



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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Division of Forestry to Assist Florida with Wildland Fire *Engine strike team heads south*

FRANKFORT, Ky. – (June 14, 2011) The Kentucky Division of Forestry (KDF) is sending personnel and equipment to Florida to assist with the state's current wildfire emergency. Eleven division employees, comprising an engine strike team, will report to Bunnell, Fla., tomorrow.

The Florida Division of Forestry requested the additional assistance from KDF on Monday through the Southeastern Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact. There are currently 287 active fires burning nearly 110,000 acres in Florida. Due to last week's heavy fire activity and a continuing drought across vast swaths of the state, Florida ordered resources from Kentucky, as well as from around the country to assist with the fire emergency.

KDF's firefighters will be assigned to the Incident Command Post in Flagler County located northwest of Daytona. If wildfires in this area are controlled quickly, it is likely that the division's firefighters will be transferred to other areas needing assistance.

KDF Director and Kentucky State Forester Leah MacSwords said, "We are fortunate that our wildfire danger level is low and we can help Florida during its emergency. The Florida Division of Forestry has always helped Kentucky during our wildfire emergencies."

Interstate forest fire protection compacts were established in the early 1950s to allow states to share skilled firefighters and equipment. Member states help each other to the extent they can, depending on their own wildfire status, according to KDF.

Division staff will be on compact detail for 14 days plus travel days, and Florida will reimburse KDF for all personnel and equipment costs.

Forestry officials encourage public land managers, landowners and homeowners to help prevent wildfires. For information about fire prevention, please visit:

<http://forestry.ky.gov/wildlandfiremanagement/Pages/KentuckyFirewiseProgram.aspx> or

contact the Kentucky Division of Forestry office at 502-564-4496.

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