer fire department members who are eligible for "Firefighter" license plates for their personal vehicles, and made this list available to all vehicle-licensing agencies throughout Alabama as mandated by state law.
- AFC representation attended numerous volunteer fire department meetings and functions across the state to strengthen relationships between agencies and share information.

During Fiscal Year 2012, Commission personnel provided the following instructional courses:

- Using the "Fire in the Field" program, 141 volunteer firefighters were taught S-130 (Basic Wildfire Tactics), S-190 (Fire Behavior), I-100 (Basic Incident Command System), and L-180 (Human Factors on the Fire Line).
- An additional 220 volunteer firefighters (162 through VFA grant and 58 through DOI grant) were trained in S-130, S-190, I-100, and L-180 through traditional classroom-style courses.
- 400 volunteer firefighters were introduced to wildland/urban interface (WUI) issues through Firewise presentations.
- 30 volunteer firefighters received training in FI-110 (Wildland Fire Observations & Origin Scene Protection for First Responders).
- 46 volunteer firefighters were instructed in ICS-300 (Intermediate Incident Command System) and ICS-400 (Advanced Incident Command System).

At the local level, AFC personnel continue to be closely associated with and supportive of VFDs throughout Alabama. Some examples of these relationships include Commission associates being active members of volunteer fire departments, as well as serving as officers in both VFDs and local or statewide volunteer fire associations. Agency employees also serve as a point of contact for sharing information between the Commission and local volunteer fire service, as well as being actively involved in joint efforts with volunteer fire departments to conduct wildfire prevention and suppression programs.

## FEDERAL EXCESS PERSONAL PROPERTY (FEPP)

Through the Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) program, the AFC obtains fire suppression equipment from various Department of Defense (DoD) military bases, most of which is transferred to volunteer fire departments. During FY2012, nine transports/tankers, two grass trucks, and nine other vehicles (such as vans) were screened and acquired. A total of 37 vehicles were transferred to VFDs, while eight were transferred to Commission offices.

## CENTRAL DISPATCH CENTER

The Central Dispatch Center is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to receive information pertaining to wildfires from 911 centers, sheriffs' offices, and the general public. This information is relayed to the proper AFC firefighters as they are dispatched to the wildfires in a timely manner. In FY 2012, a total of 4,471 calls were received in reference to wildfires. Another responsibility of the dispatch center is recording the movements of all on-duty personnel to ensure the safe return of all firefighters at the end of each work day. This is accomplished through the use of dispatch logs and regional map boards. Situational Awareness training for dispatch personnel continues so that the dispatchers have a better understanding of the responsibilities and duties of associates working in the field. This allows the dispatch center to better serve both agency employees and the public.

The dispatch center issued 13,397 burn permits for fuel reduction, hardwood control, land clearing, agricultural, wildlife enhancement, and miscellaneous burns in FY 2012. There were an additional 2,557 calls inquiring about the burn permit process and requirements, as well as general forestry information. Through an agreement with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Commission dispatch center also scheduled hunting reservations for disabled persons at Macon State Forest and Little River State Forest. A total of 177 calls were received in reference to this duty.

### Quick Facts

7,205 calls received  
by AFC Dispatch  
Center

4,471 calls related  
to wildfire

13,397 burn  
permits issued

## COMMUNICATIONS

The Alabama Forestry Commission provides and operates two complete radio systems and more than 200 tower sites across the state. Agency personnel utilize the statewide VHF system for routine communications, fire prevention, and suppression operations, while the UHF radio system provides communication for the volunteer fire departments in 39 counties throughout the state at no cost. Four Commission technicians, each with a defined geographic area, service and maintain both the UHF and VHF radio system infrastructures 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In compliance with the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) mandate that all radio systems be narrow-banded by January 1, 2013, the AFC has completed all but one of the 39 UHF systems. Although this has proven to be a technically challenging transition, demanding precise coordination between this agency and all the local VFDs in each county, conversion of the final county is expected to be accomplished by deadline. Conversion of the VHF system was concluded well before the target date.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Commission's Investigative Unit has undergone positive change over the last five years in an effort to provide better service to the public. Some of these changes involved utilizing an electronic reporting and data storage system, enhanced networking with other law enforcement agencies, amendments to fire and timber laws, and usage of surveillance camera equipment. Public education programs were also increased regarding timber/equipment theft prevention as well as fire prevention, delivered through public presentations, appearances by Blaze the Arson Dog, and literature produced by the AFC through ongoing partnerships with other natural resource organizations.

