



## COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

The Board of County Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month in the Columbia County School Board Administrative Complex Auditorium, 372 West Duval Street, Lake City, Florida 32055. The first meeting of every month is at 9:30AM while the second meeting of every month takes place at 5:30PM. All agenda items are due in the Board's office one week prior to the meeting date.

Today's Date: 9/2/2022 Meeting Date: 9/8/2022

Name: John Crews Department: BCC Administration

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Crews", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

### 1. Nature and purpose of agenda item:

Florida Forest Service's Annual Report

### 2. Recommended Motion/Action:

Approve

### 3. Fiscal impact on current budget.

This item has no effect on the current budget.

# ANNUAL REPORT

From the

## FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE'S COOPERATIVE FORESTRY ASSISTANCE PROJECT

To The

### COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Florida  
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services  
Florida Forest Service

In accordance with the Cooperative Agreement between Columbia County Board of County Commissioners and the Florida Forest Service, we are pleased to submit this report covering the activities of the Columbia County Cooperative Forestry Assistance Program for the fiscal year 2020-21 covering the period of July 1, 2020, thru June 30, 2021.

## **Introduction**

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. The strategies employed to accomplish our mission are:

- Provide leadership to protect forests, wildlands, and the public from the destructive effects of wildfire.
- Promote sound forest management practices, which maintain the integrity of the environment and provide for Florida's future natural resource needs.
- Educate the public about the importance of Florida's forests and promote the renewal and protection of these resources.
- Manage public lands for their unique character and to provide multiple public benefits.
- Encourage Florida's communities to establish and perpetuate their urban forest.
- Encourage family forest owners to attain their forestlands management goals with guidance and technical assistance that promotes good land stewardship principles.
- Improve the quality of service through the training and development of our people - our single greatest resource. This leadership will encourage innovation, excellence and freedom for personal growth.

# **Cooperative Forestry Assistance**

The services of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance (CFA) County Forester range from making simple tree or insect identification, or diagnosing tree diseases for the homeowner, to providing sound technical management advice to forest landowners through comprehensive, multiple-use forest management plans. Also included in the responsibilities of the CFA County Forester are information and education, administration of federal cost-share programs, State Lands management, and wildfire suppression assistance. The CFA County Forester position was vacant for the 2021/2022 fiscal year. The landowners were being assisted by neighboring county foresters until the vacancy was filled. A County Forester was hired and started working at the beginning of the 2022/2023 fiscal year. The number to call for assistance is (386) 243-6236. Below is a brief overview of the accomplishments toward this project for the past fiscal year.

## **Landowner Assistance**

During the fiscal year 2021-2022, there were **548** assists to the residents of Columbia County. Of these assists, **339** were field visits to forest landowners and homeowners involving **2,467** acres of forest land. These field assists included the development of forest management plans, reforestation plans, seedling sales, insect and disease detection and suppression, assistance in marketing forest products, prescribed burning, water quality enhancement advice, and economics and taxation information.

In addition to the assistance provided directly by the CFA County Forester, Columbia County Forest Rangers assisted the CFA County Forester with assists ranging from fireline plowing and technical field assistance to fire prevention and education programs.

### ***Management Plans***

Management plans are prepared for landowner throughout the fiscal year. During the fiscal year there were **6** plans prepared on **558** acres.

## **Federal & State Assistance Programs**

***Forest Stewardship Program*** encourages forest landowners to actively manage the forests and related resources to keep these lands in a productive and healthy condition for present and future generations, and to increase the economic, environmental and social benefits of these lands. Forest Stewards are those landowners who manage their forestlands on a long-term basis by following management objectives that are multiple resource based, economically viable, conservative of natural resources and socially, environmentally and ecologically responsible. The Forest Stewardship Program addresses the improvement and maintenance of timber, wildlife, soil and water, recreation, aesthetics, as well as range resources. New enrollment in this voluntary program consisted of two landowners and **367** acres within Columbia County. This program provides a wide array of technical assistance and management advice, mostly through a comprehensive Forest Stewardship Management Plan available to landowners at no cost and no obligation. There are currently **53** Columbia County landowners enrolled in the program for a total of **8,467** acres.

