



2013 Annual Report



Welcome from Joe Fox, State Forester



Welcome to the Arkansas Forestry Commission's annual report for 2013. The Arkansas Forestry Commission is an agency within the Arkansas Agriculture Department, which has served Arkansans for over 80 years. 2013 was an improved year of service and renewal.

Major 2013 accomplishments:

The Commission wrote and adopted a plan for the future, strengthened its fiscal position, and enjoyed a less stressful wildfire year.

2013 was a record low year for fires and acres of fires. Arkansas landowners were treated to the least number of wildland fires since we began keeping records in 1935 – which was 787 fires. The year's total of 11,261 was the second fewest acres of wildland fires ever recorded.

In 2013 the Arkansas Forestry Commission increased the “reserve” in the State Forestry Trust from \$514,480 to \$1,303,820 and we renewed four key positions around the state.

In 2013, the AFC's staff, board members and partners completed a new Five Year Strategic Plan. Our mission statement was updated. We adopted the first ever vision statement and core values statement. The plan contains four overarching goals, 51 objectives, and 329 action steps; and, took a year to complete. The plan is not perfect and will need annual tweaks. We intend to update it in detail every five years. The plan will be tied directly to each staff member's personal objectives. It is a living plan that gives us a compass; a direction. It is ambitious and keeps our mission in focus. You will find the Mission, Vision, and Core Values statements in this report.

You'll also find personal statements from our staff about what the Arkansas Forestry Commission means to the state of Arkansas – in their own words. Find these distributed throughout the report.

All of this puts the Commission in an improved position to accomplish our mission - to serve Arkansans. In 2013 we continued an impressive story of dedication and service. Even so, we will strive to improve in the years to come.

Please enjoy our report to Governor Beebe and to all of you, the citizens that we serve.

Sincerely,

State Forester



Protecting, Developing, and Conserving Arkansas's Forests

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Please note: All accomplishments reported in these pages are from Calendar Year, 2013, except for the Human Resources and Fiscal Reports (within the Administration Report) - which are from Fiscal Year, 2013 (July, 2012- June, 2013).

Mission Statement

The mission of the Arkansas Forestry Commission is to protect Arkansas’s forests, and those who enjoy them, from wildland fire and natural hazards, while promoting rural and urban forest health, stewardship, development and conservation for all generations of Arkansans.

Vision Statement

Arkansas’s healthy rural and urban forests provide clean air and water, functioning ecosystems, and economic and social benefits. An agency of leaders in forest protection, emergency response, and forest management is committed to maintaining and enhancing these attributes.



Arkansas Forestry Commission Values

The men and women of the Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC) value and accept the full scope of our responsibilities. We acknowledge and appreciate commitment to quality performance and recognize the accomplishments of our agency and each individual who contributes to its success.

Leadership

We initiate the direction and exhibit the commitment to accomplish our mission.

Service

We serve the people and communities of Arkansas by ensuring a safe, sustainable forest environment.

Integrity

We are committed to uphold our positions of trust by maintaining the highest ethical standards in fulfilling our duty, our mission.

Excellence

We take pride in our work and exhibit the highest standards in our profession. We keep current with new ideas and technology. We are not satisfied with the “status quo.”

Teamwork

We cultivate diverse, mutually beneficial relationships with communities, private organizations, and all levels of government to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of fire suppression and ensure sustainability of Arkansas’s forests. To that end, within our agency and with partners, we will create and recreate teams with the necessary skills to accomplish specific and unique tasks.

Board of Commissioners

Board Chair, Robert Parkes, D.D.S.

Vice Chair, James Carr, Ph.D.

Allen Bedell

Bobby Johnson

Jerry T. Davis

Allen Morgan

Mary Elizabeth Eldridge

Aubra Anthony

Frank Wilson



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“From our inner cities to our deepest forest, the efforts of the AFC promotes the health and safety of our varied landscape and, in turn, our citizens. From programs like Tree City, to Arkansas Firewise, as well as the prevention and suppression of wildfires, we make a difference.”

-Doug Cherry

“It is imperative to assist landowners in all aspects of forestry management - for the sake of future generations. We gain the trust of landowners, everyday, through phone calls, e-mails, and handshakes. We protect the resources that we have and we are responsible for preserving them for those to come.”

-Jon Goss

“The men and women of the AFC are like a family - with a common goal of protecting our fellow Arkansans. We do more with less, without expecting anything in return.”

-Jeremy Jones

“We are the last line of defense against Arkansas wildfires. Our crews also provide free, helpful assistance to statewide landowners.

-Marty White

“The AFC is so much more to the people of Arkansas than just emergency response. We are in the schools with Smokey, and are visiting with landowners at county fairs, or helping out at a local fishing derby. The employees of the AFC are there to assist in a myriad of ways, whether there is a fire, or storm in the middle of the night, or a kid needing help with a leaf collection. We are ready to serve, anytime.”

-Jeff Frizzell

“We teach, train, and protect the Arkansas public and our land. I get gratification from that every single day.”

-Tom Means

“Quality of life is increased in the state of Arkansas through the Arkansas Forestry Commission. We are able to provide communities with services they might not be able to get on their own. These can range from planting a tree, getting equipment to fire departments, wildland fire suppression and more. We assist in raising the quality of life in both big and small communities. Everyone is important.”

-Alison Litchy



“The Arkansas Forestry Commission has the most committed personnel that I’ve ever worked with. The AFC is committed to helping Arkansas landowners and protecting our forests. Without the AFC, we would no longer be considered ‘The Natural State’”

-Scott Reed

Forest Resource Protection

The Forest Protection program protects rural communities and forest resources by providing wildland fire prevention, detection, suppression, enforcement, training, and equipment.

Fire Protection

The AFC is responsible for the protection of 18.79 million acres of non-federal forestland in Arkansas. Foresters and rangers in the eight districts are involved daily in one or more of the four key activities of fire protection: prevention, pre-suppression, detection, and suppression.

Improvement in fire protection is often hard to measure, considering the many variables that influence yearly fire occurrence and behavior. The standard measurement of fire protection is the total number of fires suppressed and total acreage burned.

Currently, the Commission has a total of 104 firefighting units, comprised of a bulldozer and transport truck. Bulldozers are used to create firebreaks that stop an ongoing fire. Of those units, 71 are equipped with environmental cabs that provide added protection for the operator.

* Utilizing federal grant funds, one new JD550 was purchased in 2013.

Arkansas Wildfires, 2013 Cause and Percentage Chart

Debris Burning	40.8%
Incendiary Burning	25.8%
Miscellaneous	13.5%
Equipment Use	9.4%
Lightning	6.2%
Children	2.3%
Smokers	1.1%
Campfires	0.8%
Railroad	0.1%

"The AFC offers a variety of services to timberland owners and homeowners throughout the state that no one agency or private entity can duplicate. Our people are trained and available to respond to most types of natural or man-made emergencies day or night, all year long."

-Mike Mowery



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Wildfire Statistics, 2013

Cause of Fire	Number of Fires	Percentage of Total	Acres Burned	Percentage of Total
Debris Burning	321	40.8%	2,943	26.1%
Incendiary Burning (Arson)	203	25.8%	6,345	56.3%
Miscellaneous Burns	106	13.5%	708	6.3%
Equipment Use	74	9.4%	387	3.4%
Lightning	49	6.2%	730	6.5%
Children	18	2.3%	80	0.7%
Smokers	9	1.1%	49	0.4%
Campfire	6	0.8%	18	0.2%
Railroad	1	0.1%	1	0.00%

Central Dispatch

The Central Dispatch Center provides a 24/7 point of contact for the public, AFC firefighters, volunteer fire departments, and federal agencies. Two statewide telephone WATS lines are in place for reporting wildfires and prescribed burns. Central Dispatch provides full-time dispatch service for AFC Districts 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7; Districts 3 & 8 dispatch their own fires during working hours through the week. During nights, weekends, and holidays, the Central Dispatch Center provides full-time dispatch service for all AFC districts. The AFC has upgraded the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system to ArcView 9. This system allows better coordination of firefighting efforts and resources, as well as quicker translation of latitude and longitude into legal descriptions - for dispatching purposes.