## FOREST HEALTH

Compared to the last few years of tree mortality throughout the state resulting from tornados, drought, Ips engraver beetle, and oak decline, there were actually some positive outcomes in forest health for Alabama this year. Although the climate being normal and a sufficient amount of rainfall received during the summer months did not completely alleviate the effects of drought conditions from previous years. There were however few severe outbreaks reported of any type of forest pest. Only a small number of bark beetle infestations were documented in pine stands, and the linden looper did not make a significant presence in oak stands. Despite occasional reports of dying hardwoods and beetle-infested pines, there was no epidemic proportion of trees declining or dying in 2012.

While a minimum number of Ips engraver beetle and black turpentine beetle infestations were reported, the number of southern pine beetle (SPB) infestations was only slightly more remarkable. The 2012 spring pheromone survey had predicted a low population level of SPB, indicating a low number of infestations. These projections proved correct when aerial surveys were conducted in selected counties from June to September, detecting only a total of 57 spots infesting 1,620 pines. This is rather low compared to historical data of beetle infestations in the state. The SPB population cycle generally runs from seven to nine years, suggesting that in 2012 there should be a noticeable increase. Luckily this was not the case.

**Quick Fact**

Only 57  
Southern pine beetle  
spots detected  
infesting  
1,620 pine trees

AFC personnel continued to monitor several counties in Southwest Alabama for the presence and spread of **laurel wilt disease**. Since confirmation in Marengo County, seven other symptomatic sassafras stands have been identified as far as 12 miles away from the initial site. With the disease rapidly approaching the county line, traps were placed in neighboring Sumter County to detect the presence of redbay ambrosia beetle, the insect associated with laurel wilt. At year end, no beetles had been captured in the traps and no visible symptoms of wilt were observed on host trees in Sumter County. In Mobile County, the spread of the disease appeared to be slower. However, there were reports of declining sassafras and redbay stands possibly infected with the disease as far as 20 miles away from the initial site in Grand Bay.

The Commission is also closely monitoring reports of several non-native insects that have been confirmed in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Georgia. For more information visit “Little Critters-Big Threat” on our website at [www.forestry.alabama.gov](http://www.forestry.alabama.gov).

Public education was implemented in 2012 for the “Don’t Move Firewood” campaign. Through training sessions conducted in each of the agency’s six regions, AFC employees were instructed about the purpose of the campaign as well as the forest pests commonly associated with firewood movement. Several events were held throughout the year yielding opportunities to distribute campaign materials to the general public, including campsite signs, banners, posters, information sheets, brochures, and promotional frisbees. Educational material has been placed in Alabama Welcome Centers and rest areas across the state. At the beginning of football season, the Commission also joined several other southern states in running “Don’t Move Firewood” ads during the SEC college coaches’ radio shows. Spots aired on both Auburn and Alabama radio networks.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Cogongrass Grant, administered by Larson & McGowin, Inc. was closed in July 2012. Herbicide applications to enrolled properties ceased after that date. Members of the Cogongrass Technical Committee attended a debriefing meeting in September to discuss the overall results of the grant program. The consensus was that even with suggested improvements to the program, overall, it was very successful in accomplishing the grant’s goals.

Goals Accomplished	Totals During Grant Period
Jobs Created	163
Jobs Saved	5
Private Properties Scouted	1,145
Spots Detected	26,831
Spots Eligible for Treatment	26,262
Spots Treated	16,145
Acres Treated	1,311

To continue the efforts in controlling cogongrass infestations, the Alabama Forestry Commission collaborated with South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Mississippi on a Redesign Cogongrass Grant. As with the first grant, responsibilities of the second grant included public education, spot location, infestation assessment, and data entry. For Alabama, a portion of the funding from this grant was also used in a cost-share program for county road departments to control infestations along rights-of-way (county roads). With 11 county road departments approved to participate this year, the cost-share program was designed to reimburse their costs for the purchase of herbicides, equipment use, and accrued hours.

Also during the early part of 2012, several tornados caused severe destruction to property and forestland in affected areas throughout Alabama. Even though the devastation was minimal in comparison to the April tornados of 2011, two storms in particular warranted survey flights to assess damages.

	Forested Acres of Damaged Merchantable Timber	Total Volume (tons) of Damaged Timber	Total Value of Damaged Timber
January 23, 2012	6,620	177,842	\$3,094,430
March 2, 2012	3,613	132,432	\$2,480,722

## SUSTAIN

Our Forest Management provides landowner assistance through stewardship, cost share, best management practices (environmental issues), state lands management, urban forestry, forest inventory and analysis, as well as forest marketing and economic development. A specialist in Geographic Information Systems provides AFC mapping and imagery data needs, allowing current delivery of forest geographical information.

