



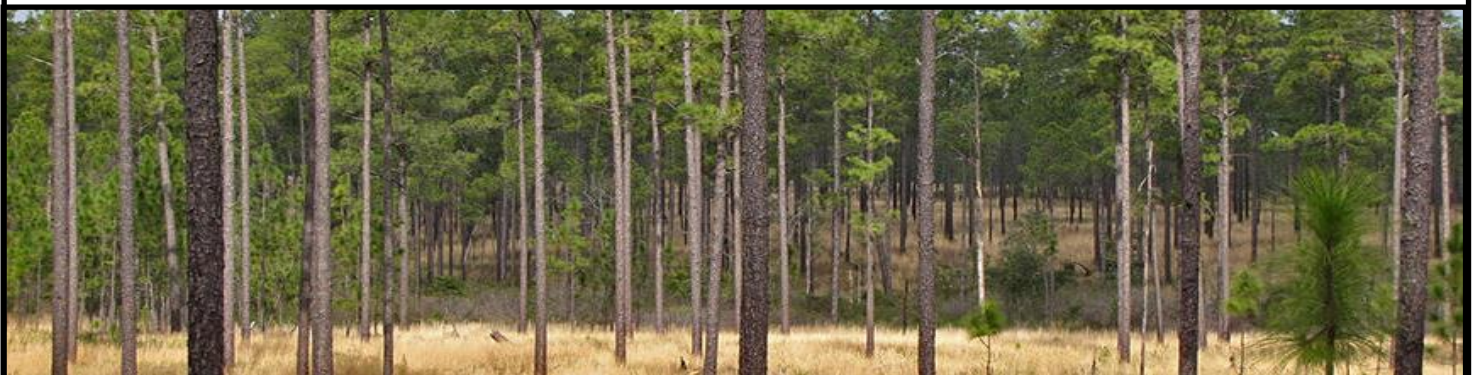
**The mission of the Florida Forest Service is to protect & manage the forest resources of Florida, ensuring they are available for future generations.**

## **JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019 FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT**

**FIRE CONTROL  
COOPERATIVE FORESTRY ASSISTANCE  
STATE LANDS**



**TO THE NASSAU COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**





# Fire Control

With the types of vegetation in Nassau County, it's inevitable that wildfires will occur, especially when the weather turns dry. When that happens, the Florida Forest Service is there to protect natural resources, property, and human lives from the devastating effects of wildfire.

To reduce the likelihood of wildfires, the Florida Forest Service actively promotes wildfire prevention and safety in the community. Smokey Bear is always a hit with kids and adults alike, bringing the message: *"Only YOU can prevent wildfires!"* We also utilize prescribed fire and wildfire mitigation mowing on public and private property. The mowing is generally used to reduce hazardous fuel accumulations in urban areas where burning cannot be conducted efficiently or safely. We also administer open burning authorizations to the general public for acreage or pile burns when conditions are favorable.



## Fire Prevention & educational outreach events in Nassau County

- The Northeast Florida Fair
- Fernandina Beach's Shrimp Festival Parade
- Fernandina Beach's Spring Family Festival
- Hilliard's Homecoming Parade
- Wild Amelia Festival
- Callahan's Family Christmas Festival
- 8 School Fire Prevention Programs serving 652 children
- 3 Public Fire Prevention Programs serving 600 people

## 18 Wildfires suppressed on 40.9 acres in Nassau County

- 0 Wildfires spread more than 9 acres
- 14 Wildfires stopped between 0.3 and acres 9 acres
- 4 Wildfires stopped between 0.1 and 0.2 acres



## Other Fire Control services in Nassau County

- 617 Burn authorizations issued for 5071 acres and 961 piles. (*The most authorizations that were issued for acreage was for pastureland <127 on 296 acres> and forest fuel reduction <95 on 3821 acres>. The most piles that authorizations were issued for were for residential land clearing 144 on 283 piles*)



- **27 On-Site Inspections** conducted prior to issuing burn authorizations
- **28 Prescribed burns** on 2,149 acres of public lands protecting private property
- **4 Prescribed Burns** conducted for landowners on 31 acres

Weather is the driving factor in the numbers above. Looking back over the past fiscal year, the latter half of 2018 and first part of 2019 were relatively wet. In the spring dry weather prevailed to near drought conditions in places. With the dryer weather wildfire activity and potential increased. In early summer, the rain returned and activity and potential lessened.

## Cooperative Forestry Assistance

The Cooperative Forestry Assistance (CFA) program provides private non-industrial forest landowners, schools, the public, and local governments with access to expert forestry knowledge and management advice at no cost through their county forester. The main goal of the program is to increase knowledge, enhance forest health and productivity and to support landowner objectives.