"I believe that one of the responsibilities of owning forestland is to use proven conservation practices to manage the natural resources present. The Arkansas Forestry Commission provides knowledge and advice to the forestland owners of Arkansas on a scale ranging from an individual tree basis to hundreds of acres."

-Bryan Aday

Wildfires at a Glance 2008-2013

The total count of wildfires recorded across the state in 2013 was 787. This total is well-below the five-year average of 1,740 total fires. The total acres burned in 2013 was 11,261; also well-below the five-year average of 27,640 acres. Finally, the average fire size for 2013 was 14.30 acres; compared to the 2012 average fire size of 16 acres. Please see chart at right.

Year	Number	Total Area Burned	Average Fire Size
2008	846	10,626	12.5 acres
2009	1,047	16,159	16.84 acres
2010	2,222	35,197	15.84 acres
2011	2,435	41,783	17.16 acres
2012	2,148	34,434	16.00 acres
'08-'12 Avg.	1740	27,640	15.88 acres
2013	787	11,261	14.30 acres



Aviation

The aviation department supports each of the eight AFC districts through aerial fire detection, timber damage surveys, insect and disease surveys, and through cooperation and partnerships with other state and federal agencies. Aviation operated 16 aircraft statewide with four full-time pilots. Extra-help pilots are used to supplement during periods of high fire danger. All AFC pilots hold at least a commercial pilot's certificate with instrument privileges obtained through the Federal Aviation Administration.

Six of the aircraft are state-owned and ten are federally owned. Two Aero Commander twin-engine planes are utilized in an air attack role, coordinating air tanker suppression aircraft. The 14 single-engine aircraft are used for fire detection, timber damage surveys and other forestry related needs.

All AFC aircraft are maintained to FAA standards. Upgrades to avionics are completed as technology advances. Logbooks, maintenance records, general condition, and appearance of all aircraft are thoroughly and routinely examined to maintain a high standard of safety. During 2013, the aviation crew recorded 572 flight hours while detecting wildfires, timber damage, and other forestry-related purposes.

Aviation staff also travelled over 3,000 miles to conduct 12 AFC Walk Tests.



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Communications

In order to dispatch fire crews, the AFC operates 50 communications towers and 12 base stations. Additionally, the AFC has access to the Arkansas Wireless Information Network (AWIN), which includes an AWIN base station located in each district office and two additional units in the Central Dispatch Center at Malvern. Not only do dispatchers have statewide communications ability with AFC crews, but also with the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management Communications Center, county Office of Emergency Management offices, and volunteer fire departments.

Over the last two years, all handheld & mobile radios were replaced with new units - capable of meeting the future FCC mandate for extreme narrowband digital technology. In 2013, the radio system was redesigned to meet the requirements for the AFC redistricting project. Several new repeaters were installed throughout Arkansas. The AFC continues to move closer to the ability to provide statewide dispatching on the VHF radio system from the Central Dispatch Center in Malvern. Additionally, numerous tower locations have been upgraded to high performance antenna systems.

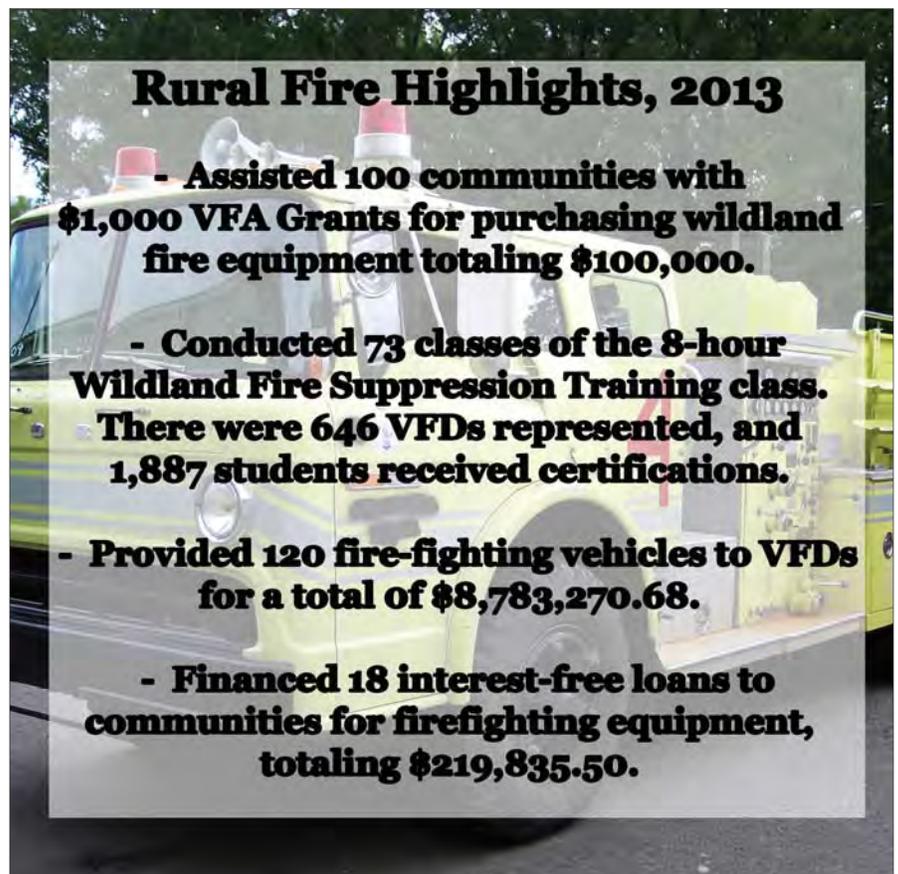
Rural Fire Protection

The AFC Rural Fire Protection (RFP) Program serves the needs of rural Arkansas fire departments, as well as the repair needs of AFC firefighting vehicles and tractors.

Communities need prepared, well-equipped fire crews. RFP provides required Wildland Training Courses for volunteer fire departments (VFDs) and administers federal grant programs to assist VFDs with the purchase of firefighting equipment.

Firefighting equipment and vehicles are provided through the Federal Excess Property Program. Vehicles destined for fire crews are evaluated and repaired for initial service at the RFP maintenance facility.

Additionally, crews may apply to receive interest-free loans - or Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Grants for the purchase of firefighting equipment.



“The AFC is important to Arkansas for the provision of education about and protection of our wonderful natural resources. The AFC offers employment opportunities for many who, though many of us have never met, are like an extended family. Teaching school children, assisting landowners, supplying resources to volunteer fire departments, and extinguishing wildfires are just a few of the things done by this group of caring and dedicated people.”

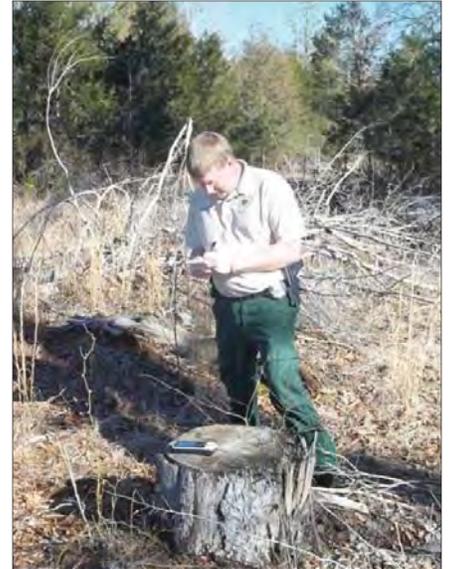
-Lorraine Mason

Law Enforcement

The AFC has three forest investigators and twelve district Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs). The district LEOs are rangers and foresters that are also law enforcement personnel as an additional duty. The AFC has the authority to enforce all the State's laws pertaining to unlawful dumping, timber theft, forest fires, and equipment theft and vandalism. LEOs aggressively seek prosecution of violators to deter such crimes. The AFC has also aggressively sought prosecution of violators to deter these crimes in the future. Rangers with law enforcement responsibility are recommended to take 16 hours of law enforcement training each year; district LEOs and the investigators are recommended to attend 40 hours of training. All LEOs attended firearms training; One LEO completed training to become a Firearms Instructor.

