



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, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2022 FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION & PUBLIC OUTREACH



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





Fire Control

With the volume and type of vegetation within our forest 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 Rangers in Nassau County actively promote wildfire prevention and safety in our community. Smokey Bear often makes an appearance and is always a hit with kids and adults alike, bringing the message: *"Only YOU can prevent wildfires!"*

Our Rangers 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. Our Rangers regularly conduct on-site inspections to facilitate open burning authorizations distributed to the public by dispatch personnel. These authorizations are for acreage or pile burns and are issued only when conditions are favorable.

Fire Prevention & Educational Outreach Events in Nassau County

- The Florida Forest Service in Nassau County participated in several fire prevention & educational outreach programs, reaching an estimated **14,325** people in Nassau County. These programs included the Fernandina Beach Shimp Festival parade, the Callahan Elementary School Community Helpers program, the Hilliard Annual Town Cleanup program, the Northeast Florida Fair in Callahan, and the Woods & Water Family Fun Day at the Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch (Camp Sorensen, Hilliard).



20 Wildfires suppressed in Nassau County

- **5 Wildfires Stopped** between 10 and 99 acres for a total of **164.4** acres burned
- **14 Wildfires stopped** between 0.3 and 9 acres for a total of **28.9** acres burned
- **13 Wildfires stopped** between 0.1 and 0.2 acres for a total of **2.07** acre burned

Many of these small wildfires had the potential to become catastrophic. Quick response times and effective fire fighting tactics contributed to keeping the fires small and less of a hazard to lives and property.

Other Fire Control services in Nassau County

- **109 Burn authorizations** were issued for **3,618** acres and **124** piles.
 - o *The most authorizations that were issued in the county were for residential and non-residential land clearing (73 authorizations for 65 acres and 124 piles).*
- **75 On-Site Inspections** conducted prior to issuing burn authorizations
- **32 Prescribed burns** on **3,355** acres of public lands protecting private property
- **4 Prescribed Burns** conducted for private landowners on **198** acres

The Florida Forest Service dispatch personnel are an integral part of our fire protection program as they closely monitor permitted fire activity within the county. This monitoring keeps dispatch and our firefighters alert and aware of where potential hazards exist. Also, Awareness of permitted fire activity often avoids unnecessarily dispatching firefighting resources when they should be reserved for true emergencies.

Summary

The Florida Forest Service enforces the Fire Laws and Open Burning Regulations for Nassau County and the State of Florida. Although suppressing wildfires is our primary and most critical responsibility, our Forest Rangers often respond to other non-emergency calls. Such calls often are for unauthorized burning and smoke complaints. Sometimes they respond to phantom fires or false alarms.

In addition to fire response, our rangers are very involved with fire prevention. They are extremely active within the community. This dedication is illustrated and documented in this report by the number of on-site inspections completed and number of people impacted by our community outreach programs.

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.



Report written and submitted by:

Terrell N Drew

Terrell N Drew

**Forest Area Supervisor
Florida Forest Service
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**

(904) 845-7121 Office

(904) 955-8672 Cell

Terrell.Drew@FDACS.com

**Florida Forest Service
3742 Clint Drive
Hilliard, Florida 32046**