The population in Nassau County may be growing, but TIMBER still occupies most of the acreage. This positively impacts the economy both directly and indirectly. Look at the most recent FORESTRY STATISTICS published by the [University of Florida / IFAS Extension](#)

When you consider the three wood mills in Nassau Co. and the countless number of log trucks that travel our highways, you are only seeing the tip of the iceberg. Forestry is a changing and growing industry in our county. When managed sustainably through reforestation, timber will continue to be our greatest RENEWABLE RESOURCE. Forests also provide “ecosystem services” by filtering air and water, reducing runoff,



*Mr. Carrol Franklin and Nassau Co. Forester (Jim Tootle) recognizing Mr. Franklin's commitment to forest stewardship.*

### **Total Acres: 413,475**

Forestland Acres: 301,553  
 Privately Owned Forestland Acres: 269,974  
 Publicly Owned Forestland Acres: 24,388  
 Timber Removals (Net Green Tons): 582,695  
 Stumpage Value: \$11 Million

### **Total Contributions for All Forest Industries:**

Industry Output: \$1,983 Million  
 Total Value Added: \$892 Million  
 Employment: 9,847 Jobs  
 Labor Income: \$528 Million  
 State and Local Taxes: \$65 Million

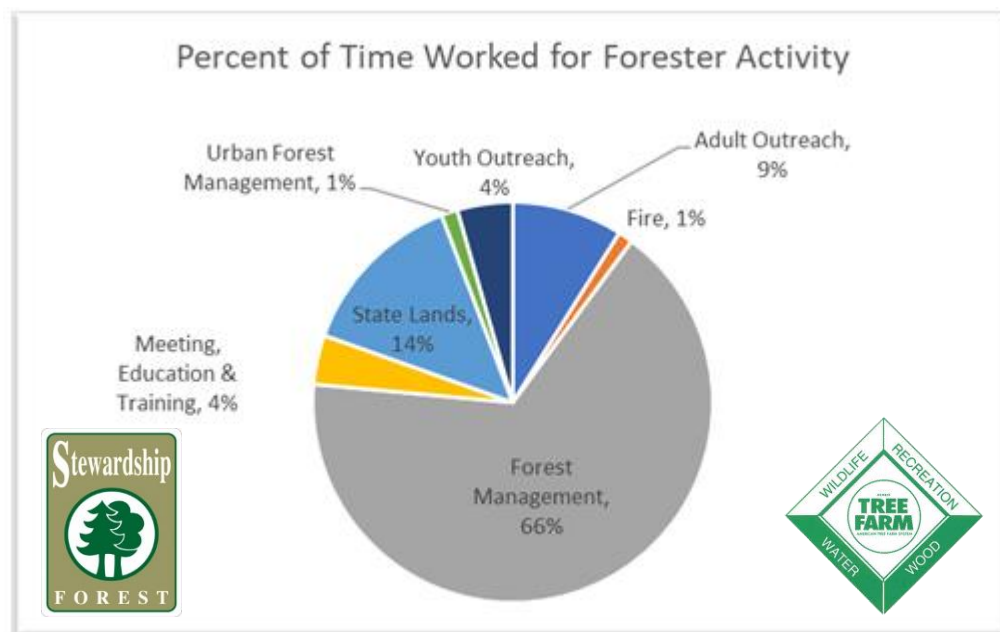
### **Total Employment Contributions by Industry (Jobs):**

Forestry Production: 592  
 Primary Wood Product Manufacturing: 408  
 Secondary Wood Product Manufacturing: 153  
 Primary Paper Product Manufacturing: 8,203  
 Converted Paper Product Manufacturing: 461  
 Allied Manufacturing: 7  
 Wholesale Trade Lumber and Wood: 24

moderating wind and temperature... They also add beauty, sustain wildlife, provide recreational opportunities, and much more.

**The County Forester provides forest landowners, local governments and schools with direct forestry assistance.**

- **52 Forest Management Plans** written covering 3,432 acres
- **8 Cost Share (financial) assistance** for practices covering 326 acres
- **8 Prescribed Burning Plans** written covering 397 acres
- **8 large Trees donated** and planted at Arbor day event in Fernandina Beach
- **10 Shade Tree Inspections** at homes and urban areas
- **8 Youth Educational Programs** for 289 students
- **2 Adult Edu. programs** conducted
- **5 Outreach Articles** / Through newspapers and other social media covering multiple forestry related topics
- **3 Trainings attended** for continuing education in support of landowner assistance



*Nassau County Forester Time Allocation July1, 2018 – June 30, 2019*



# State Lands Program

The Florida Forest Service manages more than one million acres of public forest land



*Saul's Landing (Four Creeks)*

across the state. **Ralph E. Simmons Memorial State Forest** and **Four Creeks State Forest** are in Nassau County. **Cary State Forest** lies primarily in Duval County and so most silvicultural activity occurs there and is not discussed in this report. However, some significant recreational opportunities have been improved on the Nassau portion of **Cary**. State forests are managed under a multiple use, sustained yield concept for timber, wildlife, recreation, aesthetics and soil & water conservation.