### STEWARDSHIP

Providing professional technical assistance to Alabama’s landowners is part of the mission of the Alabama Forestry Commission. One program used by the AFC to educate Alabama’s non-industrial private landowners is called Stewardship. A main feature of this program is forest management education. Offering this assistance to private landowners will help the Commission increase the forest resources of the state, which is one of the legislative mandates for the agency.

A key concept in the Stewardship program is “multiple-use management.” Landowners who manage their forests under this concept conserve biological diversity, maintain forest health, protect soil and water resources, acknowledge carbon cycles, sustain socioeconomic benefits, and voluntarily comply with laws and best management guidelines. AFC associates provided stand management recommendations to assist landowners with their multiple-use management practices on 155,735 acres of private forestland in Alabama.

Commission associates utilize three complementary recognition programs, each designed to enhance the non-industrial private landowner’s knowledge and understanding of multiple-use forest management. A landowner begins with the National Stewardship Program. This program is sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and introduces multiple-use management concepts through the development of a personalized written forest management plan. The forest management plan functions as a road map, helping the landowner plan and achieve stated objectives.

The next step in the process is the “American Tree Farm System” which is sponsored by the American Forest Foundation and introduces the concept of sustainability. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) promotes sustainable forest management and is recognized through Tree Farm certification.

The premiere stewardship program of the agency is “TREASURE Forest.” TREASURE is an acronym for Timber, Recreation, Environment, and Aesthetics for a Sustained Usable REsource. This program promotes sound multiple-use forest management through education and recognition. Sponsored by the Alabama Natural Resources Council of which the Commission is a member, landowners who achieve TREASURE Forest status have demonstrated a sound understanding of multiple-use forest management.

Recognition for participation in all of these programs took place in three separate regional (North, Central, and South) forestry events/field days in October 2011 with achievement awards, field tours, and in-the-woods fellowship. These tours were designed to showcase sound forest stewardship, demonstrate on-the-ground forest management practices, and promote the achievements of Alabama’s private non-industrial forest landowner. The highlight of these events was presentation of the 2011 Regional Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Awards. There were only two winners this year: Bobby and Marilyn Jennings of Tallapoosa County for the North Region, and O. M. Becton of Choctaw County for the South Region. Recipients of the award are recognized as some of the most outstanding TREASURE Forests in Alabama for their exceptional achievement in multiple use management with special emphasis on educational value and usage.

Accomplishments achieved through the stewardship programs in 2012 are listed in the following table.

**Stewardship/Forest Management Accomplishments FY12**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Landowners Assisted</b>	<b>Impact (acres, miles)</b>
Stewardship Management Plans	330	34,515 acres
New Certifications	248	87,846 acres
Stand Management Recommendations	3,739	155,735 acres
Prescribed Burning	320	19,573 acres
Firebreak Plowing	405	598 miles
Forestry Consultant Referrals	681	N/A

### COST-SHARE PROGRAMS

The Alabama Forestry Commission employs foresters and forestry technicians to help Alabama landowners develop and meet their forest management objectives. AFC foresters give advice to landowners on a variety of topics including timber, wildlife, invasive species control, as well as threatened and endangered species and their ecosystems. Commission foresters and technicians also provide technical assistance to forest landowners through on-the-ground assessments and written forest management recommendations.

The majority of funding available to Alabama forestland owners comes through the U.S. Farm Bill. These dollars are principally routed through cost-share programs administered by two federal agencies: the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The AFC partners with these federal agencies by providing forestry needs assessments and recommendations to the landowners whose cost-share applications are approved.

### Farm Service Agency Programs

- In 2012 the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) had 36 new and 974 re-enrolled applications for a total of 40,392 CRP acres. Commission foresters and technicians wrote stand management recommendations for all of the forestry applications.
- Emergency Forestry Restoration Program (EFRP) funding was used for restoration and reforestation to property in counties declared Presidential Disaster Counties. Alabama counties were awarded \$3.31 million in 2011 and \$776,000 in 2012 for tornado restoration activities. AFC foresters reviewed approximately 570 applications for 37,980 acres in 38 Alabama counties.

### Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs

- NRCS provides funding to forest landowners in Alabama through their administration of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives program (WHIP), and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). The Commission works with those landowners by providing technical assistance for each of the programs through a mutual agreement with the NRCS.
- Another cooperative effort between the NRCS and the AFC is the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI). NRCS provides the funding for forestry practices to be implemented by traditionally underserved landowners. Commission foresters and technicians work with these landowners to improve forest health and productivity and incorporate new management techniques to their properties. The traditionally underserved landowners receive 90 percent cost-share funding through this special initiative for the forestry practices implemented on their property.
- Under the CRP Readiness Initiative (CRP-RI), Agency associates attended training to become certified to write CRP Conservation Plans for the NRCS. The AFC completed 314 of these Conservation Plans in August 2012.

### BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR FORESTRY (BMPs)

The year 2012 brought all types of challenges for the Alabama Forestry Commission in defending numerous attempts, at various levels, to regulate the activities of private forest owners as they manage their forestland in Alabama. The agency met with a variety of groups and submitted several written documents in this defense.

In March, the Commission met with representatives of the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) to discuss the management of and harvesting of cypress in Alabama. The meeting was very informative for both parties.

The AFC provided written comment to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concerning the “Forest/Logging Road Ruling” made by the 9th Circuit Court. The Commission worked with and supported the Alabama Attorney General’s Office in developing their response to the EPA. This case will be heard by the U. S. Supreme Court and could have major consequences for forest landowners across the nation.

The AFC also continued to work with and improve our knowledge of environmental issues pertaining to forestry in Alabama by implementing the signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) – Mobile District. These relationships have proved invaluable to the forest landowners of Alabama.

Education, training, and prevention were key elements of the 2012 BMP program. Existing partnerships were maintained and enhanced as well as new ones being developed. An example of a new partnership is the Alabama Water Agencies Working Group (AWAWG). The Commission was asked by this group for input as a major stakeholder, meetings were held, and input was developed and submitted. The forest industry is supported by this AFC program as information is gathered and compiled to show auditors that voluntary BMPs are working and providing water quality protection.

#### BMP Activities for 2012:

- Education and Training: 26 programs were presented and 1,514 people attended including loggers; professionals; landowners; foresters; elementary, high school, and college students
- Prevention and Education: 293 random inspections were conducted on active logging sites representing 30,393 acres and 226 different landowners. Nine inspections by invitation were performed before harvest activity was started.
- Compliance and Education: 42 silvicultural water quality complaints were addressed by the Commission in conjunction with ADEM and USACE; 22 were valid complaints, 20 were not valid.
- Conducted two training sessions in Baldwin and Mobile counties in conjunction with AFC’s publication of the *Coastal Pre-Harvest Guide for Forest Landowners*.
- Commission Education and Prevention: 71 internal audits on AFC work completed.

## STATE LANDS MANAGEMENT

The Forestry Commission is responsible for managing approximately 26,256 acres of forestland in Alabama. More than 16,000 acres are under the agency’s direct control, including 12 state forests as well as numerous old fire tower sites. Additionally, the Commission has entered into cooperative agreements with three other agencies to manage their forestlands: 19 state fishing lakes (4,786 acres) for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, seven tracts (5,614 acres) for the Department of Mental Health, and over 1,300 acres at the old Fort McClellan post for the McClellan Development Authority. All state lands are managed under TREASURE Forest guidelines for multiple use and sustainability.

AFC personnel were involved in a variety of management activities on these lands, including preparation of timber sales and oversight of harvesting activities; prescribed burning for wildlife habitat improvement, aesthetics, and wildfire hazard reduction; site preparation and tree planting; forest health monitoring; and road, bridge, and building maintenance. In addition, hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, camping, horse-riding and other recreational opportunities are available on certain state forests.

## URBAN FORESTRY

The Commission’s Urban Forestry program strives to help Alabama towns and cities professionally manage their urban forests for the benefit of their citizens. To accomplish this goal, the agency provides technical and federal financial assistance. The primary program measures are communities that hire professional staff, complete tree inventories and management plans, create effective tree ordinances, and establish tree boards. In FY12, the AFC provided 924 urban forestry assists. Alabama citizens also contributed a total of 11,620 volunteer hours in support of their local community tree programs. The Commission was awarded U.S. Forest Service base funding in the

### Quick Facts

30,000 seedlings distributed to 16 tornado-ravaged communities through Alabama Tree Recovery Campaign

Additional 200,000 seedlings given to citizens, towns, and cities by AFC

amount of \$200,000 which was used to support an Urban Coordinator and a Community Forestry Volunteer Development Coordinator position. Alabama also received \$58,651 in pass-through funds to be awarded in the form of competitive grants to local governments, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations.

Through the Alabama Tree Recovery Campaign, the Alabama Forestry Commission and Arbor Day Foundation distributed 30,000 seedlings to 16 tornado-ravaged communities in February 2012. This was made possible by over \$60,000 raised through citizen and corporate donations in the first year of the Campaign, a large-scale, multi-year initiative launched jointly as a cooperative effort between the AFC and the Arbor Day Foundation in response to the devastation of the April 2011 tornados. The Commission will hold seedling giveaways in 10 other counties in 2013 so that 18 additional communities can take part in the replacement of trees lost during those severe storms that swept across Alabama.

