



FY-04 Fire Program Accomplishments

- Southeast Region fire program personnel taught or assisted with twenty midlevel to advanced level fire courses.
- Provided \$112,000 for fire cache and personal protective equipment (PPE) region-wide.
- Provided \$30,600 for fire training for Southeast Region parks.
- Secured \$25,000 Fire Facilities Construction Funds for Big South Fork NRRRA.
- Distributed division newsletter and maintained website.
- Maintained communications between Collaborative Groups for Fuel Treatment Planning with state and other federal agencies in the Southeast.
- Provided GIS support for fuels projects and fire management plans.
- Provided mapping software programs to 18 wildland fire prone parks to help identify and map locations of wildland fires as required by the NFP.
- Completed all Southeast Region Fire Management Plans by the national deadline of December 31, 2004.

NPS Honored with National Fire Plan Awards

The Southeast Region brought home two National Fire Plan awards at the National Fire Plan 2004 Awards Ceremony in Albuquerque, NM. Several other parks in our region were also honored as nominees.

Natchez Trace Parkway was presented with a National Fire Plan Award for Excellence in Community Assistance. The park supports the goals of the National Fire Plan through their collaboration with 52 rural fire departments along 444 miles of parkway traversing three states. Through the Rural Fire Assistance Program, the park helps provide basic wildland fire suppression materials and gear for those departments.



NATR's National Fire Plan Award for Excellence in Community Assistance



Karen Taylor-Goodrich, Sue Vap, Pat Hooks, Ken Garvin, Dan Mapstone, and Fran Mainella accept awards for Natchez Trace Parkway and the Southeast Fire Ecology Partnership

The Southeast Fire Ecology Partnership (SEFEP) was also honored with a National Fire Plan Award for Excellence in Collaboration. Southeast Region Fire Ecologist, Caroline Noble is the NPS representative to the interagency group, which is based out of Tall Timbers Research Station in Tallahassee, Florida. The award recognized the group's collaborative fire ecology efforts, including helping to define historic reference conditions for southeastern landscapes. For more information about the SEFEP, visit www.talltimbers.org/SEFEP

Hazard Fuels Reduction

Prescribed Fire — Parks throughout the region treated 39,799 acres with prescribed fire. While most of the acreage was achieved in South Florida, many acres were accomplished at the smaller units that make up the majority of the region. These included the introduction of aerial ignition at Mammoth Cave National Park and Kings Mountain National Military Park, which led to new annual records for acres accomplished at both parks.



A PSD or “ping-pong ball machine” is loaded in preparation for aerial ignition at Kings Mountain National Military Park

Fire Use Modules—The Cumberland Gap and Great Smoky Mountains Fire Use Modules played an important role in implementing projects region-wide. Many of the smaller parks in the region either lack the total number of staff to conduct any type of fire management activity, or have not conducted enough programs to justify the staff that such activities require. These parks rely on the supplemental personnel, skills, and equipment that Fire Use Modules can provide.

Big South Fork NRR — Park forestry technicians assisted with wildfires and prescribed burns at KIMO, GRSM, MACA, and the Daniel Boone NF.



Big South Fork’s Forestry Technicians

- ✓ The Southeast Region Fire Management Program* treated 40,346 acres in FY-2004. Challenges presented by a wet winter, a dry spring, and an exceptionally active hurricane season limited the region from meeting its 60,675 acre goal.
- ✓ The region accomplished 128% of its planned 5,495 wildland-urban interface acres, treating 7,606 acres.
- ✓ The region allocated \$1,227,262 in contracting funding, exceeding its nationally mandated target by 127%.

Big Cypress National Preserve —

The park has utilized two Gyrotrac brushcutters to reduce the fire hazard on 622 acres next to private businesses, several structures, two Indian villages, and the Tamiami Trail (Hwy 41).



Gyrotrac brushcutter

The project was expedited through the use of the new Healthy Forest Initiative (HFI) Categorical Exclusion process.