During 2013, LEOs conducted arrests on felony cases and recovered more than \$15,743 in restitution to landowners. Efforts of LEOs, through citations and suppression costs, resulted in the collection of \$2,972.80 in fines and \$55,460 in suppression costs - totaling \$74,175.80. LEOs also patrolled state forest land (at Poison Springs State Forest) during deer season. Officers assisted in several search and rescue efforts, several emergency response incidents, and assisted other agencies throughout the state, when requested.

Case Type	Total Completed
Fire Cases	57
Timber Theft	57
Dumping Cases	50
Vandalism	10
AFC Property	1
Total Cases	175



Arkansas Firewise

The Arkansas Firewise Program continues to be the Number 1 program in the Nation, with more recognized Firewise communities than any other state. During 2013, the Firewise team worked with 120 fire departments; 15 of those received Risk Assessment Training. Arkansas Firewise has partnered with the Arkansas Fire Training Academy to gain accreditation for Risk Assessment Training, which counts toward the 16-hour training requirement for structural firefighters in Arkansas.

This program has also overseen 258 Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans, which remain updated and on file. Great emphasis was also placed in 2013 on the retention of and support to currently recognized and active Arkansas Firewise communities.



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The Firewise team participated in outreach opportunities including the Arkansas Firefighters and Fire Chiefs Convention, as well as the AEMTA Convention. Personnel attended meetings with the Arkansas Rural Development Conference and continued cooperative efforts with other county, state, and federal agencies. Firewise is active in 36 of the 75 Arkansas counties. The goal over the next five years is to have at least one active Firewise community in each county.

Fire Weather and Prescribed Burning

Prescribed (or controlled) burns are performed as weather permits to improve forest health and to reduce the risk of out-of-control wildfires in the future, by removing highly combustible, dead vegetation.

The AFC Fire Weather Supervisor records and organizes prescribed burn information to comply with new Volunteer Smoke Management Guidelines. Furthermore, this position provides the latest weather information to AFC fire crews to better plan and manage statewide prescribed burns.

In 2013, a total of 1,009 control burns were recorded for 229,709 acres. The various agencies that report these prescribed burns are categorized as follows: Private, Federal, Industrial or State.

Prescribed Fire by Category

Landowner	Total Burns	Acres Burned
Private	162	9,914
Industrial	349	34,214
State Government	230	24,412
Federal Government	268	161,169
Total	1,009	229,709

Prescribed Fire by AFC District

AFC District	Total Burns	Acres Burned
District 1	125	11,452
District 2	204	81,016
District 3	29	4,310
District 4	133	12,424
District 5	164	12,799
District 6	141	56,009
District 7	127	30,827
District 8	86	20,872
Totals:	1009	229,709

“Many times, we are the organization that people meet first during hard times - like wildfires, timber theft situations, and emergency response situations. We are the crews ready and willing to respond to whatever kind of need is presented by our citizens.”

-Billy Black

Forest Resource Management

AFC forest management division implements innovative forest management programs and practices to establish, conserve, and utilize forests and related natural resources that will enhance social, environmental, and economic benefits.



Forest Stewardship Program

The AFC works with a diverse group of partners and professionals to conserve, protect, and enhance Arkansas's forests through the Forest Stewardship Program. The program provides an opportunity for non-industrial, private forest landowners to manage their property for multiple-uses, utilizing professional forestry guidance objectives including: wildlife, recreation, soil and water conservation, agro-forestry, and/or timber production. The primary delivery mechanism is development and implementation of a comprehensive Forest Stewardship Management Plan prepared by AFC foresters, private consulting foresters, private wildlife biologists, as well as soil and water professionals.

As of 2013, Arkansas had 4,596 landowners enrolled in the Forest Stewardship Program, who own 846,184 acres. There are 1,257 Certified Landowners with 283,528 acres, maintained under the Forest Stewardship Program guidelines. In 2013, 318 Stewardship Plans were written or revised, encompassing 73,762 acres. Consulting foresters wrote 11% of the plans, accounting for 9% of the acreage.

Landowners certified as Forest Stewards:	106 landowners, 33,818 acres
Re-certification of Forest Steward properties:	50 properties, 15,733 acres
Landowner Assists:	159 landowners, 22,279 acres

"The AFC provides essential and irreplaceable services to the residents of Arkansas with our seedling program, fire protection, and educational services. It is really a great feeling when someone calls to get help, but has no idea where to start; and I can get them what they need or put them in touch with the right person that can."

-Krys Newnum



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Urban and Community Forestry

2013 Program Highlights	2013	2012
Community population totals for urban areas that were provided educational, technical or financial assistance for projects such as developing green infrastructure plans, planting and pruning projects, reforestation after natural disasters, organizing tree or beautification committees, discussing tree management in parks and streets, tree inventories, workshops or organizing Arbor Day ceremonies:	1,370,414	1,497,199
Percentage of the Arkansas population living in communities that are involved in urban forestry programs:	36%	37%
Volunteer hours accumulated through tree planting projects, tree board participation, organizing workshops, and training program hours:	22,302 Hours	20,475 Hours

The Urban and Community Forestry Program is designed to assist communities, non-profit organizations and educational institutions with the necessary tools, information and technology to promote forest stewardship in their communities. Engaging these groups helps build capacity of the program and encourages urban forestry at the local level. To meet the growing demand for technical assistance, the AFC provides assistance through district arborists and urban forestry representatives from the eight districts. These individuals work closely with the staff urban foresters and their communities, schools, non-profits and various organizations to increase public awareness about the value of community trees. Technical assistance and educational services help improve standards for urban forestry management and involve tree protection for water quality and wildlife habitat, land use planning for greener neighborhoods, and proper planting and care by municipal employees, contractors and volunteers.

As part of our educational programs, we partner with the Arkansas Urban Forestry Council (AUFC), a non-profit with members across the state. AUFC kicked off a state-wide Arbor Day celebration at Vilonia on Saturday, March 16, in conjunction with our annual Arkansas ReLeaf project. A tree planting was held on Friday, March 15, at Vilonia Ball Park. The goal of the Arkansas ReLeaf project this year was to assist the Community of Vilonia and surrounding Faulkner County in restoring the tree canopy damaged by a tornado. A ceremonial tree was planted at the Veterans Memorial, and Mayor James Firestone read the Arbor Day Proclamation. The Arbor Day Celebration was followed by a tree giveaway at the local Vilonia Volunteer Fire Department.

“The AFC is important because it’s part of the many groups that help Arkansas continue as a great destination to live and vacation. We do our part in helping that experience to be a positive and enjoyable one. We do a lot of work that is never seen. If we do our job well, citizens see the results of a healthy, rich and safer place to enjoy and experience our natural resources.”

-Bob Porto

“The AFC is an agency that protects and develops the forests of Arkansas. We are also there for disaster response. We have a skill set that most emergency response crews don’t have.”

-George Stowe-Rains



AUFC's annual Arkansas ReLeaf projects are planned and coordinated with individual communities and may be used for tree plantings on public lands, environmental stewardship and tree education programs in the public schools, as well as assistance to communities for participating in the Tree City USA Program. Project ReLeaf is made possible by donations from local, state, regional and private and public entities. The first ReLeaf was held in Haskell in 2004 and other communities that have benefited include: Arkadelphia, Clinton, Cherry Hill, Dumas, Mena, Scotland and Marmaduke.

An urban forestry grant in the amount of \$2,500 was awarded to the Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association (FNHA) to help fund a research project on Mount Kessler by a University of Arkansas graduate student to help promote the land as a valuable outdoor laboratory. The FNHA is working with the NW Arkansas Land Trust and the City of Fayetteville to purchase the 387 acres, to place the land in a conservation easement.

Projects are a continuation from the partnership formed between the AFC and FNHA in 2005, with a grant to identify the highest priority natural areas for conservation around Fayetteville. Partners included the Nature Conservancy Ozark Highlands Office, the Landscape Architecture Dept. at the University of Arkansas and the Beaver Water District. After the analysis was completed, the City of Fayetteville adopted the assessment as part of their 2025 plan.



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Urban and Community Forestry Continued ...