The agency also supported many individual community Arbor Week celebrations during the year, primarily through its annual tree seedling distribution by AFC county and work unit personnel. In 2012, the Commission gave away 200,000 tree seedlings to residents, towns, and cities of Alabama. Tree seedling give-a-ways have three main goals: 1) outreach, 2) promotion of tree planting, and 3) helping small towns and cities get their Urban & Community Forestry (U&CF) programs off the ground. Each year, the agency looks for new ways to interact with the public and get people engaged in forestry. Since 1979, the Commission has supported Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program. A total of 85 Tree Cities USA are projected for 2012.

Working with citizens, communities, and other organizations, as well as AFC field personnel, the Community Forestry Volunteer Development Coordinator promoted community forestry volunteerism at events statewide during 2012. Involvement with tree boards was enhanced by attendance at 56 meetings and site locations pertaining to Tree City USA programs. Throughout the year, 12 visits were made to Alabama colleges and universities, each on their way to becoming a Tree Campus USA. Other networking opportunities included Classroom in the Forest/Forest in the Classroom programs, Your Town Alabama workshop, League of Municipalities Conference, and the Non-Point Source Conference. Partnering with agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, Legacy Partners in Environmental Education, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, and ARC Energy Consultants paved the way for future service learning projects that can be conducted in all high schools across the state.

### FOREST INVENTORY & ANALYSIS (FIA)

For more than 70 years, Alabama has participated in the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program, a continuous inventory of the nation's forest resources using plot sampling and the primary source for forest resource information. The Commission's role in FIA is collecting data from field sample locations that are referred to as "plots." Alabama has 5,578 plots which are evenly distributed across the state. Most plots were established back in the 1930s by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) at an approximate 3 X 3 mile spacing.

#### Quick Fact

814 forest plots inventoried by FIA crews

When fully-staffed, the AFC has five FIA crew leaders spread throughout the state that work exclusively on FIA. Crew leaders sample approximately 15 percent of the total number of FIA plots annually which means that each plot will be re-visited approximately every seven years. Once a crew leader has completed data collection for a plot, the data is transmitted via internet to USFS personnel for analysis. The USFS compiles all of the plot data from the year's allotment of plots and creates statistical reports from it. Each year

these statistics are updated and made available on the USFS FIA website.

- In FY 2012, a total of 814 Alabama plots were inventoried by the FIA crew, exceeding the desired goal of 749 plots by 8.7 percent.
- 2011 FIA data indicates there are approximately 22.8 million acres of timberland in the state, accounting for 68 percent of Alabama's total area. This amount remains virtually unchanged since 2000. Individual or family-owned forests account for 13.9 million acres or 61.1 percent of the state's timberland.
- 2011 FIA data also reveals that Alabama is growing timber faster than it is being harvested. The average annual rate of growth-to-removals for all species is 1.33:1 for the period 2001 to 2011. For softwoods, the growth-to-removal ratio is 1.26:1. For hardwoods, the ratio is 1.54:1.
- According to 2011 FIA data, loblolly pine/shortleaf pine is the predominant forest type group in the state, occupying approximately 37.1 percent of the total timberland area. The oak/hickory forest type group ranks second, accounting for approximately 31.9 percent of timberland acreage.

## FOREST MARKETING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Commission plays a key role in marketing and economic development by providing land consultants and forest industry representatives with important statistics concerning Alabama's forest resources, enabling them to make crucial decisions regarding where to locate new wood products mills and expand existing mills. The agency is a primary source of forest resource information through its involvement with the FIA program and the biennial primary forest industry survey. The forest industry survey is conducted by the AFC to determine industrial uses of roundwood and annual amounts of timber product drain.

The FIA field crew completed the 2012 FIA Inventory in late July and this statistical data is expected to be available on the U.S. Forest Service FIA website by the end of 2012. Commission employees also conducted the primary forest industry survey during the summer of 2012. All primary wood-processing mills, with the exception of pulp mills (which are surveyed by the USFS), were visited to collect information regarding each mill's operation. Information collected includes number of mill employees, amount of roundwood purchased in 2011, type and amount of products produced by the mill, and the amount and use of mill residues. The USFS will compile data from all mill survey forms and produce a publication documenting timber product output (TPO) and residue use for Alabama mills. Although mill-specific information is not published, the report will also compare TPO from 2011 with 2009. This publication should be available in the summer of 2013.

## GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

National Agriculture Imagery Program 2011 images were sent to all 67 counties of Alabama to assist AFC foresters and rangers in their analysis of Stewardship accomplishment plans, prescribed burns, wildfires, etc.

With Texas leading the effort, the 13 Southern states are working on the Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Project (SWRAP), a web-based computer application for determining the risks from wildfire for any given community. Application development work is in progress and due to be unveiled early in 2013.

