

Information Specific to the March 2025 Wildfire Outbreak.

February 26th - Forestry Services began notifying the public, fire departments, and emergency management officials of impending fire weather concerns through its Fire Situation Report.

Forestry Services notified its Incident Management Team to be ready for mobilization as early as March 2nd.

February 27th - Wildfire activity increased significantly, especially in eastern Oklahoma.

NOTE: Forestry Services responded to 34 wildfires that burned approximately 3,442 acres. Three of these fires reached "large fire" status (100+ acres burning in timber or 300+ acres burning in grass).

March 2nd – A small number of Forestry Services' Incident Management Team personnel were activated to begin the management of the Forestry Services' wildfire suppression groups to be pre-positioned in central and western Oklahoma.

NOTE: Forestry Services responds to 46 wildfires that burned approximately 6,614 acres. Twelve fires reached large fire status.

March 6th – A Forestry Services wildfire suppression group comprised of wildland firefighters equipped with bulldozers and brush trucks was mobilized to pre-position in Weatherford to be available to support wildfire initial attack and extended attack in far western Oklahoma.

Forestry Services personnel were concerned with forecasted extreme fire weather the week of March 10th through March 14th triggered additional actions to evaluate resource needs and pre-positioning locations. Forestry Services contacted the USDA Forest Service to request the pre-positioning of aircraft in Oklahoma to provide aerial suppression resources.

March 7th – The Forestry Services Incident Management Team was notified to be prepared for mobilization due to the increasing wildfire potential.

OEM Director Annie Vest was notified of Forestry Services' preparedness actions being taken in response to the potential for extreme fire weather on March 14th.

Additional Fireline overhead resources were ordered through the Arkansas-Oklahoma Interagency Coordination Center.

March 10th – Forestry Services began a focused public information campaign to alert the public of the potential for extreme fire weather on Friday, March 14th. The public information campaign included news releases through broadcast, print, and social media.

NOTE: Forestry Services responded to 8 wildfires that burned approximately 962 acres. One fire reached large fire status. One large fire from the previous day was still active.

March 11th – Forestry Services pre-positioned two additional wildfire suppression groups for response to fires in central and western Oklahoma. The groups were placed in Woodward and Guthrie. Also, two Complex Incident Management-qualified wildfire Operations Section Chiefs were brought into Oklahoma to assist with on-scene wildfire response. An Air Operations Branch Director arrived to provide administrative oversight for all suppression aircraft dispatches and flight-following of suppression aircraft assigned to Oklahoma wildfires.

The USDA Forest Service notified Oklahoma Forestry Services that two CL-415 Super Scooper aircraft and one air tactical group supervisor would be pre-positioned at Clinton-Sherman Airport in Burns Flat. These aircraft were to arrive on March 11th and be available for duty on March 12th.

Additional fire suppression aviation assets are available for Oklahoma to use from nearby Air Tanker Bases in Texas.

NOTE: Forestry Services responded to 18 wildfires that burned approximately 1,163 acres. Seven fires reached large fire status. One large fire from the previous day was still active.

March 12th – A request was sent to the Chair of the South Central Forest Fire Compact to open the Compact. This Compact allowed for Forestry Services to order additional resources from other southern state forestry agencies. Orders were placed for additional firefighting dozers, brush trucks, and personnel to augment Forestry Services response capacity. Arkansas Forestry Commission, Texas A&M Forest Service, Louisiana Forestry Commission, Kentucky Forest Service, and the Florida Forest Service filled the orders.

Secretary of Agriculture Blayne Arthur and OEM Director Annie Vest were notified that Forestry Services had requested the opening of the South Central Forest Fire Compact to allow the ordering of additional firefighting resources from the Southern States.

NOTE: Forestry Services responded to 15 wildfires that burned approximately 1,676 acres. Four fires reached large fire status. Eight large fires from the previous day remained active.

March 13th – Arkansas Forestry Commission firefighting personnel and heavy equipment arrived in Oklahoma. They were then deployed to Weatherford to join up with Oklahoma Forestry Services firefighters to create a third wildfire suppression group.

NOTE: Forestry Services responded to 12 wildfires that burned approximately 813 acres. One fire reached large fire status. Twelve large fires from previous days remained active.

March 14th – Beginning of the extreme fire weather event. High winds ground all fire suppression aircraft throughout the day. All available Forestry Services firefighting resources were assigned to fires in multiple locations across the state. Resource requests from the field to Forestry Services and Oklahoma Emergency Management were unable to be filled because every state and local firefighting resources were engaged in ongoing wildfires.

NOTE: Forestry Services alone responded to 36 fires that burned approximately 32,226 acres. Ten fires reached large fire status. Twelve large fires from previous days remained active.

During this event 158 Hot Spot Notifications were received from the National Weather Service. The Forestry Services Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Manager was embedded at the National Weather Service Forecast Office in Norman. The GIS Manager used Wildfire Analyst, a fire modeling software to project fire spread. This information was critical for NWS Meteorologists to issue 31 targeted Fire Warnings. The Fire Warnings were then used by Emergency Management to issue evacuation orders if requested by local officials. Using this process Fire Warnings were issued in under ten minutes enabling the public ample time to evacuate if warranted.

March 15th – Additional Forest Fire Compact firefighting resources from Louisiana, Texas, and Florida arrive and are assigned to suppression groups. Five suppression groups are available for dispatch. All OFS and Compact firefighting resources were deployed to new and ongoing wildfires.