Through participation of the Strategic Conservation Training Program, the AFC and the Beaver Water District recognized an opportunity to initiate a Green Infrastructure Plan for NW Arkansas to address the rapid land use changes occurring with strategic conservation planning. Through a grant, FNHA developed a model Green Infrastructure Plan that is serving other conservation efforts in the Southern United States. The tools provided are being used to continue to develop green linkages and manage those areas of cultural importance throughout the interface.

Using a regional grant and in partnership with AUFC, the AFC implemented a green infrastructure program to train city representatives and professionals in developing plans across the state. A manual was designed that shows how green infrastructure planning can occur between communities in Arkansas. As communities continue to grow and develop, increased efforts will be made to work across boundaries.



GIS

With funds from a Forest Health Monitoring Grant, the AFC purchased 88 Motorola RAZR Maxx smartphones for county rangers and foresters. In addition, GPS data collection applications and topographic map layers were purchased for the devices. The smartphones are used to gather GPS data for forest health monitoring, to prepare and monitor forest management plans, as a tool for conducting prescribed fires, and as a resource to suppress wildfires. These smartphones were used on the 2013 Aerial Southern Pine Beetle Survey with remarkable results.

The AFC was the host site for the 2013 Southern Group of State Foresters GIS Task Force Meeting (group pictured at right). Guests included GIS application development professionals and U.S. Forest Service program managers.

Finally, AFC GIS began development of a fire activities reporting website in May, 2013. The website will be utilized in recording forest management and wildfire activities, and in the creation of maps to support both initiatives. Three sections remain to be completed. The website will be thoroughly tested and is planned to go live for use by October 1, 2014.



“Besides wildfire prevention and suppression, the AFC assists hundreds of landowners every year in reaching their natural resources management goals. The AFC’s law enforcement program also assists landowners in recovering thousands of dollars annually through investigation and prosecution of timber theft and vandalism.”

-Robert Murphy

Water Quality Management Program

The AFC is the designated management agency for the silvicultural section of the Arkansas Water Plan. The Southern Group of State Foresters has emphasized six areas for state water quality programs (which we follow) as listed below: 1) BMP training and education for landowners, loggers, and foresters; 2) Courtesy Exams on active logging sites; 3) Biennial monitoring of BMP implementation on silvicultural sites throughout the state; 4) Resolution of timber harvesting/water quality complaints; 5) Coordination with other state and federal agencies, and; 6) Participation in water quality grants.

The BMP coordinator has participated with Dr Mike Daniels of the Cooperative Extension Service Working Group to develop a landowner guide, entitled “Arkansas Watershed Stewards”. The guide will be a tool for watershed development - with a follow-up strategy of training and resources for start-up groups.

Courtesy Exams

Courtesy exams provide an opportunity for water quality staff to meet with foresters and loggers in the field to discuss BMP implementation. Manuals, brochures, and fact sheets are provided to participants. Ten exams, with 56 participants, across seven counties were hosted in 2013.



Photos depict a road before and after the implementation of BMP guidelines in Poison Springs State Forest.

The AFC BMP Coordinator conducted seven technical BMP training sessions, in conjunction with the Arkansas Timber Producers Association (ATPA). A total of 178 loggers and company foresters throughout Arkansas received training.

Resolution of Logging Complaints

The AFC processes logging complaints and makes a determination concerning whether water quality impairment, or the potential of impairment has taken place. In 2013 there were 11 complaints filed. Six of those were valid complaints. All six complaints were resolved by implementing BMPs.

“The AFC is important because it provides rural fire protection, forestry programs, and fire safety and timber advice to the citizens of Arkansas. We reach many children and adults across the state in both urban and rural areas.”

-Kenny Smothers



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Baucum Nursery



The purpose of the AFC Nursery is to produce, store and distribute pine and hardwood seedlings of the highest quality. Seedlings are coupled with genetic background that provides them with the greatest chance of survival and the highest possible growth potential. These seedlings are sold primarily to private, non-industrial landowners for afforestation and reforestation purposes.

Baucum Nursery produced 6,051,425 hardwood seedlings and 3,931,900 pine seedlings for Arkansas landowners in 2013. Baucum Nursery sold and distributed 4,161,025 hardwood seedlings and 3,389,450 pine seedlings to Arkansas landowners. Private landowners purchased most of the seedlings. The majority of pine and hardwood seedlings were planted under federal cost-share programs which include: EQIP, CRP, WHIP, WRP, and the Southern Pine Beetle Prevention and Restoration Program.

Nursery employees completed all necessary cultural practices to ensure top-quality seedlings. Fertilizers were applied per soil test results. Soil fumigation was done and pesticides were applied to prevent and control weeds, diseases, and insects. Approximately 100 tons of soil amendments, as well as cover crops on layout fields, were used to maintain soil productivity.

Promotional efforts for seedling sales will be continued by all district and county personnel. In 2013, a new product was added - the Containerized 3-Star Loblolly Pine. There are two primary purposes for this product. First, it is important to be involved in reaching the market that desires a product with high annual growth potential, and secondly, it provides the optimum utilization of a very high-value seed. These genetically improved seedlings are selling for \$75 per box of 300 or \$30 per bundle of 25.

“The AFC is valuable to the people of Arkansas because we help save property from being destroyed and we are there after storms to help clean up the debris. We also help landowners with land management for wildlife, timber production, and aesthetic improvements. I’m very proud to be part of the AFC.”

-Eric Smith

“The state of Arkansas possesses more diversity than any state that I have had the opportunity to visit.... from the mountains in the western and northern portion of the state, to the delta and farmlands in the east, to the abundant pine plantations in the south and the many clean rivers and lakes throughout the state. I view the AFC as a key member of the stewards and protectors of our forest lands, public or private, whether its through fighting wildfires or assisting and educating private landowners in programs which promote our ‘Natural State’ for generations to come.”

-Jenimy Williams

Tree Improvement

The AFC continues to be aggressive and innovative in meeting the reforestation needs of Arkansas's private non-industrial, landowners by providing seed of the highest possible genetic gain and quality. The AFC's breeding and testing program and orchard management practices continually improve the genetic gain offered from our programs.

Production orchards are managed for maximum seed production at a reasonable cost. All cultural practices are applied according to specifications provided by the Western Gulf Forest Tree Improvement Program (WGFTIP). Establishment, maintenance and measurements continue on all the pine and hardwood progeny tests.

The AFC, in association with WGFTIP, continues to improve the genetic quality of plant material available for reforestation in the Western Gulf region. The AFC sells pine seedlings produced from seed with the highest possible genetic gain. Only the best clones in AFC's loblolly and short leaf pine seed orchards are being harvested. We then sell the balance of cones and seed.

Please see itemized seed sales in the table at right:

Species	Pounds Sold
LOB 25 TO 30% GAIN	19.28
LOB 35 TO 40% GAIN	42.16
IMP. N LOBLOLLY	586.46
IMP. S LOBLOLLY	59.0
TOTAL	706.90



Cone and Seed Collection

The AFC harvested 435.78 bushels of improved loblolly pine cones for a yield of 503.78 pounds of seed - which is a rate of 1.16 lbs of seed per bushel.

The advanced generation shortleaf orchard produced 10 bushels of cones, for a yield of 3.84 pounds of seed - which is a rate of .38 lbs of seed per bushel.

Demand for shortleaf seed has increased, so we reclaimed an improved shortleaf orchard. Orchard management practices should result in a crop of improved shortleaf cones next year.

The AFC collected 1,450 pounds of sawtooth oak seed, 767 pounds of improved cherrybark oak, and 6 pounds of improved nuttall oak seed.



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Annual Forest Survey Data

The Forest Inventory and Analysis program (FIA) of the USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station has been conducting statewide timber surveys since the 1950s. In 1999, the AFC joined the FIA program and began the first-ever annual surveys for the state. The information for this survey is derived from satellite imagery and timber measurements collected by certified foresters from over 5,000 permanent research plots.

