



Mississippi Forestry Association

Legislative Bulletin

The Voice of Forestry

Volume 2008 Number 5

March 14, 2008

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Links: MFA Government Affairs

<http://www.msforestry.net/governmentaffairs.php>

MFA Online

www.msforestry.net

MFA Member

Question of the Week

Q: I have heard that I can watch the proceedings in the Legislature on my computer. How can I do this?

A: Both the Senate and House provide a live web-cast while each chamber is in session. To see and hear the floor action, visit the Legislature's website at <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/>. Simply click on **Live Web-cast** in the lower left corner of the homepage. You can choose between either the House or the Senate, and you can also view the day's committee meeting schedules.

A Toast to Forestry! Mississippi Forestry Association Hosts Annual Legislative Luncheon



From left: Kit Hart, Plum Creek Timber Co.; Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant; Ken Burton, Winston CFA president; Christie Spence, Plum Creek. Please visit [MFA online](#) to view more pictures in the photo gallery.

Mississippi Forestry Association (MFA) hosted their annual MFA/CFA Legislative Luncheon at the Marriott, downtown Jackson on Wednesday, March 5th. MFA leaders and members of the Government Affairs Committee along with representatives from county forestry associations from all over the state attended to discuss current forestry issues with their state legislators. This year, the 230 luncheon attendees also celebrated MFA's 70th anniversary.

Gee Ogletree, attorney with Adams and Reese LLP and long time forestry activist, was the luncheon speaker. He emphasized the successful partnership between MFA and the Mississippi Legislature by reviewing MFA's top three legislative successes in the past 15 years.

In 1999, the Reforestation Tax Act was created giving landowners a \$10,000 tax credit for investing in the future by planting trees. This legislation was the first of its kind in the nation and received the 1999 Award for Outstanding Forestry Legislation presented by the National Woodland Owners Association. On the heels of Hurricane Katrina, this landmark tax credit was expanded in 2007 to a lifetime limit of \$75,000, giving Mississippi's landowners a much needed incentive to replant their devastated forests.

In 1994, MFA worked to pass the landmark Forestry Activities Act, designed to protect and preserve the right to practice forestry in Mississippi. *Continued on page 2*



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MFA's Mission is leading diverse forestry groups to promote landowner rights, environmental stewardship, member prosperity, and community understanding.

[Legislative Lunch con.](#)

In 1989 legislation was passed to establish a forest protection tax. This tax, paid by forest landowners statewide, provides funds for the Mississippi Forestry Commission to purchase fire fighting equipment to protect private and 16th Section Lands. This law still benefits private landowners, school districts and citizens today.

The Legislative Luncheon was organized by MFA's County Forestry Associations Committee, which represents the 62 county associations that are working in every forested county in Mississippi – 72 counties in all. There are well over 5,000 members of these local county forestry associations in Mississippi.

Do You Know Your Mississippi Forestry Law?

MFA's Legislative Bulletin wants to keep you informed about the laws that affect you as a forest landowner in Mississippi.

Q: [What is the forest acreage protection tax?](#)

A: Mississippi law in **§ 49-19-115** states that "The board of supervisors of all counties are hereby directed to levy a special tax to be known as the forest acreage tax. Such tax shall be Two Cents (2) per acre on all timbered and uncultivable lands in the county in order to receive the financial and supervisory cooperation of the State Forestry Commission in carrying out organized forest fire control and other provisions of [Sections 49-19-111](#) through [49-19-117](#)."

In 1989 the Mississippi Legislature passed an increase in the forest protection tax which was 2 cents per acre at the time, providing for an increase over 3 years to 9 cents per acre. This tax, paid by forest landowners statewide, provides funds for the Mississippi Forestry Commission to purchase fire fighting equipment and to provide forest fire protection on private and 16th Section lands. The tax is listed on all property tax bills and is currently 9 cents per acre. This law still benefits private landowners, school districts and citizens today. You can read this law online at <http://michie.com/mississippi/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm&cp=> and following the left side index to Section 49-19-115

2008 MFA Forestry Bills Tracking List
AS APPROVED BY THE MFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Note: Bill status as of February 22, 2008. Bills will be added and deleted as necessary throughout the Session

Recommended MFA Positions: M = monitor, S = support, O = oppose

House of Representatives

HB 140 Mississippi Forestry Commission Law Enforcement Officers; extend repealer on authority to appoint, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/HB/HB0140.xml> 01/22 (H) Referred To Forestry, 02/13 (H) Title Suff Do Pass, 02/19 (S) Referred To Forestry, 02/18 (H) Passed *{Vote}* 02/19 (H) Transmitted To Senate 02/19 (S) Referred To Forestry **Committee recommendation: S**