### ***American Tree Farm System***

The Florida Forest Service (FFS) has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with the Florida Tree Farm Program. If a landowner is in the Tree Farm System, their forest will be considered a sustainable certified forest. The wood from these forests is accepted and recognized by SFI and PEFC chain of custody. These forests are inspected every 5 years to ensure they are following the guidelines. If the Tree Farm does not meet the standards of certification they will be decertified. The foresters must be trained every 5 years as inspectors to conduct inspections. These Tree Farms will be part of the Stewardship Program and there are **28** certified Tree Farms consisting of **4,902** acres in Columbia County

***Southern Pine Beetle Assistance and Prevention Program (SPB)*** is offered to eligible private non-industrial forest (PNIF) landowners by the Florida Forest Service through temporary grants from the USDA Forest Service. The goal of the program is to minimize southern pine beetle damage in Florida by helping forest landowners reduce the susceptibility of their pine stand to this destructive insect pest. Forest management practices, such as thinning over-stocked stands, reducing understory competition through mechanical treatments, herbicide treatments, or prescribed burning, and the planting of less-susceptible pine species can improve the health of pine stands and decrease their likelihood of developing southern pine beetle infestations. One application period was held for this program this fiscal year. A total of **2** landowners were assisted in applying for the above listed practices encompassing **27** acres at a requested payment of **\$2,245**.

***Carbon Sequestration Program***

This program was offered through the State of Florida. It offered financial assistance with mechanical and chemical site preparation, seedlings and planting.

There were **4** landowners that applied for this program for a request of **\$23,562**.

***Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)*** is offered to eligible PNIF landowners through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and provides technical advice and cost-sharing assistance to farmers and ranchers to manage their soil, water, and forest resources. It is primarily focused on wildlife management, with an increasing interest in pine tree planting, timber stand improvement and exotic invasive plant species control. The CFA Forester assisted **13** landowners with a total of **560** acres enrolled in EQIP. More information can be found at

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/>.

***Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)*** is a voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead is used for conservation benefits. Land must be cropland that is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity four of the previous six crop years from 2014 to 2020. The CRP participants will need to establish long-term, resource-conserving vegetative species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as "covers") to control soil erosion, improve the water quality and enhance wildlife habitat. The participant will need to restore the groundcover to qualify to plant trees. In return, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Continuous sign-up contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration. The participant will need to work with the FSA, (NRCS) and FFS County Forester to establish a management plan for the acreage being enrolled into the CRP for the duration of the contract. The management plan will need to address the current condition of the acreage being enrolled into CRP and what will need to be completed to establish and/or restore the native vegetation and longleaf pine. There were no applications received for this program this year. More information can be found at

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/>.

***Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP)*** is offered to eligible PNIF landowners through the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The EFRP helps PNIF landowners restore forest health to forests damaged by natural disasters. There were no applications received for this program this year. More information can be found at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/emergency-forest-restoration/index..>

### **Forest Health**

The CFA County Forester assists forest landowners and homeowners in diagnosing and treating insect and disease problems involving pine and hardwood trees, as well as non-native invasive species. During this fiscal year 46 hours was spent aiding 11 landowners on 36 acres in Columbia County to diagnose and treat forest health problems.

There was minimal Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) activity in the spring and summer. When environmental conditions are favorable, SPB populations can increase rapidly and exponentially, resulting in the destruction of many acres of pine timber. Both private non-industrial forest (PNIF) landowners and industrial forest landowners were affected. The County is surveyed every year through aerial patrols and in the Spring by putting out beetle traps. These are used to spot and predict the potential beetle activity by county. The 2021 report can be found at [2022 SPB Monitoring Report](#).

The occurrence of the less aggressive species of pine bark beetles, such as the Ips Engraver Beetles and Black Turpentine Beetles, have been reported and contained with little loss to forest resources.