Forestland Area

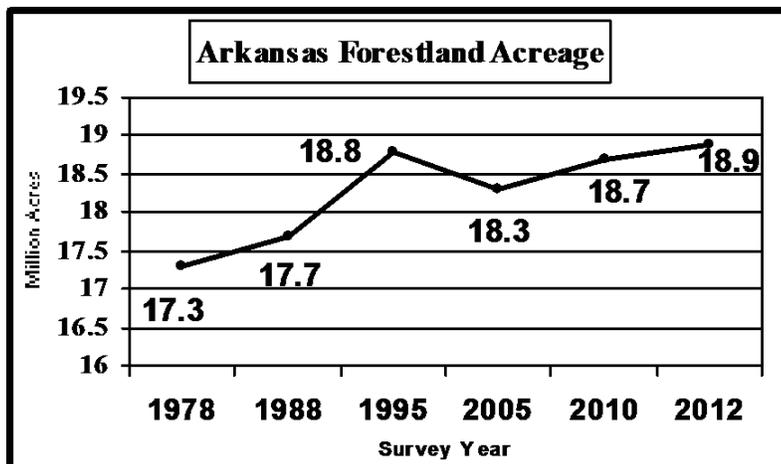
Arkansas's forests cover 18.9 million acres, or 56% of the State. During the 50's and 60's, Arkansas lost nearly 20% of its forestland. Since 1978, forestland has increased by more than 1 million acres. There are an estimated 11.6 billion trees growing within Arkansas's Forests.

Forest Distribution

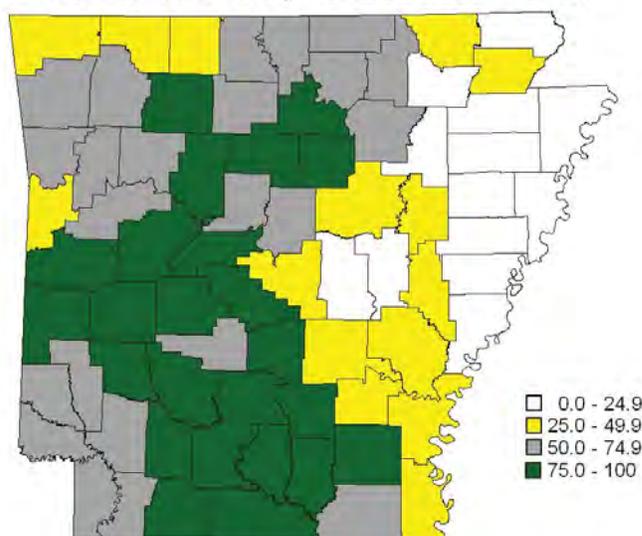
The Southwestern, Ozark and Ouachita regions contain 88% of the forestland in the state. The most heavily forested County is Dallas (92%) and the least forested is Mississippi County (5%).

Forest-Type Composition

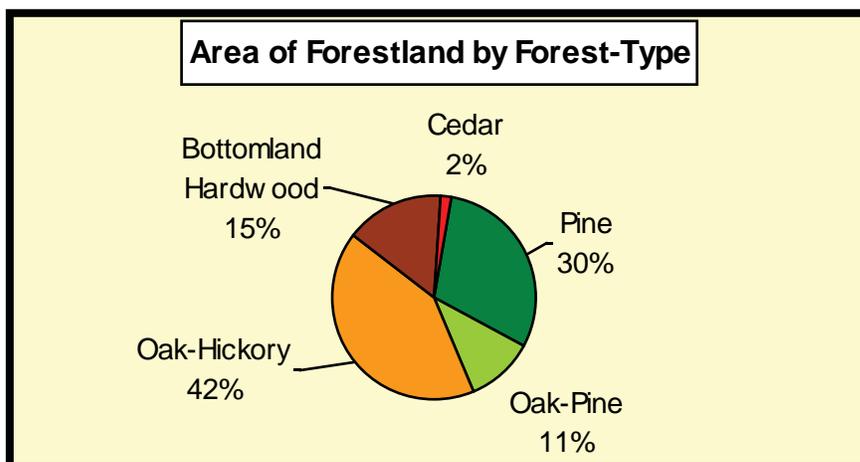
Most of the forest in the state is a hardwood timber type. 50% of the pine forests are plantation forestland.



Percent of County Area in Forest Land



Area of Forestland by Forest-Type

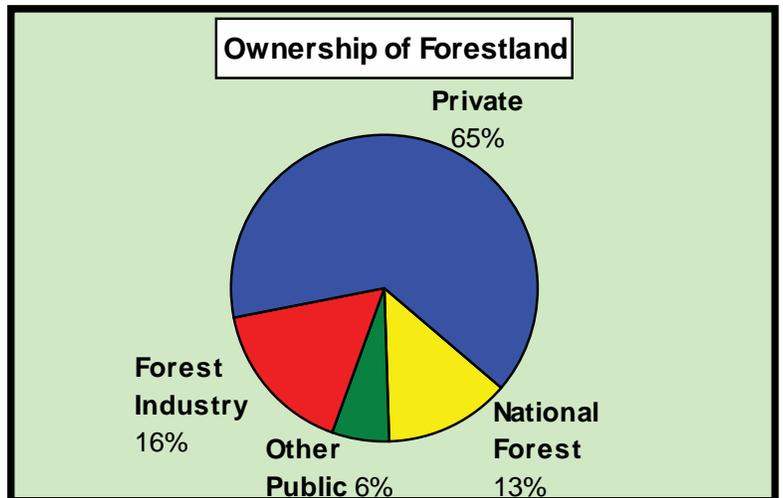


"The AFC is important to the state of Arkansas for the detection and elimination of wildfires. AFC is also very helpful with all fire departments, helping with emergencies and getting firefighters equipment."

-Adam Bartlet

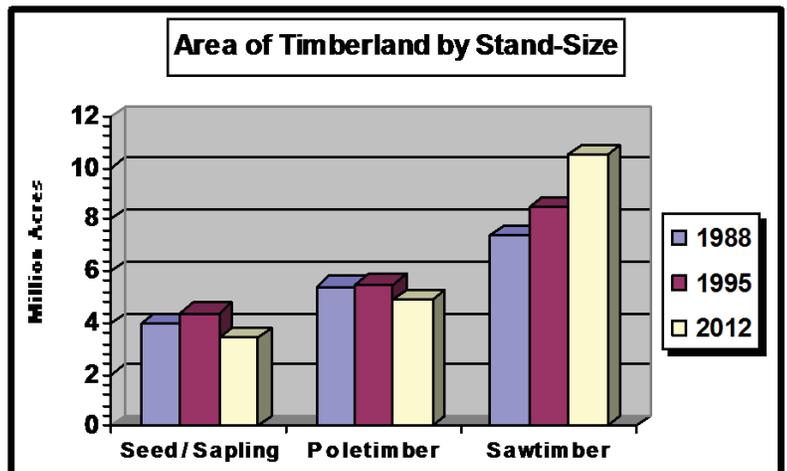
Ownership of the Forest

Arkansas contains the largest National Forest area in the South, with 2.5 million acres within the Ozark-St. Francis and Ouachita National Forests.



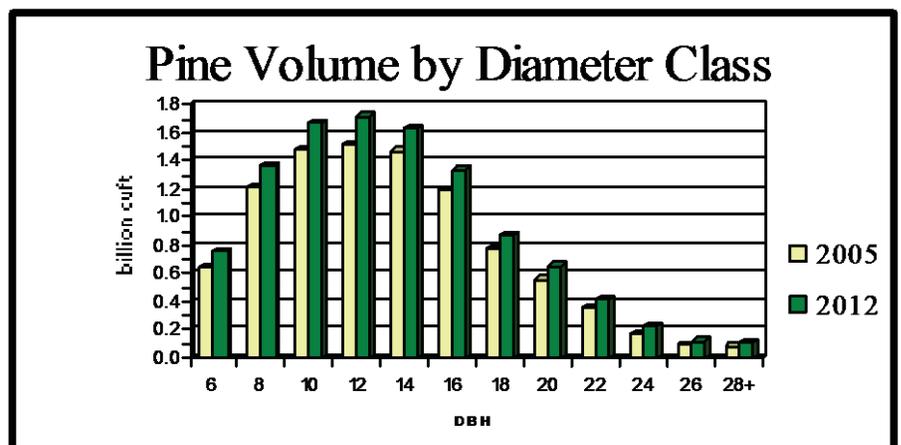
Stand-Size Distribution

More than half of the timberland acres in the state are sawtimber stands.



