



LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2019



Florida's annual legislative session began on Tuesday, March 5, with all the traditional ceremonial fanfare.



An address by Governor Ron DeSantis to the combined House and Senate rallied the legislators to be bold: "... because while perfection is not attainable, if we aim high we can achieve excellence," he said.



Boldness could be required: the governor's proposed \$91.3 billion budget would be the largest in state history.



The following day, the Association held its annual Forestry Day at the Capitol events. We hosted

the Wedgworth Leadership Institute reception with special guest Commissioner Nikki Fried on Wednesday afternoon and participated in the Taste of Florida legislative event at the capitol that evening. On Thursday, a Board of Directors meeting was followed by member visits to their local delegations as well as a meeting with the Assistant Agriculture Commissioner Matthew Van Name. The need for hurricane relief and recovery efforts was a consistent theme throughout all the meetings. Board members John Alter and David Harrelson also represented the forest industry at a press conference announcing new proposed legislation on that issue.

On Friday, April 5, six legislators from around the state joined Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried on a tour of areas impacted by Hurricane Michael.

The tour was designed to give the legislators a firsthand look at the damage created by the storm and the work that still needs to be done. Among other things, funding is needed for debris management to help lessen the danger of wildfires and invasives.

Association Executive Vice President Alan Shelby applauded the Commissioner and the Florida Forest Service for their continuing efforts for hurricane relief.

"This tour highlighted the serious needs of this area that remain almost six months after Hurricane Michael," Shelby said, "as well as the potentially enormous consequences if those needs are not met. Legislative action is critically needed on both the state and federal levels."

Many thanks also go to Senators Bill Montford and Victor Torres and Representatives Loranne Ausley, Rick Roth, Josie Tomkow and Elizabeth Fetterhoff for participating in the tour and for their support.

As of this printing, the House and Senate have passed their individual budgets; conferencing is expected to begin after Easter. Significant funding for hurricane relief and recovery of the impacted area's forestlands is lacking, but efforts are ongoing.

Disaster relief has been stalled in Congress as well. The United States House of Representatives passed a disaster relief package in January, but legislation in the Senate seems to be ensnared in political quicksand.

Senators Rick Scott and Marco Rubio were part of a bipartisan group that introduced a major disaster relief package with the backing of President Donald Trump. The package appropriates approximately \$13.6 billion in overall relief efforts to all those affected by disasters, including emergency funds for critical timber needs. Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard Shelby (R-AL) voiced hopes that talks would continue over the Easter break.

Senator Scott has also called on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to do more to help the timber industry after Hurricane Michael. He has requested that USDA send an incident management team to deploy to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) field office in Marianna to help process the current applications for affected timber landowners, noting that they need timely information regarding their status in the numerous USDA programs currently available, and the resources they need to remove debris and begin the process of reforestation.

Shelby and State Forester Jim Karels, and several other members of the Association participated in a roundtable discussion on federal relief efforts with Senator Scott.

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS



On Thursday, March 21, almost 50 people gathered at the Nutrien-White Springs conference center for the Association's first membership meeting of the year.



Association Executive Vice President Alan Shelby briefed the group on legislative issues, including hurricane relief and recovery efforts on the state and federal levels.



Shelby also officially presented Greg Chapman of Greg's Dragline & Bulldozer, Inc., with his 2018 Silvicultural Contractor

of the Year Award. (Greg was unable to attend the awards breakfast at the 2018 Annual Meeting.)

The following Monday, 80 people gathered at the Coastal Plywood Company's beautiful Magnolia Lodge for the Association's second and final regional membership meeting of the year.

Shelby again briefed the group on legislative issues, including hurricane relief and recovery efforts on the state and federal levels. Representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) were also on hand to help affected members with any questions or issues.

Many thanks to Nutrien-White Springs and Coastal Plywood Company for hosting and to ArborGen Inc. and to Farm Credit of Florida and Farm Credit of Northwest Florida for sponsoring the membership meetings and for the delicious lunches!

As always, great fellowship and good times abounded!

To see more pictures from Association events, check out our Flickr account at www.Flickr.com/Photos/FloridaForestryAssociation

WORKING FOREST PARTNERS



Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried was the special guest at the Working Forest Partners (WFP) meeting in February. WFP is a diverse statewide coalition with representatives from all aspects of the forest industry, environmental advocacy groups and governmental agencies who share an appreciation of Florida's working forests and their significant benefits.

The group, chaired by Association Vice President Carlton Jones and Audubon Florida Executive Director Julie Wraithmell, met to discuss legislative issues and find areas of common interest and support.

Specific issues and actions were delved into as Association Executive Vice President Alan Shelby shared possible priorities for the group: hurricane relief and recovery, Rural and Family Lands, Florida Forever and others. The discussion was healthy and engaged, leading to better understanding among the various groups represented.

"Even greater than the individual issues discussed is the discussion itself," said Shelby. "I believe that WFP can and will play a tremendous role in keeping working forests working in Florida through continued communication on focused areas of mutual concern and agreement."

