

Alabama Forestry Commission Rates High in

Customer Satisfaction



The Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) authorized a customer satisfaction survey from the Center for Governmental Services at Auburn University in July 2008. The purpose of this study was to assess customer satisfaction among Alabama landowners who requested or received services from the agency within the 2007-2008 fiscal year. After the AFC identified approximately 3,800 clients who had requested or received such services, these customers were mailed surveys and 1,184 completed surveys were returned.

Expressing high levels of satisfaction in all areas, the survey revealed that overall clients of the Alabama Forestry Commission have a high opinion of the agency and the services it provides to the public. Below is a summary of the key findings.

- 95 percent of customers rated their overall satisfaction with the services they were provided as “satisfactory” or “excellent”
- 96 percent of customers felt the services provided were “some-what” or “very” timely
- 94 percent of customers felt that the response they received met their needs.

The most common reason customers cited for contacting the agency was to request prescribed burn assistance (40 percent), followed by assistance with a specific forestry program, fire prevention and control training, stand management recommenda-

tions/improvement plans, and land management assistance. These contacts were typically made by phone.

Of the customers surveyed, 13 percent had visited the new AFC web site. Of those who had visited the website, the primary reason for their visit was to find out about services offered by the agency, and 98 percent of them thought it was “easy” or “very easy” to obtain the information they needed.

Survey respondents were asked to consider several options to address declining funding. Customers indicated their preference would be for the AFC to continue to seek additional funding sources rather than decrease services. Fire mitigation/suppression was identified as the most preferred service, followed by forest management services, and then educational services.

About one-quarter of the respondents indicated they had current needs they would like the agency to address. The most common need mentioned was for assistance with prescribed burns (37 percent), yet only 8 percent indicated they had a need to be contacted by the AFC.

Additionally, the survey reveals new services desired by landowners and additional ways that the agency can meet customer needs. This study reflects the Alabama Forestry Commission’s commitment to evaluating and continuously improving the quality of services. ♣