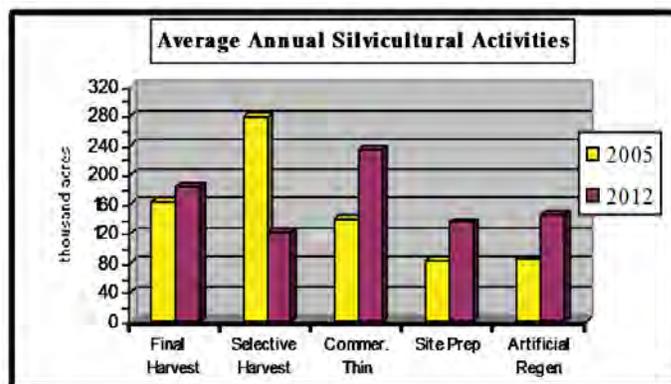
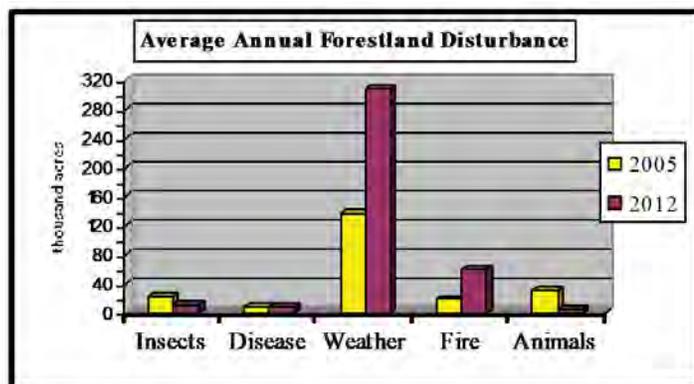
Timber Volume

Softwood volumes account for 33% of the state's total tree volume.



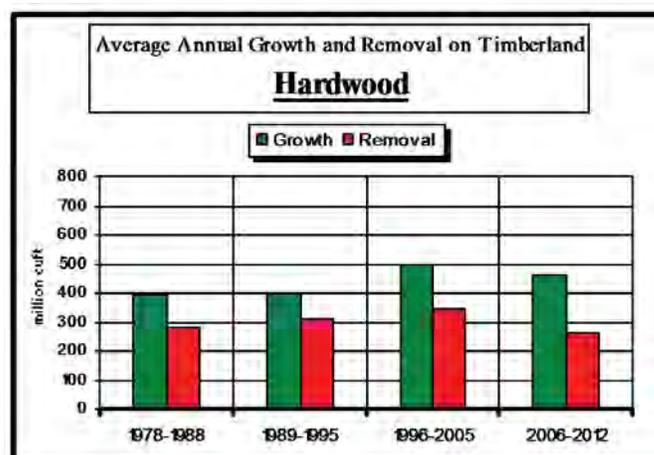
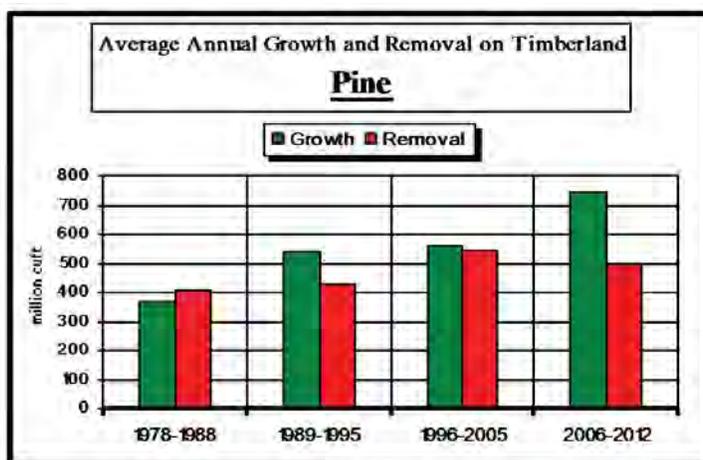
Protecting, Developing, and Conserving
Arkansas's Forests

Annual Forest Survey Data Continued ...



Disturbances

A Disturbance is an event that affects or kills at least 25% of the trees in an area. Disturbances caused by insects and diseases have been decreasing, but average annual acreage affected by weather events has more than doubled.



Growth and Removal

Pine timber is growing faster than it is being harvested. The latest survey shows a pine growth surplus of almost 250 million cubic feet per year. Hardwood timber is also growing faster than it is being harvested, with an annual growth surplus of 200 million cubic feet per year.

“The AFC is a link for private landowners to the forest industry to help them manage and market their timberland. Soil and water conservation, fire suppression, fire prevention through educational programs, and All-Hazard Response Crews help Arkansas maintain a clean and green ‘Natural State.’”

-Walter Jones

“Through the technical assistance, education programs, wildfire prevention and all other programs provided, the AFC works to protect natural resources such as timber, soil and water, and property. This all helps keep Arkansas ‘The Natural State’ - safe and renewable.”

-Billy Harris

Forest Legacy

The Forest Legacy Program protects privately owned forests from conversion to non-forest uses. Property is protected through land or conservation easement acquisitions. The Forest Legacy Program is funded through a nationally competitive, cost-share matched grant process overseen by the U.S. Forest Service and administered in Arkansas by the AFC.

The AFC hosted the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Southern Region Forest Legacy Meeting in Little Rock. The meeting was attended by Forest Legacy Program Managers from eleven states and three USFS national/regional Forest Legacy program managers. Topics included the current Forest Legacy program status and training on specific program processes. During the meeting, Central Arkansas Water (CAW) celebrated the purchase of its 741 acres of Forest Legacy tract.



Winrock Grass Farm received 4 million in grant funds as part of the Forest Legacy program in 2012. Presentation of the check took place in 2013 (pictured above).

A part of Forest Resource Management includes the coordination of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Programs, like the four described below ...

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (*NRCS)

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for landowners who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat, primarily on private land. By targeting wildlife habitat projects on all lands and aquatic areas, WHIP provides cost-share assistance to conservation-minded landowners who are unable to meet the specific eligibility requirements of other USDA conservation programs.

In 2013, the Commission provided 33 Management Plans on 2,785 acres to non-industrial, private forest landowners. A total of 77 landowners were assisted, across 5,141 acres.

Wetlands Reserve Program (*NRCS)

The Wetlands Reserve Program provides landowners cost-share funds and/or land payments to restore wetlands. Wetlands converted to cropland prior to December 23, 1985, are eligible for the program, which is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office.

Under this program in 2013, 54 landowners planted 3,900 acres of hardwood seedlings. Planting Inspections were accomplished on 44 properties, comprising 3,608 acres. The AFC also assisted NRCS in checking eight forest tracts for seedling survival on 1,282 acres, and provided 44 landowner assists on 12,250 acres.



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Environmental Quality Incentives Program (*NRCS)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants with installation or implementation of structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

A portion of the state allocated EQIP funds may be dedicated to forestry practices. EQIP addresses Forest Protection, Health, and Water Quality. Forest practices include firebreaks, prescribed burning, fencing, forest stand improvement, invasive species control, tree planting, water bars, stream crossing structures, culverts, and seeding/stream bank stabilization.



EQIP offers contracts to provide incentive payments and cost-shares to implement conservation practices. EQIP activities are carried out according to a plan that identifies the appropriate conservation practice or practices to address the resource concerns. The practices are subject to NRCS standards.

In 2013, 290 EQIP landowner assists were given on 11,137 acres, and 23 EQIP landowners with 2,051 acres were referred to forest consultants and other resource professionals. The AFC prepared or revised 155 management plans on 11,137 acres for non-industrial, private forest landowners (NIPFLOs) to implement EQIP eligible practices. Planting Inspections were done on 145 landowner properties, comprising 6,097 acres. Seedling survival checks were conducted on 88 landowner properties, comprising 3,902 acres. Prescribed burns were performed on 34 tracts, which totaled 1,642 acres, alongside 22 fire breaks, totaling 33.5 miles. Forest Stand Improvement was also performed on five tracts, totaling 332 acres.