Laurel wilt is a destructive disease of redbay and other trees in the laurel family (Lauraceae) that has been active in Columbia County since 2008. The disease is caused by a fungus that infects the sapwood of host trees, restricting the flow of water and causing the leaves to wilt. The fungus is carried into trees by a non-native insect, the redbay ambrosia beetle that was first detected in the United States near Savannah, Georgia, in 2002. Laurel wilt has caused high levels of redbay mortality in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida and has affected several other hosts including sassafras and avocado. Laurel wilt can spread to new areas through the movement of host material infested with the Redbay Ambrosia Beetle. Avoid the movement of firewood, tree trimmings, or mulch from redbays and other laurel family hosts out of areas or out of counties in which laurel wilt is known to occur. More information can be found at [Redbay Ambrosia Beetle and Laurel Wilt / Forest Insects / Forest Health / Our Forests / Forest & Wildfire / Home - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services \(fdacs.gov\)](#).

A forest pest in the category of non-native invasive plants is present in Columbia County in several locations. Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrical* L.) is a non-native grass which is established in Florida and several other southeastern states. In addition to being regulated as a state and federal noxious weed, cogongrass is a pest plant in 73 countries, and has

been recognized as one of the “Top 10 Worst Weeds in the World.” Cogongrass infestations negatively affect tree regeneration, growth and survival, as well as wildlife habitat, native plant diversity, livestock forage quality and property values. They also increase the risk of wildfires and alter fire behavior.

Cogongrass tolerates a wide range of site conditions, and can quickly colonize both disturbed and undisturbed areas, both by seed and by the growth of its thick rhizome. New infestations are often started by unintentional spread of seed or pieces of rhizome in contaminated fill dirt, or on equipment used for mowing, logging, grading, or site preparation. Once established, cogongrass spreads rapidly by the growth of its rhizomes, forming thick, often circular patches in which few other plants can establish.

Steps should be taken to avoid spreading cogongrass to new areas, by using only non-contaminated fill dirt, careful sanitation of equipment that has been operating in infested areas and avoiding soil disturbance that runs through infested areas and into un-infested areas. Once the plant has established, it can be eradicated by the thorough and repeated use of herbicide treatments. More information can be found at [Invasive Non-Native Plants / Forest Health / Our Forests / Forest & Wildfire / Home - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services \(fdacs.gov\)](#).

### **Urban Forestry**

**Tree City USA** - The City of Lake City was recertified as a Tree City USA Community. The City of Lake City is encouraged to complete the application for re-certification as a Tree City USA Community for the coming year. This program recognizes cities for their efforts in maintaining a healthy urban forest. The CFA County Forester is a resource to the citizens and local governments providing urban forestry advice and assistance when needed.

To qualify for Tree City USA, a town or city must meet four standards established by The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters. These standards were established to ensure that every qualifying community would have a viable tree management plan and program. It is important to note that they were also designed so that no community would be excluded because of size.

1. A Tree Board or Department (can be volunteers)
2. A Tree Care Ordinance
3. A Community Forestry Program with an Annual Budget of at Least \$2 Per Capita
4. An Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation

Florida's **Arbor Day** (the third Friday in January).

The **Champion Tree Program** was created by the American Forests organization in 1940, to recognize the largest known tree of each species in the United States. American Forests publishes their [National Register of Big Trees](#) every two years. The 2019 edition of the

Register includes 105 Florida tree species, many of which are only found in the tropical region of the state. Florida now has the most national champions of any state.

The Florida Forest Service keeps a state register, The Florida Champion Tree Register, to recognize the largest tree of each species within the state. Columbia County is the home of the National Champion Devilwood (*Osmanthus americana*); the Emeritus Florida Co-Champion Winged Elm (*Ulmus alata*) died (and was removed from the registry); Florida Champion Swamp Chestnut Oak tree (*Quercus michauxii*); Florida Co-Champion Pecan (*Carya illinoensis*); and Florida Champion Common Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*).

### **Forest Information and Education**

The forester will assist with forestry related subjects to local schools; assist with the Future Farmers of America (FFA) Forestry Training Camp at O'leno State Park; assist with the FFA District 3 Forestry Field Day; assist with the Annual FFA State Forestry Field Day Championship; and assist with the Suwannee Regional Envirothon. Forest information activities included several informational articles submitted to the Lake City Reporter newspaper to keep Columbia County residents informed of forestry related topics.

