



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Alabama 2020



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2019 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$517,824
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$267,541
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$298,403
State Fire Assistance	\$1,223,883
Urban and Community Forestry	\$235,000
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$328,384
Total	\$2,871,035

NOTE: This funding is for all entities within the state, not just the State Forester's office.

Program Goals

- The Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) is committed to protecting and sustaining the state's forest resources using professionally applied stewardship principles and education. The AFC utilizes cooperative programs to maximize cost effectiveness through the use of partnerships in program delivery to increase forestland value and sustainability and does so in a voluntary and non-regulatory manner.
- The cooperative programs are administered and implemented through a partnership between the State of Alabama, the USDA Forest Service, Auburn University, Alabama A&M University, Tuskegee University, the Alabama Forestry Association and many other private and government entities. These programs promote the health and productivity of forestlands and rural economies. Emphasis focuses on forest sustainability and the production of commodity and amenity values and benefits.

Key Issues

- Several years of budget reductions have reduced the AFC's wildfire response capacity to critical thresholds. At current staffing levels, each 2 person initial attack fire crew is responsible for protection on 275,000 acres. This area of responsibility is 70% greater than the next southern state in staffing and more than 100% greater than the average across the South.
- Even with a historically robust forest industry, FIA data shows the average annual rate of growth-to-removals for all species is 1.56:1 for the period 2001- 2017. An increase in markets will increase the need for more certified wood in the state. The Alabama Forestry Commission has hired an employee to focus on expanding markets for Alabama forest products.
- Fragmentation and parcelization has led to smaller tracts of forestland. Reaching more landowners with assistance specifically designed to meet their individual needs is a key to growing the number of acres under multiple benefit forest management in the state.
- Better technology has improved river and stream channel delineation, increasing the number of miles that the AFC tries to protect from 77,242 miles to 132,419 miles – almost doubling what we thought existed. Through education, site assessment, and complaint resolution, the AFC and forest industry can make a strong case that silvicultural operations with properly implemented BMPs do not degrade water quality in the state.
- It is imperative to maintain a strong forestry water quality program through the use of forestry BMPs. Through education, site assessment, and complaint resolution, the AFC and forest industry can make a strong case that silvicultural operations maintain and/or improve water quality in the state.
- Prescribed burning is important to Alabama's fire-adapted ecosystems. A total of 29,593,000 acres (91.7% of Alabama's total land area) are subject to wildfire threat.

- Invasions, including new species of non-native plants, pathogens and animals into forests continue to spread. These non-native invasive species, some of which are new to Alabama, increasingly erode forest productivity, hinder forest use and management activities, and degrade diversity and wildlife habitat.
- Under certain circumstances, forest insects and diseases have a significant impact on forest health and productivity through the effects of excessive defoliation, progressive decline, significant decay, root damage, stem dieback, species alteration, or outright mortality.
- Despite the rather mild climate, Alabama is prone to numerous adverse weather events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, ice storms, and droughts. In 2019 we had a significant tornado outbreak in March that the AFC was heavily involved in emergency response. We also had a severe drought that led to an active Fall fire season.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2019 Accomplishments	Value
Population	4,779,736	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	0
Acres of Forest Land	23,104,630	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	29,236
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	17,765,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	9,514
Number of NIPF Landowners	412,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	976
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	687,000	State Fire Communities Assisted	923
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	27,720,994	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	2,000
Number of Rural Fire Departments	986	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	460	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	92
Forest Based Employment	40,837	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	1,989,618
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	2	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	34,766
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	21,728,209		

Program Highlights

Cooperative Fire Protection

The AFC provided almost \$100,000 in grants to VFDs across the state to purchase personal protective equipment and other needed items to ensure safety in fighting fires.

Economic Action

The Alabama Forestry Commission completed our primary and secondary mill surveys in 2019. The secondary mill survey had not been updated in over a decade. We used this new information to create a statewide mill directory that is being used by economic developers working to bring new industry to the state. It is available on our web site.

Forest Health Protection

Our Forest Health Section is working with the National Forests in Alabama and other groups to combat the spread of cogongrass. We are also working to secure Congressional funding through a separate program with APHIS to eradicate cogongrass.

Forest Legacy

We are working with the Forest Legacy Program, Forever Wild, the Alabama Department of Conservation and others to complete the purchase of approximately 2,500 acres of forestland adjacent to our Little River State Forest. This will double the size of this property that is owned by the Alabama Forestry Commission and enjoyed by citizens across South Alabama.

Forest Stewardship

171 landowners were recognized for their accomplishments in managing their property for multiple-uses and long-term sustainability by certifying them under three programs: Tree Farm, Stewardship Forest, and Treasure Forest.

In the process of modernizing our program, the Treasure Forest Committee created a new streamlined nomination form and hosted 3 statewide trainings to encourage natural resource professionals to get landowners involved in the Treasure Forest Program.

Urban and Community Forestry

Administered 2 annual Federal Urban & Community Forestry grants totaling \$415,00 and are partnering on 4 multi-state Community Forestry grants worth \$571,000

Increased Arbor Day Foundation program participation to 82 Communities; 13 Universities; 1 Healthcare Campus; and 2 Utilities

Contact Information



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