



Mississippi Forestry Association

# Legislative Bulletin

*The Voice of Forestry*

Volume 2009 Number 9

May 8, 2009

## In This Issue:

- Eminent Domain
- Action Alert on MSU Forestry Budget Cuts

## Contact MFA

[E-Mail MFA Government Affairs](mailto:info@mforestry.net)

601.354.4936

601.354.4937 FAX

620 N. State St, Suite 201

Jackson, MS 39202

[www.msforestry.net](http://www.msforestry.net)

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

## No Eminent Domain Bill in Special Session

The May 7th Special Session of the Mississippi Legislature ended without any change to the state's eminent domain law. Governor Barbour had asked the Legislature to pass a bill allowing for the use of eminent domain by the state for major economic development projects. Neither chamber even considered the Governor's proposed bill.

"This is a clear victory for private property rights and MFA members", stated MFA President Ellen Dabbs. "Protecting private property rights for forest and farm landowners is a core mission for the Mississippi Forestry Association."

## ACTION ALERT

### Legislature Considers Governor's Proposed Budget Cuts to Mississippi State University and Forestry Units

#### BACKGROUND

The MFA MSU Forestry Liaison Committee recently conducted a conference call for the purpose of hearing about proposed budget cuts to higher education entities, specifically the MSU Forest and Wildlife Research Center (FWRC), the MSU Extension Service (MSUES) and the Agriculture and Forest Experiment Station (MAFES).

Dr. George Hopper, Dean of the MSU College of Forest Resources, briefed the committee on the proposed budget cuts and their devastating impacts to forestry-related research. "The forestry program at the College of Forest Resources and the vital research performed at the FWRC are directly related to our future success in forestry-related economic development, education and outreach to landowners in Mississippi. The educational mission of our MSU Extension Service extends far beyond the classroom and all the way to the forest," Hopper said.

Under the leadership of David Barge, Committee Chairman and President of Barge Forest Products Co. in Macon, the MFA MSU Forestry Liaison Committee agreed that they would take all necessary steps to serve as an advocate for these separately funded units, especially the FWRC, which has such a small budget relative to other agencies. Chairman Barge said, "The FWRC serves a vital role as an economic development engine for Mississippi. The research conducted by the FWRC is critically important to future economic growth in the state. This role is especially important

man Barge said, "The FWRC serves a vital role as an economic development engine for Mississippi. The research conducted by the FWRC is critically important to future economic growth in the state. This role is especially important given the challenges the forestry and forest products industries are facing in today's economic environment. MFA and CFA members must speak up for our forestry and natural resources community's future, and not be found guilty of being silent, allowing the MSU units to be treated unfairly now and in the future."

## **ACTION NEEDED IMMEDIATELY**

### **CONTACT YOUR STATE SENATOR AND**

**REPRESENTATIVE:** Ask that all three separate forestry-related units; FWRC, MSUES, and MAFES, be funded at comparable levels to the state's universities, and not receive budget cuts in excess of those experienced by the state's universities.

Call your legislators at home this weekend or in the Capitol early next week. If you have to leave a message, tell them your request and specifically ask for a return phone call.

Fax your note or letter of support to:

Your State Senator – 601-359-2129

Your State Representative – 601-359-3728

OR, contact them by telephone at the Capitol (leave a message for delivery if necessary):

Your State Senator – 601-359-3770

Your State Representative – 601-359-3770

## **Appropriations Watch List**

[S. B.3214:](#) Appropriation; IHL - MSU -Agriculture & Forestry Exp. Station.

SENATE CONFEREES: Nunnelee, Davis (1st), Jackson (15th)

HOUSE CONFEREES: Stringer, Ward, Gibbs

[S. B.3215:](#) Appropriation; IHL - MSU -Cooperative Extension Service.

SENATE CONFEREES: Nunnelee, Davis (1st), Dearing

HOUSE CONFEREES: Stringer, Ward, Warren

Appropriation; IHL - MSU -Cooperative Extension Service.

SENATE CONFEREES: Nunnelee, Davis (1st), Dearing

HOUSE CONFEREES: Stringer, Ward, Warren

[S. B.3216:](#) Appropriation; Forest & Wildlife Research.

SENATE CONFEREES: Nunnelee, Davis (1st), Dearing

HOUSE CONFEREES: Stringer, Eaton, Malone

[S. B.3221:](#) Appropriation; IHL - General Support.

SENATE CONFEREES: Nunnelee, Davis (1st), Frazier

HOUSE CONFEREES: Stringer, Reynolds, McBride