### **Training & Development**

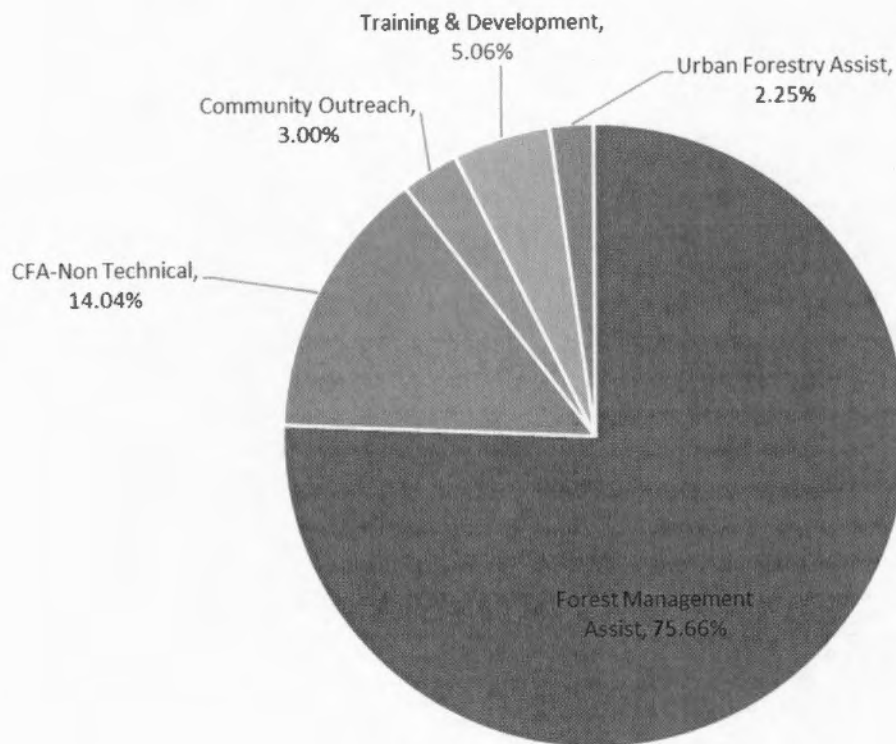
This year the CFA County Forester received 10 hours of training and continuing education in forest management and 4 hours in incident management (an incident can be wildfire suppression, hurricane recovery, etc.), prescribed burning and wildfire suppression subjects.

### **Forest Protection**

The County Foresters are encouraged to become Wildland Fire Fighter Certified. When certified they can be deployed on wildland fire incidents engaged in wildland fire suppression and other emergency incidents.

### **Summary of Activity**

### Percent Time Allocated to CFA Activities, Columbia County



Should you need clarification, or have questions, please do not hesitate to contact this office. We will be available to appear before the Board to provide answers to questions that they may have.

Respectfully submitted,

Florida Forest Service

FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE  
SUWANNEE FORESTRY CENTER  
(386) 243-6260  
(386) 243-6244 FAX



137 S.E. FORESTRY CIRCLE  
LAKE CITY, FLORIDA 32025

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES  
COMMISSIONER NICOLE "NIKKI" FRIED

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August 26, 2022

The Board of County Commissioners

P.O. Box 1965

Lake City, FL 32056

Dear Board of Commissioners,

Pursuant to the agreement between Columbia County and the Florida Forest Service, the following Fire Control Report for the fiscal year 2021-2022 is hereby submitted.

We appreciate the cooperation that the Florida Forest Service has received from the County Commission and look forward to continuing this cooperation in the future.

Sincerely,

Ryan Rehberg  
Forest Area Supervisor  
Suwannee Forestry Center

Natalie Debehnke  
Senior Forester  
Suwannee Forestry Center

**Forest Protection Program Annual Report  
for  
Columbia County Board of County Commissioners**

**Prepared By**

**Ryan Rehberg**

**Forest Area Supervisor**

**July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022**



2021-2022

## Annual Report

### FOREST PROTECTION

Florida Forest Service personnel and equipment responded to 247 incidents as recorded in the Fire Management Information System. These incidents consist of wildfires, landowner assistance, state land management, compliance checks, smoke complaints, notice of violations and prevention programs. The following is a breakdown of some of the incidents that our personnel assigned to Columbia County responded to.

