

2. REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED FOR FILING

- a. Reports of Expenses Incurred Under Incentives, Awards, and Recruitment Ordinance for the Quarters Ended June 30, 2010, September 30, 2010, and December 31, 2010.
- b. Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service, Lakeland District, Annual Report to Pinellas County Commissioners for the period July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.
- c. Juvenile Welfare Board Monthly Financial and Investment Report dated September 30, 2012.
- d. Dock Fee Report for the month of October 2012.



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
Florida Forest Service  
Lakeland District



**ANNUAL REPORT TO  
PINELLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
JULY 1, 2011 - JUNE 30, 2012**

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BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS  
PINELLAS COUNTY FLORIDA

**INTRODUCTION**

Florida's forests are as complex and diverse as any in the country, and meeting the public's expectations for their management and protection is an enormous challenge. The social and economic needs of the nation's fourth most populous state have influenced forest land values, ownership patterns and exposure to wildfire in an unprecedented manner. The Florida Forest Service (FFS) must meet the challenges of changing landowner values, protecting lives and property, and managing the public land in a manner that serves the citizens of the state to the best of our ability.

**MISSION**

*The mission of the Florida Forest Service is to protect Florida and its people from the dangers of wildland fire and manage the forest resources through a stewardship ethic to assure they are available for future generations.*

**AUTHORITY**

The Florida Forest Service, through the Forest and Resource Protection Program, is charged with the primary duties and responsibilities mandated by Chapters 589 and 590 of the Florida Statutes. The Forest Service will:

- Promote and encourage forest fire protection, environmental education, land stewardship, tree planting and care, forest recreation, and the proper management of public lands;
- Serve as the lead management agency and provide direction for state-owned lands which are suited for forest resources and managed for multiple use;
- Continue an aggressive program to reforest lands for which the Forest Service has forest resource management responsibilities; and
- Prevent, detect, suppress, and extinguish wildfires wherever they may occur in Florida.

## **FIRE CONTROL OPERATIONS**

### ***Providing Leadership to Protect Forests, Wildlands, and the Public from the Destructive Effects of Wildfire***

A long-standing contractual agreement between Pinellas County and the Florida Forest Service is in place to provide fire protection in the forested undeveloped lands of the county. This report outlines accomplishments identified in the agreement.



Fire control operations in Pinellas County are conducted under the direction of District Manager Gary Zipprer and Forest Area Supervisor Patrick Keogh. A total of four (4) Forest Rangers and Senior Forest Rangers, who are certified wildland firefighters, are strategically located in Pinellas County. Two (2) tractor plow units and three (3) brush units are used for wildfire suppression.

Expenditures by the Forest Service for wildland fire protection services in Pinellas County totaled approximately \$336,500. Pinellas County has contributed \$4,134.62 to help offset these expenditures based upon \$.07 per acre for 59,066 acres of accessed wildlands.

During Fiscal Year 2011-2012, the Lakeland District responded to 4 fires totaling 36.0 acres in Pinellas County. The efforts of these specially trained and dedicated firefighters are often the only control point between the local fire departments and large destructive wildfires.

In a cooperative effort amongst state-wide Forest Service personnel, our agency promotes an aggressive wildfire prevention effort. Law enforcement investigations by the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement and hard work by the District's Fire Prevention Team helped reduce fire occurrence throughout the county.

### **WILDFIRES - PINELLAS COUNTY July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012**

<b>Fire Causes</b>	<b>Fires</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Campfire	0	0.0	0.0	0
Children	0	0.0	0.0	0
Debris Burns – All Types	0	0.0	0.0	0
Equipment use – All Types	0	0.0	0.0	0
Incendiary	1	25.0	2.0	5.56
Lightning	2	50.0	24.0	66.67
Miscellaneous	0	0.0	0.0	0
Railroad	0	0.0	0.0	0
Smoking	0	0.0	0.0	0
Unknown	1	25.00	10.0	27.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>36.0</b>	



## **FEDERAL EXCESS PERSONAL PROPERTY (FEPP) & FIREFIGHTER PROPERTY (FFP)**

The FEPP/FFP program is authorized under terms of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, and the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978. FEPP/FFP is Federal equipment on loan to State Foresters from the Federal Government for use in rural and wildland fire protection programs.