Conservation Reserve Program (*NRCS)

The Conservation Reserve Program began in March, 1986, and was designed to retire erodible cropland from agricultural production - in an effort to conserve soil. Landowners may submit applications for eligible crop or pastureland. Programs include vegetative cover for established trees, riparian buffers, wetland restoration, and bottomland timber establishment on wetlands.

The AFC is a primary Technical Service Provider (TSP) for landowners that are accepted into the CRP program. TSP responsibilities include development of the Conservation Plan to direct implementation, and verification of the implementation through audit and compliance checks.

In 2013, the AFC wrote Conservation Plans for 249 landowners, which resulted in forest management recommendations for CRP on 15,045 acres, and the planting of some 262 acres of pine seedlings and 4,925 acres of hardwood seedlings.

“Titus 2:7 says for us ‘to be an example by doing good works and by letting everything reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.’ AFC does that through partnerships, protection, reforestation, education, and preservation. We are helping to keep the natural state natural for generations to enjoy.” -John Pressgrove

Poison Springs State Forest

Poison Springs State Forest (PSSF) demonstrates science based forest management that protects and conserves water, wildlife, soil, and related forest resources for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Poison Springs State Forest (PSSF) is a demonstration forest located in western Ouachita and eastern Nevada counties. PSSF provides the AFC with yearly revenue while demonstrating different forest management techniques to private non-industrial landowners.

When the AFC purchased PSSF in 1957, the 19,942-acre forest had 20,240,000 board feet of pine sawtimber and 10,303,000 board feet of hardwood sawtimber. The AFC has cut timber every year since 1957. Today PSSF is 22,697 acres and has over 120,000,000 board feet of pine sawtimber and over 15,000,000 board feet of hardwood sawtimber. PSSF has added some land each year for the last several years. The most recent acquisitions came from non-industrial private forest landowners.

Income generated from formal timber sales during FY'13 was \$720,566.43. Receipts from miscellaneous sales during the same time period amounted to \$647.70. The AFC used timber sale proceeds to make annual payments to the U.S. Forest Service until the original land purchase was paid for. The recent land purchases were paid for primarily through grants from the Natural and Cultural Resources Council. Timber sale proceeds pay operations and salary expenses and provide the AFC revenue for general operations. The AFC has never used any general revenue to pay for or operate PSSF. The AFC places timber sale proceeds in excess of expenses/operations into a trust fund for capital equipment purchases.

Arkansans use PSSF for camping, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and sightseeing. The AFC requires a permit for camping on PSSF. Most permits are issued for the October and November deer seasons. Over 350 campsite reservations were made for PSSF's primitive campsites during the year.

Income from Poison Springs State Forest, 2013

Product	Volume	Value
Pine Sawtimber	3,280* (mbf)	\$653,560.28
Hardwood Sawtimber	215 (mbf)	\$ 61,927.65
Misc. and Salvage		\$647.70
Non-timber Income		\$347.92
Pine Pulpwood	5 (cords)	\$62.50
Hardwood Pulpwood	209 (cords)	\$5,016.00
Total:		\$722,185.27

*Some of this was sold in FY2013, and will be harvested and paid for in FY2014; value listed above reflects only income received in FY2013.



**Protecting, Developing, and Conserving
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Administration

The AFC administration provides support and leadership for agency personnel with operational efficiency and effectiveness by fostering partnerships, exercising fiscal management, and cultivating a workforce that consistently responds to the challenges facing Arkansas's forests, forest owners, and citizens.

Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) Department is responsible for employment procedures, recruitment, employee benefits, time data entry, payroll processing, workers compensation claims, training, and safety. The HR staff works with AFC employees on a myriad of day-to-day assists to facilitate a productive work environment. The Arkansas General Assembly authorized 284 regular positions for 2013. A total of 35 training courses were provided - representing 5,138 total man hours taken by employees and cooperators.

Safety

Safety is a topic on every staff meeting agenda, in addition to routine tailgate sessions and local AFC unit safety meetings. Inspection of PPE (personal protective equipment) worn by AFC firefighters is reviewed in conjunction with the Rural Fire Protection equipment inspections. AFC firefighters must meet annual physical fitness standards. The AFC works with the Arkansas Department of Labor to assure that all buildings and contents meet building and shop safety requirements.

Employee Development

HR handles training requests and is responsible for maintaining copies of individual training records. Other departments also provide and report training that occurs within their respective department. This training may or may not be specific to each department. Training conducted in 2013 was accomplished with several different methods ranging from the traditional classroom method, field demonstrations, hands-on or practical, and distance/on-line self-study training.

AFC staff members, including new and experienced personnel, continued to comply with training directives from the Department of Homeland Security, which applies to employees with emergency response responsibilities. Much of the training is available by distance learning from the FEMA Emergency Management Institute. Over 108 AFC employees completed such training during 2013.

Additionally, personnel are required to take specific training provided by the DFA Inter-Agency Training Program (IATP). A total of 32 employees participated in 5 different IATP courses in 2013, including: Administering Discipline, Interpersonal Communications, Grievance Prevention and Handling, T.H.E. Course (The Human Element), and Written Business Communications.

A total of 108 employees were certified in CPR/First Aid training to maintain their biannual certification requirements in 2013. A group of 11 AFC staff members became certified instructors in CPR/First Aid in order to provide training to other AFC personnel.

“The AFC provides essential assistance to landowners, homeowners, communities and fire departments. We support Arkansas through emergency and disaster cleanup, education and training in the public and private sector, and in the supporting and training of statewide volunteer firefighters.” -Tom Lindsey

Human Resources Cont...



In 2013, 9 AFC employees and 30 from other state, federal and private organizations attended the Prescribed Fire Course held annually at Camp Robinson. AFC personnel help organize and instruct the annual Prescribed Fire Course. Agencies require their personnel to pass this course before they can manage a prescribed burn.

The 9th Annual River Valley Fire Academy was held on the campus of Arkansas Tech University in May, 2013. During this academy, 154 individuals registered for classes, and most attended either one or more courses that were offered during the two-week period. The River Valley Academy remains the main training method that AFC employees and partners/cooperators receive required wildland fire training that meets both agency standards and the standards of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group. This two-week event also continues to be a very cost effective means for agencies to arrange for employee training, locally. A total of 16 different agencies and organizations were represented at the academy with attendees from several surrounding states. A total of 40 AFC employees participated as students or classroom instructors.

AD Training – U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and National Interagency Fire and Disaster Responses
AFC employees and other cooperators receive specialized training for emergency response positions within the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) or other federal agencies. AFC employees attend training as Administratively Determined (AD) employees of the Federal Government. The Federal Government pays for travel and training expenses. Upon meeting the training requirements, AFC employees are then selected by the USFS or other federal agencies to fill emergency response positions.

In 2013, the AFC issued Fire Qualification Cards to 35 employees, three retired AFC employees, 12 to individuals from paid or volunteer fire departments, and 12 to individuals from Arkansas State Parks. All of these individuals met the training, experience, and physical fitness requirements for national certification amid many different emergency response positions. Many AFC employees continue to maintain job qualifications that allow them to be utilized as resources for national emergencies.

In 2013, the AFC deployed eight AFC and four non-AFC individuals to AK, CA, AZ, VA, UT and OR. These individuals worked as: Faller Class B, Line Safety Officer, Firefighter Type 2, Air Tanker Base Manager, Emergency Medical Paramedic, RAMP Manager, Crew Boss, and Staging Area Manager.



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Minority Outreach



AFC Law Enforcement Officers assisted 58 minority landowners, owning a combined total of 1,613 acres, with timber theft complaints, illegal dumping, line disputes over timber, and failure to pay cases. *These numbers are included in those reported among totals in the Law Enforcement Report on page 8.

Special events and conferences that included minority outreach or training are as follows: Rural Life Conference, Minority Health Meeting, statewide career days, statewide outreach meetings, and statewide county fairs. Crews also reported the offering of many forestry programs and services specifically to minority Arkansas citizens including: Landowner management plans, controlled burns and tree thinning, urban forestry efforts, and stewardship presentations.