2019 ANNUAL MEETING

August 20-22, 2019

Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort

Miramar Beach, FL



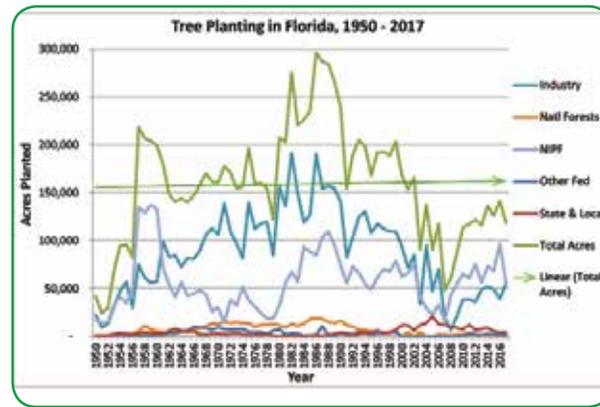
Join your friends and business associates at the beautiful Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort for three days of networking, learning and celebrating another year in the amazing forest industry! The resort offers gorgeous gulf views, fabulous food, shopping within easy walking distance, and a host of other offerings that are sure to make this year's event one of the best ever!

The state's largest forestry trade show is held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting, featuring exhibits by the industry's cutting edge equipment and service providers. Don't be left behind – schedule time to meet with all the representatives to find out the latest and greatest developments for forestry professionals in today's marketplace!

As always, our Silent Auction will be a main attraction. You will be the envy of your friends and associates when you walk away with the top bid on any item in our slate of auction offerings!

If you are interested in sponsoring, exhibiting or donating to our silent auction, please contact Whitney Hough at 850.222.5646 or Whitney@ForestFla.org.

FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE TRACKS REFORESTATION



The Florida Forest Service has tracked reforestation trends in Florida since 1950. The chart above depicts Florida's historical reforestation trends through the 2017-18 planting season. Reforestation dropped in 2017-18 by approximately 20,000 acres compared to the previous year. Planting densities were also lower in 2017. The combination of reduced densities and acres planted resulted in around 18 million fewer trees planted in 2017 than in 2016.

It should be noted that the 2017-18 data represents a snapshot in time within Florida's broader reforestation trends and is dependent upon self-reporting by various seedling suppliers, landowners, and agencies. The decadal average (over 123,000 acres planted per year from 2010-2017) better reflects long-term trends but remains near half the acres planted on average during the 1970s and 80s. A significant decline started in the early 1990s and reached lows from 2007-2009, generally increasing thereafter.

The chart also depicts planting by major landowner groups. Historically, the forest industry was the leading tree planting group in Florida. Non-industrial private landowners (NIPF) became the leading tree planters in Florida beginning around 2007 and maintained this trend in 2017.

Possible explanations for the long-term reduction in tree plantings include: large numbers of new landowners unaware of forest management options, less industry-owned land, less industry support for private landowner assistance programs, decreasing funds for government forestry assistance programs, and increasing competition for alternative land uses.

WANT TO GOBBLE UP SOME SAVINGS?

Partnering with Outdoor Underwriters, Inc., the Association offers our members special reduced rates for liability insurance for hunting leases and timberland.



Click here for details or contact Mike Branch (850.222.5646 or Mike@ForestFla.org).

FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE LONG RANGE OUTLOOK

According to the Florida Forest Service's long range outlook (April-June), El Niño conditions in the Pacific Ocean strengthened in February and are likely to continue through the end of spring. There is a moderate chance for El Niño through summer.

Typically, El Niño conditions mean a cooler and wetter climate for the Southeast. While that has held true for the northern part of the region, the same can't be said for the southern parts (including Florida), which has seen above average temperatures and generally dry conditions. Above-average temperatures are likely to continue through June. Precipitation is also forecast to be above average through June, meaning either rain will pick up in either mid to late April or May, or perhaps an early start to the rainy season in June.

Above average temperature and precipitation are likely though June. The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) is forecasting normal Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook through June.

FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE PERSONNEL NEWS



Jimmy Roberts has been named Bureau Chief of Forest Management, which directs and administers statewide programs that provide land management activities to private, non-industrial landowners on over 17 million acres of private and community forests. The Bureau also provides technical direction for field units carrying out the land management responsibilities on more than 1 million acres of state forests. The Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) and Best Management Practices (BMP) programs are also administered by the Forest Management Bureau.



Bonnie Stine has been named **Assistant Bureau Chief of Forest Management**. In her new role, Bonnie is supervising the Cooperative Forestry Assistance, Forest Health and the Utilization and Hydrology programs. She is also responsible for coordinating the state-wide internship program.



Monica Corbin has been named **Communications and Public Relations Coordinator**, serving as the statewide contact for all internal and external communication. She oversees social media as well as print and promotional materials on both the field unit and statewide levels. Monica is also responsible for statewide press releases and articles.



Jarek Nowak, Ph.D., named **Utilization and Hydrology Section Supervisor**, is now managing forest water resources, including the Silviculture and Wildlife Best Management Practices (BMP) programs. He will continue his forest utilization duties and to supervise the Florida Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program.