The Commission's GIS program continues to grow, proving to be a vital tool for the citizens of Alabama as agency leadership pursues the goal of ensuring sustainable forestry management and environmental integrity for the state.

## EDUCATE

### OUTREACH

Fiscal Year 2012 was a year of continuity for the AFC's Outreach Program. The largest initiative was a collaboration between the agency and Friends of the Smokey Bear Balloon, Inc., bringing the spectacular 145,000 cubic foot, 97-foot tall special-shaped balloon to the Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival in Foley the weekend of June 15-17. In addition to Smokey delivering his message of preventing unwanted wildfires during the three-day event, AFC employees were on hand to demonstrate all of the services provided by the Commission to citizens of the state. Literature was distributed such as *Selling Your Timber*, *Five Ways to Protect Your Forestland from Wildfire*, *50 Ways to Make Your Woodland Home Firewise*, and *Don't Move Firewood*. This exposure allowed the agency to reach over 45,000 people.

### ALABAMA FORESTRY CAMP

In June, 38 high school students from around the state were exposed to the fields of natural resources as they participated in the 18th Alabama Forestry Camp. Again this year, the camp was held at the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund's Rural Training and Research Center located in the town of Epes in Sumter County. The five-day event was conducted by an Incident Management Team comprised of personnel from the Alabama Forestry Commission, Alabama A&M University, and Tuskegee University who directed each day's varied activities. The week's agenda featured a tour of a TREASURE Forest, sponsored by the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association; a tour of the Corps of Engineers' Demopolis Lock and Dam; forestry and wildlife activities at the Corps' Foscue Park, assisted by Westervelt Company foresters; a fishing trip sponsored by Oakhurst Farms; GPS instruction and activities; and tours of Moundville Wood Products and Moundville Archaeological Park. Other presentations included urban

forestry by the City of Tuscaloosa, water safety by the Alabama Marine Police, a wildlife presentation by Alabama A&M University, a laser hunting simulator and fishing class provided by the Department of Conservation, and an appearance by “Blaze” the AFC Arson Dog.

Graduates benefitted from an enhanced awareness of forestry and natural resources as they returned home. Additional sponsors helping make this year’s camp successful included Auburn University, the Alabama Forestry Foundation, the Alabama Tree Farm Association, and the National Park Service.

### BUTLER COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES YOUTH CAMP

In its 17th year, the Butler County Forestry Planning Committee’s Natural Resources Youth Camp offers Butler County young people the opportunity to become more aware of the value of forest resources to Alabama’s environment and economy, and the relationship of these resources to their everyday life. This outdoor classroom setting is provided for 30 energetic, inquisitive sixth-grade students, selected by their school principals and science teachers to attend the three day/two night camp. Campers are presented with the opportunity to learn about forestry, wildlife, ecology, tree identification, fire protection, forest products, soil and water conservation, as well as the people who manage these vast Alabama resources.

Instructors from the Alabama Forestry Commission, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Butler County Soil & Water Conservation District, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Farm Service Agency, the Alabama Forestry Association, the Alabama Ornithological Society and others hold “hands-on” classes concerning forestry-related subjects which include native plants, wildlife management and identification, non-game birds, as well as several Project Learning Tree activities. In addition, an on-site visit from a Callaway Gardens representative provides an up-close visit with some local birds of prey. Often a highlight of the camp is an opportunity to spend time in one of Alabama’s many creeks. Campers explore Mussel Creek, looking for inhabitants, and are often surprised by what they find. The final day provides a chance for the students to display their marksmanship in different shooting sports events such as shotguns, rifles, black powder, and archery.

Since the beginning of this unique camp experience, the opportunity has been provided at no cost to campers or their families. Funding for the project comes from tremendous support from the forest community, private individuals, and civic clubs.

### MEDIA/PUBLICATIONS

Fiscal Year 2012 provided two milestones for *Alabama’s TREASURED Forests* magazine. In April, the publication received a commendation from Alabama’s State Senate. The Resolution made by State Senator Tom Whatley praised the magazine for “providing landowners with invaluable information on how to preserve and care for the state’s precious forests . . .”

With the Fall 2012 issue, the *Alabama’s TREASURED Forests* magazine celebrated “30 Years” of publication, providing forest landowners with proper forest management principles/techniques and advice. Through landowner success stories and stewardship articles, the publication is designed to inspire other landowners to continue in being good stewards of Alabama’s forests.