- 36 Wild Fires — Florida Forest Service personnel responded to 36 wild fires in Columbia County which burned 99.78 acres. Debris fires accounted for 45% of these fires as where lightning at 2% were the second leading cause of fires in Columbia County.
- 12 NOV's — Florida Forest Service personnel assigned to Columbia County issued Notice of Violations to those individuals who were not adhering to the burn laws of the State of Florida.
- 18 Smoke Complaints — Our personnel responded to 18 smoke complaints from individuals that were impacted by smoke. When a smoke complaint is received personnel of the Florida Forest Service are dispatched to investigate and mitigate any smoke issues that arise.
- 24 On Site Inspections - On site inspections (OSI's) are performed by Florida Forest Service personnel for all first-time burners and for all landowners who are intending to burn in a smoke sensitive area. This gives us an opportunity to educate first time burners regarding Florida Laws that pertain to open burning. OSI's also give us an opportunity to set wind restrictions or alternate methods of removing debris in cases where smoke generated by the burn could impact major roads, hospitals, schools, airports and retirement communities.

## COLUMBIA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Florida Forest Service cannot elaborate enough in regard to the dedication and professionalism displayed by the Paid and Volunteer Fire Departments of Columbia County. These men and women have been instrumental in the suppression of wildfires in Columbia County. I have attached the equipment schedule which indicates the equipment that is currently on lease through the Cooperative Equipment Lease between the Columbia County Board of Commissioners and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service. We would like to thank the Board of County Commissioners for their support of the Columbia County Fire Department.

## FIRE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

The Florida Forest Service has participated in 6 Fire Prevention Programs which included 2400 people. Our Fire Prevention Program gives us an opportunity to present Fire Prevention presentations to a wide variety of recipients. Some which included schools, daycares, safety expos, career days, parades, fall festival and civic groups. The Lake City Community College and the Florida Forest Service hosted the annual FFA regional competition. The Florida Forest Service also hosted the annual FFA camp held at the Oleno State Park. This opportunity allows students from all over the state to participate in a learning experience within a competitive environment that will provide them with an education in sound forest management practices.

## LANDOWNER ASSISTANCE

The Landowner Assistance Program provides landowners of Columbia County an avenue in which pre-suppression fire lines can be established to protect their homes, property and resources. In addition, we assist landowners who desire to conduct prescribed burns on their property and feel they do not possess the training, experience or equipment to confidently conduct a burn. We also can provide contract burns in the event a landowner is not able to burn or does not have the necessary equipment to burn. There are charges associated with these services. This year we were able to assist 25 landowners where pre-suppression fire lines were established around 2,000 acres. Our personnel also assisted landowners in conducting prescribed burns on 783 acres. There was a total of 2,783 acres impacted by the landowner assistance program.

## BURNING AUTHORIZATIONS

A total of 7,935 burning authorizations were issued in the Suwannee Forestry Center for agricultural, silvicultural and land clearing operations. These authorizations represent a total of 101,536 acres and 20,254 piles that were legally burned. The Suwannee Forestry Center is made up of six counties consisting of Columbia, Hamilton, Bradford, Suwannee, Union, and Baker counties. Columbia County had 2,029 authorizations for a total of 34,276 acres and 4,384 pile burns.

**EXHIBIT-A EQUIPMENT SCHEDULE**  
**Cooperative Equipment Lease Between**  
**The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**  
**Florida Forest Service and**