**SUSTAINABLE  
FORESTRY  
INITIATIVE**

This year, Four Creeks continues to be certified through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative 2015-2019 Standard. Four Creeks encompasses 13,147 acres between Callahan and Yulee, being bordered or bisected by Boggy Creek, Alligator (Mills) Creek, Plummer Creek, and Thomas Creek.

Slash and loblolly pine plantations dominate the flatwoods ecotype, while natural hardwoods, pine and cypress occupy the drainages. Grass-dominated marshland can be found on the eastern portions of the forest. The timber on our forests support our recreation facilities and programs.

The construction work has been completed on Saul's landing camp area on Four Creeks. Campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Saul's Landing also offers kayak and canoe launch access.



*Saul's Landing camp site (Four Creeks)*



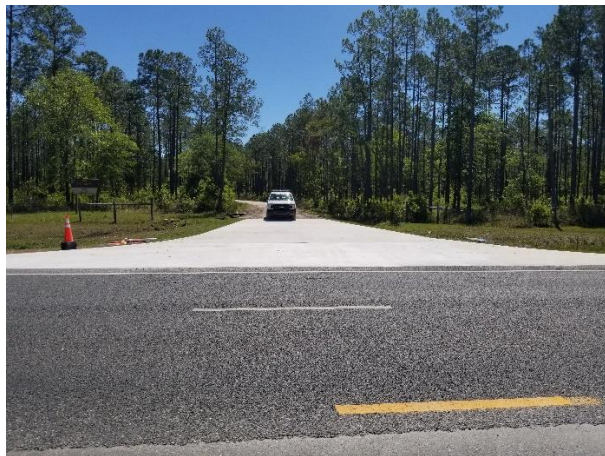
*Hobb's Landing signage (Four Creeks)*

Also, on Four Creeks, Hobbs Landing recreation area has been improved to include new signage and a new concrete boat ramp



*Hobb's Landing boat ramp (Four Creeks)*

On the Nassau County portion of Cary State Forest, the entrance has been improved with new signage and a new concrete apron onto Highway 301 to facilitate the ingress and egress of log trucks and recreational vehicles.



*Concrete apron at Cary entrance on highway 301*



*Cary's New Signage*

Ralph E. Simmons Memorial State Forest encompasses 3,638 acres along the St. Mary's River in Boulogne. Here, visitors can experience pristine longleaf pine sandhills that transition into hardwood, pine and cypress bottoms. Recreational opportunities include hiking, kayaking, boating, biking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, fishing, and studying nature. There were no significant structural improvements on Ralph Simmons this year.

Forest management practices are a continuous endeavor on all state forests. However, Four Creeks is usually the recipient of a higher level of harvest activity due to volume available and the greater need for thinning operations. This generates significant revenue for the state of Florida and our recreational facilities. Marketing timber also stimulates the local economy through direct employment and the redistribution of wealth by the purchase of goods and services by timber businesses and their employees. All three forests have an active prescribed burning program, which reduces the risk and intensity of wildfire and restores or enhances native, fire-dependent ecosystems. Invasive plant management is also an ongoing process as we strive to protect our natural resources.

### **Major state forest silvicultural and recreational activities in 2018-2019**

- **0 Tons of timber harvested due to prevalent wet ground conditions throughout most of the year.**
- **2,149 Acres prescribed burned (includes Cary State Forest)**
- **603 Acres treated for Chinese Tallow, an invasive plant species**
- **Upgraded boat ramp and signage at Hobb's Landing (Four Creeks)**
- **Completed camp site at Saul's landing (Four Creeks)**
- **Upgraded RV campsites, pavilion, nature trail, road entrance and signage on Cary State Forest (Nassau Co.)**
- **43, 792 estimated visitors**

## **Summary**

The Florida Forest Service provides a comprehensive land management service to the Nassau County public. This service integrates fire protection, multiple use management on public lands, and private landowner assistance. Each service may excel alone but when joined together they create a truly superior benefit to the citizens of Nassau County.

It is our privilege and pleasure to serve you and we appreciate your support as we provide for the community's needs now and into the future.