Another major accomplishment was the successful coordination of the Alabama Tree Recovery Campaign press conference held on February 6, to which a tremendous amount of time and resources were devoted in collaboration with the Urban Forestry section. First Lady Dianne Bentley and Tuscaloosa Mayor Walter Maddox addressed members of the state legislature, several mayors, other dignitaries, and citizens, as well as media from around the state in launching the distribution of trees to towns ravaged by the tornados of April 2011. Staged in Tuscaloosa, a site of major devastation, the Alabama Forestry Commission and Arbor Day Foundation announced the 16 North Alabama communities that would receive 30,000 trees in the first phase of the large-scale, multi-year initiative to help restore the state’s community forests back to their previous beauty and strength.

Members of the Media Team coordinated the agency’s “first time” participation in two of Alabama’s biggest three-day venues. Billed as “the largest deer and turkey hunting show in the world,” the Commission set up an exhibit at the 29th Annual World Deer Expo in July at the Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center (BJCC). Featuring over 300 exhibitors, the AFC also set up a display at the 19th Annual BuckMasters Expo in August at the Montgomery Convention Center/Renaissance Hotel. Since most of the patrons of these two events are landowners, it provided an

excellent opportunity to promote the Commission’s services and the vital role it plays in protecting the citizens and forests of Alabama. AFC associates were on hand to talk with visitors, answer questions, provide contact information for local agency offices, and distribute informative AFC brochures regarding forest management/stewardship and fire/insect protection such as *Selling Your Timber*, *Five Ways to Protect Your Forestland from Wildfire*, *50 Ways to Make Your Woodland Home Firewise*, and *Don’t Move Firewood*, as well as publications such as *Living with Fire* and Alabama’s *TREASURED Forests* magazine. An assortment of Blaze, Smokey Bear, and Woodsy Owl merchandise was also available. These events were perceived as successful endeavors that would merit the agency’s continued participation in coming years.

Other projects for the year 2012:

- Designed event canopies and table covers imprinted with the AFC logo for each region and the state office, as well as Incident Command (IC) post banners to be used by agency IC teams.
- Produced the annual Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Awards video presentations for the 21st year.
- Assisted with production of the annual Tree Farmer of the Year video presentation.
- A \$10,000 grant from the Alabama Forests Forever Foundation made possible the purchase of promotional materials featuring the AFC’s Arson Hotline and “Blaze” the AFC Arson Dog.
- Funded in part by an FM Global grant, a new wildland/urban interface (WUI) banner and flyer were produced the WUI door-hanger was redesigned and printed.
- Prepared a “Water Quality/BMP” poster for presentation at the national convention of the Society of American Foresters.
- Redesigned and expanded the Alabama Forestry Commission promotional brochure.
- Revised and published the *Alabama Prescribed Burning Guide*.
- Assisted in the production of the *Coastal Pre-Harvest Guide for Forest Landowners*.
- Produced the annual brochures for both Alabama Forestry Camp and the Butler County Natal Resources Youth Camp, as well as two issues of the AFC employee newsletter, *TREETopics*.

### AFC PERSONNEL

The Personnel Office remains steadfast in refining operational processes through deliberate planning while supporting the core values of the agency. Through the use of efficient human resources management techniques, Personnel has oversight for ensuring appropriate actions with regard to appointments and separations, payroll and benefits, evaluation, safety, readiness and training, and other auxiliary services for over 265 employees statewide.

### ASSOCIATE TRAINING

The goals of the Commission’s training program are to ensure employees are trained to national standards in wildland fire fighting and forest management, and to provide leadership for other agencies in times of natural emergencies. This fiscal year, there were over 13,000 hours spent on training individual employees to meet these standards.

Academy/Courses	Hours
Annual Wildland Fire Safety Refresher	1,688
Basic Wildland Firefighter	1,621
BMP Training	301
Fire Equipment Familiarization	2,981
L-380 - Fire Line Leadership	51
L-580 - Advanced Leadership	85
Prescribed Burn Manager	673
Regional Level	2,830
Incident Command System	1,030
Law Enforcement	1,033
Southern Area Fire and Aviation Academy	118
Human Resource Development	1,121
Tennessee/Kentucky Fire Academy	439
<b>Total AFC Training Hours:</b>	<b>13,971</b>