**Columbia County Board of Commissioners**

LOCATION	EQUIPMENT SOURCE	LEASED DATE	DESCRIPTION	STATE	SERIAL #
EMS BAKER'S	FEPP	2/11/2002	MOBILE TOWER	502806	097255-2
ICHETUCKNEE/S COLUMBIA	STATE	6/28/2006	300 GALLON SKID UNIT	078650	
COLUMBIA COUNTY YARD		8/28/2012	CAT 613C TRACTOR SCRAPER	110276	9F00139
COLUMBIA COUNTY YARD	FFP	2/4/2015	GORMAN-RUPP PUMP	096298	858795
COLUMBIA CO FD		9/23/2016	1995 LIBBY GENERATOR 60KW	098477	RZJ02230
Florida Forest Service		1/9/2017	CONEX WATERPROOF CONTAINER	095082	FFS0056406
Florida Forest Service	FFP	1/9/2017	CONEX WATERPROOF CONTAINER	095083	FFS3010623
Florida Forest Service		1/9/2017	CONEX WATERPROOF CONTAINER	095084	FFS0020511
Florida Forest Service		1/9/2017	CONEX WATERPROOF CONTAINER	095085	FFS0004682
COLUMBIA CO FD STA 48 (ROAD DEPT)	FFP	1/9/2017	CONEX WATERPROOF CONTAINER	095086	FFS3008591
COLUMBIA CO FD STA 48 (SHERIFF DEPT)		1/9/2017	CONEX WATERPROOF CONTAINER	095087	FFS0042402
COLUMBIA CO FD STA 48 (LANDFILL)		1/9/2017	1985 CATERPILLAR 130G MIL GRADER	G0001511	7GB01561
COLUMBIA CO STA 48 (VA DOMICILIARY)	FFP	12/8/2017	2010 13 GENERATOR MD MEP- 806B	099269	
COLUMBIA CO FD STA 48	FFP	12/8/2017	1991 JOHN DEERE 544E LOADER/FORKLIFT	L01740	DW544ER532650

COLUMBIA CO FD STA 48		5/31/2018	LIBBY CORP PUMP MIL-P52144	099281	LC0939
COLUMBIA CO FD STA 40		8/11/2022	Trailer	31938	16mpf0714d0331381
COLUMBIA CO FD STA 40		8/11/22	Generator	0104645	USA003711

This Equipment Schedule is considered to be part of the lease dated 1/30/2015 and referred to in the heading. Any changes to this Equipment Schedule must be by written request from the Lessor, with a copy attached to this document, and the approval of the Director indicated below.

# Fire Weather Outlook

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## August — December 2022

Updated August 26, 2022

### Long-Range Weather Outlook

For the next 60 days it is predicted to have humid and hot temperatures with a higher chance of scatter thunderstorms. We are currently experiencing La-Nina conditions to November but will be weaking to a more of a neutral condition. The coming winter is going to be milder and drier than normal with the coldest days being in January and early February. The spring outlook is going to be near normal temperatures with above normal rain.

The hurricane season is predicted to be an active one, with the season lasting into November. They are predicting 14 to 20 named storms this season which 3 to 5 of them is going to be major.

### Summary and Fire Potential Outlook

As we go into summer the western fire season is going to pick up as they are experiencing extreme drought. In the Southeast the fire danger will be low through September but is expected to pick up in October and November. The arrival of fall will be drier than normal but will pick up in the spring. The wildfire threat will increase in the spring due to hotter temperatures and lower humidity, but hopefully with above average forecast for rain the fire threat will stay low.

# 2022 / 2023 County Operating Plan

## Between:

### Florida Forest Service And Columbia County

#### Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to establish operating procedures for State and County fire fighting personnel to follow while working on incidents in Columbia County. A County Operating Plan is established in each County of the State of Florida.

#### Incident Response

The Florida Forest Service personnel and equipment will respond to all brush fires. The Florida Forest Service personnel are not equipped with the proper gear to directly suppress structure fires but will respond to structure fires to support the Columbia County Fire Department upon request. When the Columbia County Combined Emergency Communications Center dispatches brush fires to the Columbia County Fire Departments the Combined Emergency Communications Center will also contact the Florida Forest Service so that Florida Forest Service personnel and equipment can respond to the incident. When the Florida Forest Service is the recipient of calls reporting brush fires they will in turn notify the Combined Emergency Communications Center.

Personnel and Equipment			
Crew Number	Personnel Assigned	Type Equipment	Location
SU-6	Rehberg	Pickup 4x4	Lake City Headquarters
SU-62	Knight / Coody	Transport	Lake City Headquarters
SU-63	Knight / Coody	Tractor / Plow	Lake City Headquarters
SU-64	Ellis / Benton/Delrio	Transport	Lake City Headquarters
SU-65	Ellis / Benton/Delrio	Tractor / Plow	Lake City Headquarters
SU-66	Sanderson/ Palmer	Transport	Oleno Forestry Site
SU-67	Sanderson / Palmer	Tractor / Plow	Oleno Forestry Site
SU-68	Ross/Davis	Transport	Bullock Forestry Site
SU-69	Ross/Davis	Tractor / Plow	Bullock Forestry Site
SU-106	Rangers	300 gal. Engine	Lake City Headquarters
	Rangers	750 gal. Engine	Lake City Headquarters
SU-126	Rangers	750 gal. 2 1/2 Ton	Lake City Headquarters
SU-136	Rangers	2,000 gal. Tender	Lake City Headquarters
SU-172	Rangers	Road Tractor	Lake City Headquarters

SU-173	Rangers	JD 850 Dozer	Lake City Headquarters
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## Incident Reports

Situations requiring the completion of a Fire Report are listed below. These reports are available to our cooperators as well as the general public.