Hazard fuels reduction along Tamiami Trail

The Gyrotracs were also deployed on a lightning-caused suppression fire in late June. They were able to open up an access road for engines, clear brush around power poles, and clear brush to make it safer for helicopters to fill their buckets with water.

Kings Mountain National Military Park *

— The park conducted their first-ever collaborative burn with neighboring Kings Mountain State Park. The project is part of their overall management goal to restore native vegetation and the historic landscape and to reduce hazard fuels along the park’s boundary.



Kings Mountain NMP’s Partner Rx Burn

Contracted Hazard Fuels Reduction Projects

— A total of 547 acres were treated this fiscal year to reduce fuel loads and to develop fuel breaks on and adjacent to park lands. This is an increase from 209 acres in FY-03.



Moores Creek National Battlefield after fuels reduction treatment

These wildland urban interface (WUI) projects were conducted at:

- ✓ Chickamauga & Chattanooga NMP (125 acres)
- ✓ Cowpens NB (125 acres)
- ✓ Gulf Islands NS (24 acres)
- ✓ Kennesaw Mountain NBP (70 ac)
- ✓ Horseshoe Bend NMP (30 acres)
- ✓ Ninety Six NHS (30 acres)
- ✓ Ocmulgee NM (42 acres)
- ✓ Little River Canyon NPres (175 ac)
- ✓ Moores Creek NB (28 acres)
- ✓ Shiloh NMP (18 acres)

Rural Fire Assistance

- ✓ The Southeast Region Fire Management Program distributed \$414,000 in Rural Fire Assistance funding to 152 rural fire departments adjacent to parks.

Blue Ridge Parkway* — In 2004, the Parkway provided personal protective equipment, hand tools, power tools, blowers, basic firefighter and safety training for 49 local fire departments. The Parkway is 470 miles long, spans two states and crosses 29 counties. The success of the program is a direct result of the enthusiasm, collaboration, and commitment of the rangers who manage and implement the program despite its many logistical challenges.



Basic Wildland Fire Training at the 3rd Bedford County Wildland Fire Academy



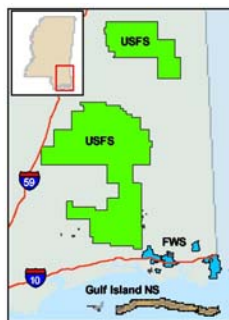
In September, the Parkway partnered with the Virginia Department of Forestry, Bedford County Fire and Rescue, and the USDA Forest Service to sponsor the 3rd annual Bedford County Wildland Fire Academy. Six wildland firefighter training courses were offered during the course of this week-long academy, operated under and incident command system (ICS) to simulate the operational organization of a wildland fire response incident. This successful program has trained more than 700 students over the course of three years.

Planning / Preparedness

Southern Mississippi Fire Planning Unit Prototype*



—Southern Mississippi was one of four areas nationwide selected by the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) to be a prototype area for Fire Program Analysis (FPA) planning. The collaborative fire planning unit includes the Mississippi District of the Gulf Islands National Seashore, the DeSoto National Forest, and the Mississippi Sandhill Crane & Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge.



Southern Mississippi Fire Planning Unit

The prototype has been instrumental in identifying and reflecting specific aspects of fire preparedness in the Southeastern U.S., with issues including unique equipment, split fire seasons, staffing, and working with remote island locations.

Contracted Burn Plans — The Southeast Region contracted the writing of several burn plans this year with great success.

Kings Mountain National Military Park — The park purchased their first wildland fire engine with normal equipment replacement funds, and built the engine in park with the assistance of one of the park's RFA partners, the York County Fire Prevention Office.



King Mountain NMP's wildland fire engine

* National Fire Plan 2004 Award Nominees are indicated with an asterisk.