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30

	Actual		Budget		Operations Plan	
	FY11	FY12	FY11	Balance	FY12	Balance
Personnel	12,864,603	12,096,697	12,877,201	12,598	12,941,770	845,073
Fringe Benefits	4,964,593	4,396,752	4,963,812	(780)	4,799,440	402,688
In State Travel	221,774	145,759	241,529	19,755	150,296	4,537
Out Of State Travel	61,065	47,270	34,235	(26,830)	49,000	1,730
Repairs and Maintenance	273,759	371,876	301,074	27,315	378,165	6,289
Rental and Leases	47,976	75,564	56,335	8,359	78,653	3,089
Utilities and Communications	656,172	667,955	658,562	2,390	694,839	26,884
Professional Services	2,371,552	2,580,823	2,895,298	523,746	3,112,024	531,201
Supplies	870,243	954,167	1,129,771	259,528	993,078	38,911
Transportation Operations	1,622,755	1,472,687	1,348,046	(274,709)	1,614,069	141,382
Grants and Benefits	3,402,838	2,190,251	3,517,850	115,011	2,643,474	453,223
Capital Outlay	6,900	167,425	31,900	25,000	355,000	187,575
Transportation Equipment	342,487	8,350	289,475	(53,012)	2,512,826	2,504,476
Other Equipment	63,692	57,871	94,366	30,674	255,000	197,129
Transfers						
031 Expenditures	27,770,410	25,233,448	28,439,455	669,045	30,577,634	5,344,186
<b>Revenue Budget</b>						
<b>AFC Funds:</b>						
Severance Tax	4,373,579	4,798,605	4,142,770	(230,809)		(4,798,605)
Timber and Turpentine	38,909	38,025	38,909			(38,025)
Fishing Permits	5,003	4,509	5,003			(4,509)
Fines and Forfeits	7,498	5,684	7,498			(5,684)
Radio Leases						
Oil Royalties	7,968	6,997	7,968			(6,997)
Insurance Proceeds	167,409	52,152	167,409			(52,152)
Miscellaneous	15,435	7,153	15,435			(7,153)
Prior Year Refunds	15,598	4,806	15,598			(4,806)
Contract Services						
Equipment Sales	338,829	44,621	338,829			(44,621)
Timber Sales	35,464	58,923	35,464			(58,923)
Other Sales	102,800	17,450	102,800			(17,450)
Seedling Sales						
Non-Govt Contributions	81,851		81,851			
Donations						
Intragovt Sales	24,612	12,053	24,612			(12,053)
Equipment Rentals						
Other Rents	44,296	51,524	44,296			(51,524)
Plowing Firebreaks	189,663	183,688	189,663			(183,688)
Prescribed Burning	362,924	325,452	362,924			(325,452)
031 AFC Funds	5,811,838	5,611,643	5,581,030	(230,809)	7,219,812	7,219,812
031 State General Fund	11,576,636	9,558,350	11,576,636	0	9,652,640	9,558,350

Continued	Actual		Budget		Operations Plan	
	FY11	FY12	FY11	Balance	FY12	Balance
Federal Grants	6,408,897	2,412,180	6,408,897			(2,412,180)
Federal Agreements	1,500		1,500			
Federal Reimbursements	311,801	772,073	311,801			(772,073)
Interfund Federal Reimbursements	440,069	155,097	440,069			(155,097)
031 Federal Funds	7,162,267	3,339,350	7,162,267		11,859,107	11,953,397
<b>Local Funds</b>						
County Appropriations	45,731	22,376	45,731			(22,376)
Acreege Assessments	1,763,184	1,762,522	1,846,075	82,891		(1,762,522)
Local Grants	17,350	33,975	17,350			(33,975)
031 Local Funds	1,826,265	1,818,873	1,909,156	82,891	1,846,075	1,846,075
Budgetary Transfers In(Out):						
Supplement						
Severance Tax - County Share						
Operating Transfers						
Capital Transfers						
<b>031 Transfers</b>						
AFC Balance Forward	660,947	9,916,892	660,947			(9,916,892)
Federal Balance Forward	8,393,113	(2,256,285)	8,393,113			2,256,285
Local Balance Forward						
Total Forward	9,054,061	7,660,608	9,054,061			(7,660,608)
031 Revenues and Transfers	35,431,067	27,988,824	35,283,150	(147,917)	30,577,634	
<b>Appropriation Unit 050</b>						
Capital Transfers						
Capital Outlay						
Unallotted Capital Transfers						
Reserve for Capital Outlay						
Agency Funds Available	35,431,067	27,988,824	35,283,150	(147,917)	30,577,634	2,588,810
Agency Expended & Reserved	27,770,410	25,233,448	28,439,455	669,045	30,577,634	5,344,186
Prior Period Adjustments	(50)			50		
Ending Cash Balance	7,660,608	2,755,376	6,843,696	(816,912)		(2,755,376)



Published by the Alabama Forestry Commission  
513 Madison Avenue  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2550

The Alabama Forestry Commission remains committed to the prohibition of discrimination in programs, activities, and operations on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital or family status, or disability. Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs. Persons with disabilities who require alternate means of program information are encouraged to contact the Commission's state headquarters at (334) 240-9300.

If an individual believes they have been discriminated against by the Alabama Forestry Commission, a complaint may be filed by calling toll free (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD) or by writing to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250-9410



Photo Credit: Patrick Waldrop