Agency Overview

Fulfilling the service component of a true land-grant university system, Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) is a proud member of The Texas A&M University System.

Conserve

TFS is recognized as a leader in forestry for the state and the nation. TFS works to ensure the state’s forests, trees and related natural resources are conserved and continue to provide a sustainable flow of environmental and economic benefits.

The work of TFS supports existing timber and wood industry and attracts new businesses to Texas. TFS helps property owners develop and implement long-term land management plans and keep our forests healthy by protecting our natural resources from insects, disease and devastating wildfires.

Protect

TFS is the incident management agency for the state. Incidents include wildfires, floods and hurricanes. As a primary function of the agency, TFS delivers wildfire response and protection through the Texas Wildfire Protection Plan (TWPP).

Launched as a pilot program more than a decade ago, it is now a national model for state wildfire protection. TWPP is a tested and proven emergency response model emphasizing ongoing analysis, mitigation, prevention and preparation followed by a coordinated and rapid response.

With legislative support, TFS plans to expand the plan, increasing the number of personnel and emergency response resources throughout the state.

The 2011 Wildfire Season

The worst wildfire season in Texas history was fueled by the hottest summer on record and a prolonged, historic drought. More than 31,000 wildfires burned 4 million acres of land, destroyed 2,947 Texas homes and claimed 10 lives. The record-setting season laid claim to 10 of the 14 largest documented wildfires in state history, the most homes destroyed by a single wildfire (in the Bastrop area), the largest wildfire to ever burn in East Texas (Bear Creek Fire in Cass and Marion counties), nine Texas firestorms in the Southern Plains, and the most acres burned in a single season. Under the leadership of TFS, 16,690 responders from every state in the nation created a network of protection across Texas.
TFS coordinates the Texas Big Tree Registry where 78 trees in Texas are recognized by American Forests as the largest of their kind in the nation.

The Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program, one of the largest TFS-administered programs, was created in 2001 by the 77th Legislature. Since 2002, grants for more than 1,400 fire trucks, 59,536 sets of protective gear (structural and wildland) and 44,288 training tuitions have been awarded to volunteer fire departments across the state. The needs are great as evidenced by the $131 million in unfunded requests.

Thomas G. “Tom” Boggus is the Texas state forester and director of Texas A&M Forest Service.

A veteran forester, Boggus has worked for the state agency since 1980. He has spent the early years of his career serving the nonindustrial private forest landowners of Texas by providing technical assistance and information – two of the agency’s key functions.

Boggus was appointed to his current position in February 2010 after serving 20 months in an interim role. In the years that followed, he led the agency’s response in two Texas wildfire seasons, including the worst in state history. Boggus has fostered statewide partnerships and collaborations to better protect the people of Texas. He has encouraged and supported TFS employees to develop solutions and deliver information and tools enabling Texans to take care of their land, which protects them from wildfires and other natural disasters.

Boggus leads the nationally prominent state forestry agency by example. His leadership principles include building the capacity of others, passionately believing in making a difference, creating opportunities for success, building lasting partnerships and challenging the status quo by seeking innovative ways to improve.