1. Any wildfire on which an FFS crew takes suppression action.
2. Any wildfire to which an FFS crew is dispatched and arrives on scene, but which is entirely suppressed by a landowner crew or cooperating agency except fires totally on federal land.
3. Any forest area fire or non-forest area fire of a significant size which burned itself out or was rained out. If there is any question as to whether a non-forest area fire is significant, the local supervisors will decide. Example: A tenth-acre of burned grass on a highway right-of-way started by a cigarette and burned out is not significant. If it was started by an incendiary device, it is significant.
4. The Forest Area Supervisor will interpret when and if a fire report is required. If the Fire Management Information System (FMIS) has started the fire report process and it is determined that a fire report is not needed, the incident type must be changed from wildfire to "other" and notes made to the effect as to why the incident does not qualify as a fire.

NOTE: Rural and municipal fire departments suppress many small, non-forest area fires to which FFS crews are not dispatched. No attempt will be made to prepare fire reports on these, or on unreported object fires on which an FFS crew did not take suppression action.

## Fire Cause Investigation

Firefighters should approach their jobs with the intent that every person-caused fire should be investigated, in so far as practical. Caution should be exercised by all firefighters to not destroy or obliterate any evidence at the scene of the fire. After the fire is suppressed, firefighters should make a thorough investigation to locate the origin area of the fire and collect any evidence associated with the cause of the fire. Evidence associated with the cause of a brush fire will be turned over to the Office of Agriculture Law Enforcement Investigators for processing.

## Hazardous Material Fires

The Florida Forest Service personnel are not equipped with the proper gear to directly suppress hazardous fires. However, the Florida Forest Service will provide support with their personnel and equipment in whatever capacity possible with due consideration for the safety of personnel.

## Mutual Aid

The Florida Forest Service personnel and equipment will respond to any mutual aid request as needed as long as the resources are not already engaged in an emergency response activity.

## Aviation Operations

The mission of the Aviation Program is to provide the needed aviation support, consistent with principles of safe and efficient aircraft operations, to the Florida Forest Service (FFS) to achieve its forest protection and resource management objectives.

The principal use of FFS airplanes is for aerial surveillance, which includes sorting smokes, detecting fires, and providing direct assistance to fire suppression efforts on the ground. We currently have a fixed wing assigned to the Suwannee Forestry Center and it is located at the Lake City Airport.

FFS helicopters are located throughout the State to provide initial and reinforced aerial attack on wildfires. They deliver water and foam using a bucket and foam injection system. They can also provide a platform for fire personnel to conduct aerial reconnaissance of an incident when an airplane is not available. Currently the helicopter which is assigned to the Columbia County Area is based out of Ocala.

## Burning Authorizations

Since unrestricted outdoor burning could contribute to wildfires and air pollution, the State has set up guidelines for open burning. Regulation of open burning connected with rural land clearing, agricultural or forestry operations is assigned to the Florida Forest Service. The Forest Service rules and procedures for the regulation of open burning are intended to allow maximum burning opportunities, while protecting the forest resource, preventing air pollution and protecting the health and safety of Florida's residents and visitors. Rules of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service, Chapter 51-2, Open Burning, lists the rules governing agricultural and silvicultural fires and rural land clearing.

## Prevention

Florida Forest Service personnel conduct planned fire prevention activities such as presentations, school programs, personal contacts and appearances with "Smokey Bear" at approved functions. The Florida Forest Service is willing to support fire prevention activities of the Columbia County Fire Departments.

