



News Release

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GEORGIA FORESTRY COMMISSION SENDS RESOURCES TO WESTERN FIRES

The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) is helping wildland firefighters in five western states where fires have consumed more than 100,000 acres. More than a dozen GFC professionals are currently serving in Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas and Wyoming.

"We've shared resources since March," said Georgia Forestry Commission Expanded Dispatch Coordinator Jennifer Tapley, "but activity really increased in June and July, which is typical for those areas. Georgia's fire season is in fall and winter."

Fires on which GFC is currently serving include Nevada's "Martin's Fire," which is 440,000 acres and 65% contained, the "Weston Pass Fire" in Colorado, which is 13,000 acres and 74% contained, and the 50,000 acre "Buzzard Fire" in New Mexico, which is 90% contained. Some of the fires were ignited by lightning, while others were determined to be human-caused.

Tapley said a variety of jobs is being performed by GFC's trained personnel on these fires, including heavy equipment operators, training specialists and logistics experts. Resources are placed on assignment for 14-day periods, and are utilized from states across the nation.

"It's a reciprocal arrangement," said Tapley. "When requests come in for support, we evaluate conditions in Georgia and then place personnel as we are able. On a number of occasions, resources from other states have come here to help contain our wildfires." Tapley said having assistance from other trained firefighters is an essential tool for safe and effective containment operations, and said the experience gained by working in varying terrains is valuable.

The GFC also supports certain operations by supplying heavy equipment and operators. Bulldozers and tractor plows supplied by the GFC are currently in service in Texas.

"Our team loves to have the opportunity to help," said Tapley. "That's the best part, because we've been there."

For more information about wildfire safety and services of the Georgia Forestry Commission, visit GaTrees.org.

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