HB 141 Levy of forest acreage tax; extend repealer, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/HB/HB0141.xml> 01/22 (H) Referred To Forestry, 02/13 (H) Title Suff Do Pass, 02/19 (S) Referred To Forestry; Finance, 02/18 (H) Passed *{Vote}*, 02/19 (H) Transmitted To Senate, 02/19 (S) Referred To Forestry; Finance, **Committee recommendation: S**

HB 591 Eminent domain; restrict to direct public use, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/HB/HB0591.xml> 01/31 (H) Referred To Judiciary A, 02/05 (H) Title Suff Do Pass Comm Sub, 02/07 (H) Committee Substitute Adopted, 02/07 (H) Amended, 02/07 (H) Passed As Amended *{Vote}*, 02/08 (H) Transmitted To Senate, 02/11 (S) Referred To Judiciary, Division A **Committee recommendation: M**

HB 1357 Mississippi Public Waterways Law; revise regulations relating to use of ATVs in public waters, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/HB/HB1357.xml> 02/04 (H) Referred To Conservation and Water Resources; Marine Resources 02/12 (H) DR - TSDP: CR To MR, 02/13 (H) DR - TSDP: MR To CR, 02/13 (H) Title Suff Do Pass 02/20 (H) Passed **Committee recommendation: S**

Senate

SB 2437 Levees; clarify prohibited activities, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/SB/SB2437.xml> 01/28 (S) Referred To Judiciary, Division B; Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks 02/13 (S) DR - TSDP: JB to WI, 02/14 (S) Title Suff Do Pass **Committee recommendation: O**

SB 2457 Forestry tax; extend repealer on forest acreage tax, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/SB/SB2457.xml> 01/29 (S) Referred To Forestry; Finance, 02/06 (S) DR - TSDP: FO To FI, 02/07 (S) Title Suff Do Pass, 02/20 (S) Passed, 02/21 (S) Transmitted To House **Committee recommendation: S**

SB 2458 Forestry; extend repealer on authority of the Forestry Commission to hire law enforcement officers to investigate arson, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/SB/SB2458.xml> 01/29 (S) Referred To Forestry, 02/06 (S) Title Suff Do Pass, 02/07 (S) Passed *{Vote}*, 02/08 (S) Transmitted To House, 02/12 (H) Referred To Forestry **Committee recommendation: S**

SB 2680 Executive agency personnel; remove all from certain State Personnel Board procedures. <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/SB/SB2680.xml> 02/04 (S) Referred To Fees, Salaries and Administration, 02/07 (S) Title Suff Do Pass Comm Sub, 02/12 (S) Committee Substitute Adopted, 02/12 (S) Amended, 02/12 (S) Passed As Amended *{Vote}*, 02/12 (S) Motion to Reconsider Entered 02/13 (S) Motion to Reconsider Tabled, 02/13 (S) Transmitted To House, 02/15 (H) Referred To Fees and Salaries of Public Officers; Appropriations,
Committee recommendation: M

SB 2820 Public waterways; provide penalty for damaging fish habitat by riding motorized vehicle in the bed of a stream, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/SB/SB2820.xml> 02/04 (S) Referred To Judiciary, Division B, 02/12 (S) Laid on Table Subject to Call, 02/19 (S) Title Suff Do Pass Comm Sub
Committee recommendation: S with amendment

SB 2822 Eminent domain; restrict to direct public use (Hyde-Smith), <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/SB/SB2822.xml> 02/04 (S) Referred To Judiciary, Division A, 02/19 (S) Title Suff Do Pass Comm Sub
Committee recommendation: S

SB 2837 Criminal trespass; enhance when trespass is knowing and trespasser is in possession of a firearm, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/SB/SB2837.xml> 02/04 (S) Referred To Judiciary, Division B, 02/12 (S) Title Suff Do Pass Comm Sub, 02/20 (S) Passed, 02/22 (S) Transmitted To House
Committee recommendation: S

SB 3007 Public buildings; authorize use of green building standards in certain major facility projects, <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2008/pdf/history/SB/SB3007.xml>, 02/04 (S) Referred To Environment Prot, Cons and Water Res, 02/13 (S) Title Suff Do Pass
Committee recommendation: S