Currently in Pinellas County, FEPP/FFP equipment is on loan to Caladesi Island State Park, Egmont Key, Pinellas County Department of Environmental Management, City of Oldsmar Fire Rescue, and St. Petersburg Fire Rescue.



*FEPP Equipment on loan to St. Pete Fire Rescue*

## **OPEN BURNING AUTHORIZATIONS**

Through a cooperative agreement with other fire agencies, the Forest Service administers open burning rules and regulation and is responsible for issuing burn authorizations for agricultural and silvicultural. During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, the Lakeland District authorized 24 burns in Pinellas County consisting of 14 piles and 156 acres.

### **BURN AUTHORIZATIONS - PINELLAS COUNTY July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012**

Burn Type	# Fires	Acres	Piles
Agricultural--Pasture	0	0	0
Agricultural--Range management	0	0	0
Agricultural--Stubble (post harvest)	0	0	0
Agriculture--Citrus	0	0	0
Land clearing - All	0	0	0
Silvicultural—All	24	156	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>14</b>

## **PRESCRIBED BURNING AND PRE-SUPPRESSION PLOWING**

The Florida Forest Service promotes the safe, effective use of prescribed fire as a means to reduce the threat of wildfires, and manage environmentally sensitive lands. The Forest Service assists various agencies including Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Pinellas County Department of Environmental Management, and the City of St. Petersburg, in safely conducting their prescribed burns.

The Forest Service preformed approximately \$7,052.22 of in-kind services for the Pinellas County Department of Environmental Management, Brooker Creek Preserve. Prescribed burning on the Preserve and throughout the county has protected neighborhoods and homes from wildfire.



The Forest Service also constructs and maintains fire lines for both public and private landowners. These pre-suppression fire lines are used to control prescribed burns but also as a means to assist suppression efforts in the event of a wildfire.

The Forest Service maintains an aggressive wildfire mitigation program that has helped many landowners lessen the chances of devastating wildfires in high fire danger areas. Forest Service fire crews have completed wildfire mitigation burns and constructed firelines at no cost to property owners or the county.

The Florida Forest Service employs a Regional Burn Team. This team, funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, allowed the Forest Service to purchase new equipment and hire additional personnel to conduct prescribed burning at no costs to the landowner. This Regional Burn Team has assisted with both prescribed burns and mechanical fuels treatment at the Brooker Creek Preserve.

## **FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAMS**

### ***Educating the Public About the Importance of Florida's Forests and Promoting the Renewal and Protection of these Resources***

The Forest Services's fire prevention committee is dedicated to reducing the number of devastating wildfires in Pinellas County through increased public awareness. Fire prevention and educational programs featuring "Smokey Bear" were used to reach thousands of school children and adults. These programs teach the public about the importance of fire safety, the benefits of prescribed fire, and general forestry practices.

Neighborhood wildfire mitigation and educational classes, and landowner contacts are part of the Forest Service's efforts to mitigate this fire danger. During dry windy periods, making local residents aware of fire danger is critical, and it is accomplished with the help of local media.



***Smokey Bear Event***



## **FIREWISE COMMUNITIES**

Over the past fifty years increasing numbers of Floridians have moved out of our cities to build homes and businesses in outlying fringe areas known as the wildland/urban interface. Almost 1/3 of our population now lives in interface areas where structures intermingle with forests and wildland.



Residents in these areas are often unaware they may live too close to nature. They may in fact be living on the edge of a wildfire disaster.