The AFC is dedicated to landowner knowledge and participation in forestry programs and services across Arkansas. To increase minority participation and knowledge in AFC programs and services, targeted minority outreach efforts are made by AFC personnel. Some 211 minority landowners in 2013 (citizens of an African-American, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian-American decent) have benefited from these initiatives.

As part of minority outreach efforts, Smokey Bear programs, fire safety presentations, and tree planting demonstrations were offered to the following communities: Springdale, Batesville, Wynne Head Start, Marvel, schools in Lee County, and Melbourne.

The AFC Rural Fire Protection Program awarded interest-free loans to minority fire departments (to fund firefighting equipment) including: North Pulas-ki, Chidester, Genoa, and Mount Vernon Fire Departments. The Arkansas Firewise program also certified two minority communities in 2013.

The AFC added many new staff members in 2013, including four new minority personnel.



“The AFC is important to Arkansas because we help to keep Arkansas beautiful through our constant work that we do out in the field. Through prescribed burns, seedling plantings and checks, and our continuous efforts in preventing hazardous wildfire conditions, the AFC has proven to be a vital asset to not only keeping Arkansas safe - but also keeping the ‘Natural State’ as natural as it can be.”

-Misty “Shay” Cowling

Financial Report: For the Year Ending June 30, 2013

Cash Balance, July 1 **\$5,337,379**

RESOURCES PROVIDED

General Revenue Transfers In	8,787,978
Timber Severance Taxes	3,401,627
Fire Protection Acreage Tax	2,084,423
Timber Sales	721,201
Seedling Sales	939,119
Sales of Equipment To Volunteer Fire Departments	574,093
Federal Grant Reimbursements	7,182,578
Natural & Cultural Resources Council Transfers In	589,134
Miscellaneous Revenue (Book Sales, Rents, Reimb.)	776,125
Total Receipts	<u>25,056,278</u>

EXPENDITURES

Salary Expense	13,920,232
Communication & Transportation of Commodities	306,886
Printing & Advertising	79,280
Repairing & Servicing	814,525
Utilities & Rent	355,436
Travel and Subsistence	115,272
Professional Services & Fees	746,086
Insurance and Bonds	20,507
Other Expenses & Services	951,449
Commodities, Materials & Supplies	1,777,473
Assistance, Grants & Aid	4,500,241
Refunds, Taxes & Claims	24,212
Treasurer of State Service Charges	174,250
Capital Outlay	1,188,688
Interagency Transfers for Claims & Other Expenses	26,283
Total Expenditures	<u>25,000,820</u>

Cash Balance, June 30* **\$5,392,837**

Non-Cash Expenditures

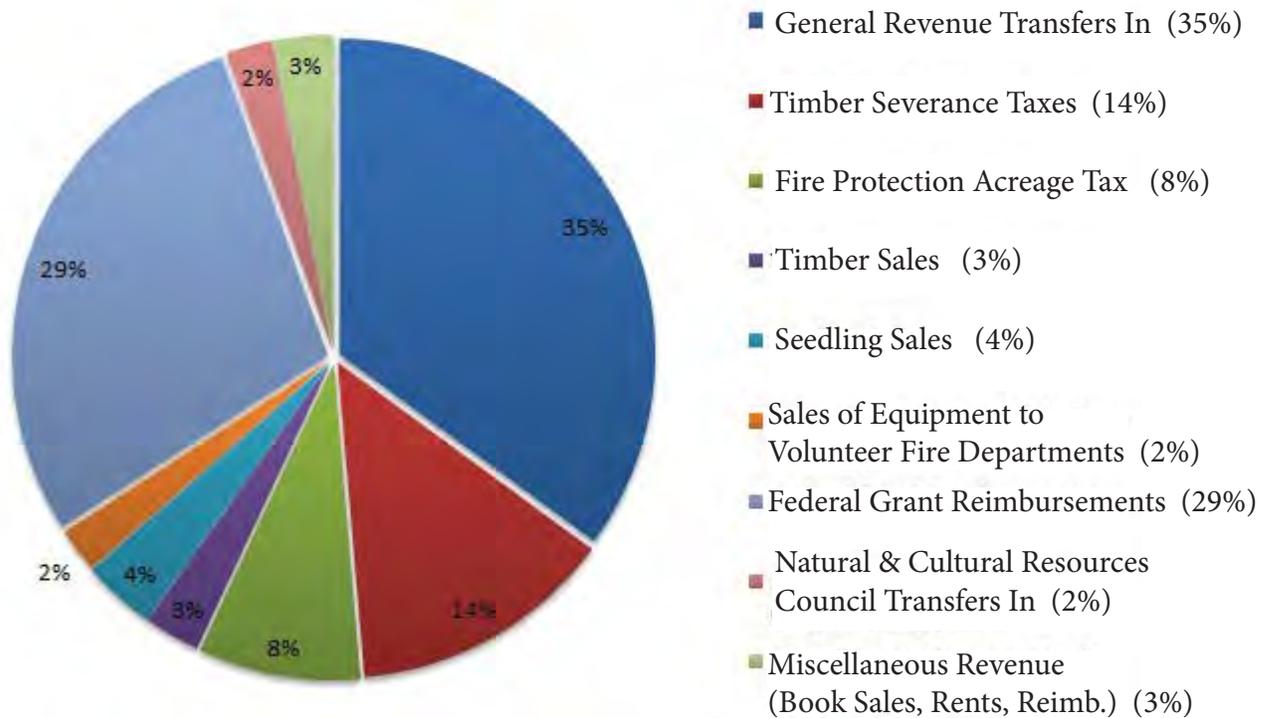
Depreciation & Amortization	1,686,426
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	2,968
Total Non-Cash Expenditures	<u>1,689,394</u>

*2013 Cash balance included \$427,586 restricted for Federal Grant programs; \$334,882 restricted for the Rural Fire Revolving Loan program; \$1,180,100 restricted for repayment of potential Federal liabilities; \$1,303,820 restricted reserve in the Trust Fund; and \$3,545 restricted for land acquisitions - leaving \$2,141,371 unrestricted Special Revenue and \$1,533 unrestricted General Revenue for use in operations.



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FY2013 AFC GAAP Resources Provided (Receipts)



“The AFC is important to Arkansas because it provides public services to individuals, timber companies, rural VFDs, schools and local cities. These services include: Asset protection for landowners and timber companies; training to rural VFDs; educational programs along with STOP Programs (Shade Trees on Playgrounds) for schools, and Tree City USA programs for urban areas.”

-Verdene Lingo

“We provide a valuable service to the private landowner in that we protect their timber, pasture, and cropland from fire or insects that can greatly reduce the income that the landowner receives from their property. In some cases, these are lands that have been in the family for several generations - land that may have put kids through college or started businesses. Our controlled burns also help provide for wildlife habitat.”

-Jim Barham

2013 Accomplishments Re-Cap

Building relationships with Arkansans is a key strategy to sustaining Arkansas's forests. Though there are numerous ways that AFC crews interact with the public on a daily basis, the table below captures a piece of the year-end accomplishment report totals from across the state. These activities and totals represent something much greater than data - they also reflect the many ways that all AFC personnel work to deliver forestry messages and services to Arkansans.



Accomplishment Summary, 2013

Landowner Assists (of any kind)	2,329
Management Plans Prepared	819
New Fire Lanes Installed	111
Presentations Given to Civic Groups	67
School Programs	571
Urban Tree Assists	252
Arbor Day Activities	76
Newspaper Articles Published	181
Planting Inspections	368

"We are part of the chain between homeowners, fire departments, and other partners. We do our part to keep everyone safe - and we do a job that no one else can."

-Harold Brasel

"Whether it is wildfire suppression, landowner management assistance, or law enforcement work - the AFC provides vital services to landowners and citizens throughout the state. The tasks we have been given are dangerous at times, but truly rewarding both personally and professionally. It has truly been an honor to be a part of this agency for the past 15 years and I look forward to continued service."

-Chris Ludwig



Protecting, Developing, and Conserving Arkansas's Forests

**We hope you've enjoyed our 2013 Annual Report.
We appreciate the opportunity to serve
the citizens and forests of Arkansas.**



The Arkansas Forestry Commission prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender; religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs).
Arkansas Forestry Commission is an equal opportunity employer.

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