



Five Ways

to Protect Your Forestland from Wildfire



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Damages from wildland fires can be devastating to your forests and wildlife. A single wildfire during the wrong set of conditions can wipe out years of investment in your trees. Here are five ways you can become proactive in wildfire protection:



1. Install Firebreaks – Construct and maintain firebreaks around the perimeter of your forest to help keep fire from entering your property. Interior firebreaks help contain wildfire in isolated areas and aid in wildfire suppression. Firebreaks also allow for easier access to inspect your timber while providing trails for recreation. To find out about firebreak construction and other services provided by the Alabama Forestry Commission, visit www.forestry.alabama.gov/AFCServices.aspx



2. Prescribed Burns – Use of controlled fire is one of the best methods of reducing hazardous fuels, thus reducing damages to your forest in the event of a wildfire. A list of available service providers can be found at: www.forestry.alabama.gov/ServiceProviders.aspx

Some forest owners might want to employ prescribed burning as a “Do-It-Yourself” activity. The Alabama Forestry Commission recommends that you become a “Certified Burn Manager.” Check the AFC website periodically for upcoming prescribed burn workshops at: www.forestry.alabama.gov/BurnCourses.aspx



3. Mitigate Along the Edge – Reduce hazardous accumulations of flashy fuels along roadways and property entrances where arson fires are most readily ignited. Remove scrubby vegetation, ladder fuels, and mow or brush-cut the area. This reduces wildfire risk and adds to the aesthetics of your property. Visit www.forestry.alabama.gov/ServiceProviders.aspx for a list of available service providers.



4. Limit Access – Install gates or similar barriers to limit unwanted access to your property; post your telephone number should someone need to contact you. This also helps minimize trespassing and protects your land from arson, dumping, poaching, timber theft, and vandalism.

The Alabama Forestry Commission provides an arson/forest crimes hotline; the toll-free number is 1-800-222-2927. Information provided is confidential and you will remain anonymous. To learn more, visit: www.forestry.alabama.gov/arsontimber.aspx



5. Partner with Others – Become part of your community’s wildfire protection efforts. Get involved with your local volunteer fire department and the Alabama Forestry Commission’s efforts to plan for wildfire protection. More information can be found at: www.forestry.alabama.gov/WUI/Community_Wildfire_Protection_Plan.pdf

If you are an absentee forestland owner, enlist the assistance of a trusted local resident to serve as your “fire warden.” Some might do this for little or no cost, for example, if you provide them with written permission to hunt on your land, or written permission to cut pre-selected trees for firewood. Consult your attorney for ways to limit your liability when doing this.

The Alabama Forestry Commission is dedicated to serving you.
Contact us at: www.forestry.alabama.gov/Contact.aspx