During dry years, Florida experiences severe wildfires that destroy homes, impact people's lives, and affect the economy. The Forest Service is currently working with local leaders and neighborhoods throughout the state to create FIREWISE Communities. This program recognizes those groups that demonstrate the spirit, resolve, and willingness to take responsibility as partners in wildfire protection. The program helps to prevent and reduce losses due to wildfires and fosters awareness and public participation.



*Before and After Using FIREWISE Principles - Ridgemoore*

## **TRAINING GIVEN AND RECEIVED**

***Improving the Quality of Service through the Training and Development of our People, our Single Greatest Resource***

***This Leadership Encourages Innovation,  
Excellence and Freedom for Personal Growth***

The Forest Service operates the Florida Center for Wildfire & Forest Resources Management Training Center in Brooksville, where our forest rangers attend annual training. The Forest Service employs some of the most well-trained, and experienced firefighters in the wildland fire services in the United States. On assignments throughout the nation, Florida is recognized for their qualified personnel.



Forest Service employees not only regularly participate in training to maintain and develop their skills, they also provide valuable training to local cooperators. As many as 45 local participants attended Firefighter Training, Firefighter Type I, LCES, and Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior.

The State Fire Marshal has mandated that all fire department personnel complete basic wildland fire classes consisting of "Firefighter Training" (S-130) and "Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior" (S-190). In addition to offering these classes through a traditional classroom setting, the Forest Service developed and administers an online training program titled "Fire in the Field" to provide these courses to local fire departments.



*Instructing Firefighter Training (S-130/S190)*

### **ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Florida Forest Service also participates in various meetings and committees. Many of the Forest Service employees in Pinellas County are members of the local Forestry Safety Committee, Fire Prevention Committee, Central Florida Prescribed Fire Council, and State Interagency Incident Management Teams.

### **URBAN FORESTRY**

#### ***Encouraging Florida's Communities to Establish and Perpetuate their Urban Forests***

Urban forestry work includes assisting planning groups, school boards, parks and recreation departments, and homeowners to promote shade tree care and planting. The forester coordinates local forestry and conservation activities with the Cooperative Extension Service. They also keep the public informed of new developments in forestry through the news media and workshops.

### **TREE CITY U.S.A**



**TREE CITY USA**

This program recognizes communities that have committed adequate personnel and financial resources to develop comprehensive, long term urban forestry programs. This program began in 1976 as a Bicentennial project sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and U.S. Forest Service. The benefits of this program include a framework for action, education in urban forestry, public image, citizen pride, financial assistance, and publicity. Currently there are 118 Tree Cities in Florida, thirteen of which are in Pinellas County: Town of Belleair, Clearwater, Dunedin, Gulfport, Largo, Oldsmar, Safety Harbor, Seminole, South Pasadena, St. Petersburg, St. Pete Beach, Tarpon Springs, and Treasure Island. In addition, Tampa Electric Company (TECO) is a Tree Line USA Company. The Forest Service believes strongly in this program and is working to add more Pinellas County cities to that number.



## **URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANT**

The Forest Service manages the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program in which federal funds are made available to organizations to develop or enhance their urban and community forestry programs.

The City of Dunedin received a \$10,000.00 matching grant for an education project, and the City of Largo was awarded a \$15,000.00 grant to update their city tree inventory.

## **INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

Youth Forest Education activities included Smokey Bear presentations, "How Does a Tree Grow?" program, Arbor Day celebrations at various schools throughout the county, helping Boy Scouts earn their forestry badges, and participation at the State Fair.

The 2011 Future Farmers of America (FFA) Forestry Field Day was conducted at Hillsborough River State Park through a coordinated effort of local personnel and cooperators. This program, designed to stimulate student interest in forestry by promoting forestry instruction in the agricultural education curriculum, recognizes those who demonstrate these skills. At the field day local high-school students compete in a variety of tests including map interpretation, dendrology, orienteering, insect and disease identification, and timber measurement.

In order to better prepare for this contest students are invited to attend a weeklong FFA Forestry Summer Camp held at O'Leno State Park in High Springs, where local personnel participate as teachers and chaperones.