Fire Ecology

Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Project — Horseshoe Bend National Military Park, in cooperation with Auburn University and the Piedmont-South Atlantic Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU), have combined resources to evaluate the impacts of various fire and mechanical treatments on the restoration of mountain longleaf pine at Horseshoe Bend NMP.



Mapping Longleaf Pine at Horseshoe Bend NMP

Fire Effects Teams — Currently three fire effects monitoring crews in the southeast region conduct fire effects monitoring inventory work at 26 parks. Virginia McDaniel, Great Smoky Mountain Fire Effects Team Leader, recently presented Great Smoky Mountains NP monitoring data results for a meeting of the Ecological Society of America.



NPS fire effects monitors measure post fire fuel loads

Fuel Loading Study Funded — A research proposal submitted by the Southeast Fire Ecology Partnership (SEFEP) in 2004 has been funded through the Joint Fire Sciences program. The study, entitled "Litter and Duff Bulk Densities in the Southern United States," will quantify litter and duff bulk density values for southeast vegetation community types. These values are necessary constants in equations utilized to quantify fuel loadings.

Education, Prevention, and Information

Web Updates — Many parks have now made their fire management plans available on their park website. In addition, an increasing number of parks are utilizing NPS FireNews to post updates on active fire management activities to www.nps.gov/fire.

Natchez Trace Parkway — During Fire Prevention Week, the park hosted field trips for more than 300 third and fourth graders from Pontotoc county (Mississippi) in conjunction with the Tupelo Fire Department, Mississippi Forestry Commission, Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, and the Lee County Sheriff's Office. Students learned about fire prevention and the natural role of fire in the ecosystem.



NATR Hosts Field Trip for Local Students

Gulf Island National Seashore— partnered with Topsail Hill State Park to present "Learning about Burning," an educational program about prescribed fire.

Mammoth Cave National Park — Public TV station WKYU produced a program segment which featured the park's fire management program.



WKYU Filming Prescribed Burn Operations at Mammoth Cave National Park

- ✓ The Southeast Region Fire Management Program continued to support community assistance projects region-wide.

Alabama — The Jefferson-Shelby Wildland Urban Interface Advisory Council distributed Alabama Reader newspaper supplements for 5th grade students. Educational CD-ROMS were also distributed to classrooms to enable students to learn about fire and fuels management.

Florida — The Florida Division of Forestry developed a statewide prescribed fire awareness media campaign. They continued the Fire in Florida's Ecosystems teacher training program and bi-lingual outreach in South Florida, as well as the distribution of fire education and prevention brochures, newspaper supplements, mobile displays, and educational CD-ROMS.

Mississippi — The Mississippi Forestry Commission trained representatives in Firewise principles and offered teacher training workshops where they distributed educational CD-ROMs to help teach students about Firewise.



North Carolina — The North Carolina Division of Forest Resources distributed Firewise newspaper supplements and other educational materials to reach out to communities in the wildland-urban interface.

Southern Area Risk Assessment — This interagency risk assessment is well underway, and will provide specific information about fire risk on local, state, and federal lands when it is complete.

Southeast Region Fire Displays — Southeast Fire Management Program displays with mannequins dressed in personal protective equipment (PPE) were circulated around the region for community outreach and education efforts including the 2nd International Wildland Fire Ecology and Fire Management Congress and an Alabama Firewise workshop which preceded the Alabama Livable Cities Conference.



New Southeast Fire Management Banners

Displays were utilized by parks prior to and during planned fuel treatments or high fire danger periods. Displays were utilized at Big Cypress NP, Canaveral NS, Chatahoochee NRA, Congaree NP, Kings Mountain NMP, Gulf Islands NS, Mammoth Cave NP, Natchez Trace Parkway, and Stones River NB. A new, more portable banner stand display was also developed as a traveling resource.

Wildland Fire Education Toolboxes — This year, the Southeast Region Fire Management Program distributed wildland fire education toolboxes with resources and references to education and interpretive staff at parks with fire management programs region-wide.



Wildland Fire Education Toolbox Contents