

**North Carolina Forest Service
Annual Report**

**Prepared for:
Currituck County Commissioners &
County Manager**

Fiscal Year: June 2016 – July 2017

**Prepared by:
Eric Lefevers
Currituck County Ranger
North Carolina Forest Service
September 26, 2017**

North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
N.C. Forest Service



Steven W. Troxler
Commissioner



Scott Bissette
Assistant Commissioner

September 26, 2017

Dear Currituck County Commissioners and County Manager Daniel Scanlon:

This letter highlights the North Carolina Forest Service's annual accomplishments for Currituck County for last fiscal year. The NCFS is responsible for the protection and development of all private and state woodlands in the county per North Carolina general statutes. Currituck County's woodland area consists of 51,600 acres as listed in the 2007 Forest Statistics for North Carolina survey. Below are a number of our program areas and the accomplishments we have made during the year.

Personnel

I was hired in August 2017, as the County Ranger, to carry out the North Carolina Forest Service's programs in Currituck County. Previous to this position, I have worked with the Virginia Department of Forestry, National Park Service, as well as in the private land management sector. I'm excited and thankful for the opportunity to be working here in Currituck County. In addition, a new Assistant County Ranger, Aaron Bishop, will be starting this month to fully staff the county office. Aaron has college coursework in Forestry and has worked with various parks in Maryland. We are excited to have a full staff in order to best serve Currituck County.

Fire Control

During the 2016/2017 Fiscal Year we have responded to 77 fire calls with 27 being for wildfire response. Currituck County's 5 Volunteer Fire Departments continue to be a tremendous asset to us in wildfire suppression. Thanks to their hard work, quick initial attacks, and close work with the North Carolina Forest Service, fires have been contained quickly, minimizing size and possible damage. We continue to visit each department and are working with them on inter-agency policies and wildland fire training. We completed two weeks of training with Knotts Island VFD on 10/13/16 for basic wildland fire training (S-130/190, L-180). In addition, we completed a chainsaw course for county first responders on 6/28/2017.

Forest Management

The NC Legislation passed a law in 2014 that requires the NC Forest Service to charge a fee for the creation of certain woodland management plans for forest landowners which began on July 1, 2014. This past year, we prepared 3 management plans for landowners. These plans help landowners meet financial and personal objectives for their timberland. These plans address timber resources, wildlife, aesthetics, water quality, soil protection, and/or recreation opportunities. We are also responsible for conducting survival checks of last year's planting projects, land measurement of all projects funded with state funds using global positioning system instruments and collecting seed for our nursery.

Water Quality Protection

We are also committed to randomly check on forestry logging operations. All forestry activities must adhere to Forest Practice Guidelines and Best Management Practices. These laws and regulations protect water quality and enable us to utilize forest resources in a sustainable manner. We conducted 29 inspections and re-inspections covering 484 acres on forest harvesting activities in the county.

Information and Education

These programs are a vital part of our organization to educate the public in forestry and the prevention of wildfires. We conducted 6 programs including: chainsaw safety, educational resource fairs, basic wildland firefighting courses and various school programs.

Urban Assistance and Pest Control

We provide Currituck citizens with advice and support on shade trees, yard trees, windbreaks, and insect disease control. Urban assistance will continue to be a priority as the population increases and more land is developed. In an effort to protect urban and forested areas, each year we conduct aerial and ground surveys for forest pest outbreaks. We did not find any significant insect activity this past year. We continually work with cooperative agencies, including the North Carolina Department of Agriculture to monitor forest pest movements. They continue to work the Slow the Spread Project to reduce the gypsy moth population. Currently, only Currituck and a portion of Dare are listed by the state as counties that have quarantines implemented for the gypsy moth.

Other Services

We are also involved in overall emergency response in Currituck County, the State of North Carolina, and the Southeast Compact. We stand ready for natural disaster recovery efforts such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and ice storms. We also offer assistance for planned events in the county.

Summary

The NC Forest Service had a successful 2016-2017 FY in Currituck County. Our achievements are made possible with support and cooperation from the Volunteer Fire Departments, Emergency Management Department, and many other county agencies. We strive to provide all Currituck landowners with wildfire control, forest management assistance, water quality protection, information and education programs, urban forestry assistance, and forest pest control. We will also strive to offer assistance in any natural disaster or planned event when possible.

If you need any assistance or have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 252-232-0983 or at currituck.ncfs@ncagr.gov.

Sincerely,

Eric Lefevers
Currituck County Ranger