## Communications

The Florida Forest Service communications system is established, operated and maintained in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), State of Florida (Department of Management Services and Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services). Only the licensee may authorize another agency or cooperator to use approved frequencies. To satisfy local intercommunications requirements Field Units may coordinate directly with local fire departments to gain written authorization to program those agencies' frequencies in Florida Forest Service mobile and portable radios. The chart below displays the radio frequencies in which the Florida Forest Service and the Columbia County Fire Department have agreed to share. Both parties realize that their personnel will adhere to the rules and regulations of the FCC when communicating on these frequencies.

### Florida Forest Service

Channel	Function	Receive	RX Tone	Transmit	TX Tone
60	Columbia S. Columbia	159.3300	88.5	151.3475	88.5
61	Hamilton Central & N. Columbia	159.3300	88.5	151.3475	127.3
62	Baker South	159.3300	88.5	151.3475	94.8
63	Baker North	159.3300	88.5	151.3475	136.5
190	Tactical	151.2725	CS	151.2725	CS
191	Tactical Columbia Tac	151.2875	CS	151.2875	CS
192	Tactical	159.2475	CS	159.2475	CS
193	Tactical	159.2925	CS	159.2925	CS
194	Tactical	159.3075	CS	159.3075	CS
195	Tactical	159.3675	CS	159.3675	CS
196	Tactical	159.3375	CS	159.3375	CS
197	Tactical	159.3825	CS	159.3825	CS
198	Tactical	159.3975	CS	159.3975	CS
199	Tactical	159.4425	CS	159.4425	CS
200	Tactical	159.4125	CS	159.4125	CS
201	VFIRE 22 Red	154.2650	CS	154.2650	CS
202	VFIRE 21 White	154.2800	CS	154.2800	CS
203	VFIRE 23 Blue	154.2950	CS	154.2950	CS
204	Air-To-Ground	168.6750	CS	168.6750	CS
223	VFIRE 26 Alt. Columbia Tac	154.3025	CS	154.3025	156.7

### Columbia County Fire

Channel	Function	Receive	RX Tone	Transmit	TX Tone
260	CCFD County Wide Page	155.20500	D155	150.77500	D155
261	CCFD Fire 1	154.00250	D205	155.99250	D205
262	CCFD Yellow Tac.	151.26500	D503	151.26500	D503
263	CCFD Fire 3	156.16500	146.2	150.79000	146.2
264	CCFD Fire 2	155.58750	D245	159.42750	D245
265	CCFD Green Tac	156.10500	D306	156.10500	D306
266	CCFD Fire 5	155.31000	D306	153.78500	D306
267	CCFD Fire 4	159.21750	D343	154.79250	D343
268	CCFD Orange Tac	155.43000	D413	155.43000	D413
269	Lake Ci Fire	158.88750	D631	155.81250	D631
270	Lake Ci Fire Tac	155.29500	146.2	155.29500	146.2

## Existing Agreements

The Florida Cooperative Agreement between the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service and Columbia County establishes 339,957 acres of protected land in Columbia County. The 2012-2013 Assessment as per the Cooperative Agreement was for \$0.07 per acre for a total of \$24,100.23.

Vehicles for Rural Community Fire Protection Program Use — Requests may be made as the need arises by "Letter of Request" from the department/agency and a memorandum from the field unit to the FP Bureau. To be valid, the "Letter of Request" must be dated by the requesting agency. The FP Bureau will maintain the needs list on a first in, first out basis.

Cooperating fire departments may obtain property from the warehouse only with the specific written permission of a Field Unit Manager, Operations Administrator, Forest Area Supervisor or the FP FEPP/FFP manager. The permission must specify the number and description of item(s) the fire department is authorized to pick up. The cooperator must also make an appointment to provide for good customer service. For issued inventory items an ICR will be initiated by Central Shop, Central Shop will keep a copy, and fax a copy to FP Bureau and the field unit property manager. The field unit property manager will complete the ICR and the Add/delete form and send to FP Bureau. For issued non-inventory items, the Central Shop will fill out a copy of the DACS-11419, send a copy with the driver and fax a copy to FP Bureau and field unit.

RCFP loaned equipment will be adequately maintained, insured and will be kept in a state of constant fire readiness as stated in the terms of the lease agreement.

## Plan Approval

RV  TITLE Forest Area Supervisor DATE 8/29/22

RV  TITLE Fire Chief DATE 8/29/22