FUNDING NOW AVAILABLE TO COVER CONSULTANT FOREST STEWARDSHIP MANAGEMENT PLAN PREPARATION

The Florida Forest Service has received funding to help cover the costs for private natural resource consultants to write Forest Stewardship plans covering hurricane resiliency and/or longleaf pine management.

Eligible Stewardship plans must include information and recommendations related to: forest resilience and recovery following hurricanes, forest and landowner preparedness for hurricanes, and/or resources available to assist private forest landowners following hurricanes and/or longleaf pine establishment, restoration, improvement, and management for landowners with longleaf stands or those who want to establish longleaf pine on appropriate sites.

Compensation rates and additional information are provided in the Forest Stewardship Program Consultant Plan Preparation Agreement. This form also serves as the application for reimbursement.

All applications that meet requirements as described above will be considered in the order in which they are received. Contact your county forester for more information.

HURRICANE MICHAEL COMMEMORATIVE DISPLAY



Members of the Florida Forest Service recently installed an eye-opening commemorative display in Ag Commissioner Nikki Fried's capitol office. The trunk featured, a loblolly pine, stood proudly for 73 years before it was felled by Hurricane Michael.

The dedication plaque on the trunk highlights the size of the tree and the scope of the damage to the Panhandle. Because of a lack of disaster relief efforts, this tree sat on the ground alongside 72 million tons of fallen trees until it was repurposed by the Florida Forest Service officers to help raise awareness. The Department is hard at work helping clear timber debris in the Panhandle.

LOGGING COST ANALYSIS

The University of Georgia's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources' Continuing Education Program will be sponsoring the course titled "Logging Cost Analysis" at the Harbison State Forest Environmental Center in Columbia, South Carolina, on June 12-13, 2019.

The course will be taught by Warnell Assistant Professor Joe Conrad and Associate Professor Chad Bolding of Virginia Tech. It will cover both principles and applications of logging cost analysis techniques from the perspective of wood dealers, procurement foresters, and independent logging contractors.

SILVICULTURAL CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Nominations for the "Silvicultural Contractor of the Year Award" are being accepted through May 14, 2019. The award honors the dedication, hard work and challenges of those individuals whom we depend on for professional silvicultural services.

Who can be nominated?

Mechanical site preparation contractors, herbicide applicators, timber stand improvement contractors, tree planters, and fertilizer applicators.

Who can submit a nomination?

Everyone is encouraged to nominate contractors they feel exemplify the best in silvicultural contractors.

Judging:

All judges are actively involved with silvicultural activities. The top 3-5 finalists will be judged in an on-site evaluation.

Award:

- o Complimentary registration and hotel accommodations for one night for the winner and a guest at the Florida Forestry Association's Annual Meeting.
- o Recognition at the awards breakfast and appropriate award plaque.

Deadline for nominations:

May 14, 2019

For more information, contact Mike Branch (850.222.5646 or Mike@ForestFla.org).

HELP WITH INTERNATIONAL MARKETING FROM SUSTA



The Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) is a non-profit trade association aimed at increasing the export of US food and agriculture products. SUSTA works closely with each state's Department of Agriculture in the south to enhance the economic well-being of the region.

Through the Market Access Program (MAP) 50% CostShare, SUSTA can reimburse up to 50% of eligible international marketing expenses aimed at increasing exports. The goal of increasing food and agriculture exports is to ensure that the US exports more than we import, thus creating jobs and bolstering our economy.

For more information about the SUSTA cost-share program, please contact Whitney Lett with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service's marketing division (Whitney.Lett@FreshFromFlorida.com or (850) 617-7333).

FLORIDA FORESTRY TEACHERS' TOUR: SPONSORS NEEDED



The Florida Forestry Teachers' Tour is an annual event that gives the Florida Forest Service and the

forest industry the opportunity to share forestry's story with educators from around the state. Teachers take back the information and insights they learn in this four-day hands-on experience and incorporate them into their curriculum during the school year. This year's tour will be held June 18-21, based in Fernandina Beach, FL.

Sponsors are vital to the success of this program! Each \$500 sponsorship allows one teacher to participate at no cost to him/herself beyond travel to and from Fernandina Beach. To become a sponsor, contact Christina Sabo (Christina@ForestFla.org or 850.222.5646) or simply send your check, payable to the **Florida Forestry Foundation, to P.O. Box 1696, Tallahassee, FL 32302.**

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MASTER LOGGER TRAINING

The Florida Master Logger 2-Day Logger Training will be held at the Lake City Gateway College in the Wilson Rivers Media Room on June 5-6, 2019. Completion of this course is required to become a FL-SIC Master Logger.

The complete schedule for our remaining Master Logger Continuing Logger Education classes in 2019 is below:

July 18 - DeFuniak Springs, FL
September 5 - Gainesville, FL
November 7 - Lake City, FL
December 12 - Blountstown, FL

To register for one of these logger training workshops, please contact Christina Sabo (Christina@ForestFla.org or 850.222.5646).

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