

By: Representatives Read, Pigott, Arnold,
Bounds, Boyd, Huddleston, Mangold, Scoggin

To: Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1628
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE SUPPORT AND
2 MAINTENANCE OF THE STATE FORESTRY COMMISSION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR
3 2024.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

5 **SECTION 1.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be
6 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the State General
7 Fund not otherwise appropriated, for the support and maintenance
8 of the State Forestry Commission for the fiscal year beginning
9 July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024.....
10\$ 15,732,212.00.

11 **SECTION 2.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be
12 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the special fund in
13 the State Treasury to the credit of the State Forestry Commission
14 which is comprised of special source funds collected by or
15 otherwise available to the commission, for the support and
16 maintenance of the commission for the fiscal year beginning
17 July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024.....
18\$ 13,600,367.00.



19 Of the funds specified in this section, Two Hundred Fifty
20 Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) shall be deposited in a fund
21 created in the State Treasury called the "Forest Improvement
22 Revolving Fund." Money in this fund shall be used by the State
23 Forestry Commission to assist in the reforestation and growth
24 improvement of the forests, woodlands, and publicly owned lands of
25 the state, including sixteenth section lands, Camp Shelby,
26 Columbia Training School and colleges and universities.
27 Landowners who contract with the commission for such work shall
28 pay to the commission its actual cost for conducting such work.
29 Money received for this work by the commission shall be paid into
30 the State Treasury, and the State Treasurer shall deposit such
31 money in the "Forest Improvement Revolving Fund."

32 **SECTION 3.** Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of
33 this act, the following positions are authorized:

34 AUTHORIZED HEADCOUNT:

35 Permanent: 343

36 Time-Limited: 7

37 With the funds herein appropriated, it shall be the agency's
38 responsibility to make certain that funds required for Personal
39 Services for Fiscal Year 2025 do not exceed Fiscal Year 2024 funds
40 appropriated for that purpose unless programs or positions are
41 added to the agency's Fiscal Year 2024 budget by the Mississippi
42 Legislature. The Legislature shall determine the agency's
43 personal services appropriation, which the State Personnel Board



44 shall publish. The agency's personal services appropriation may
45 consist of restricted funds for approved vacancies for Fiscal Year
46 2024 that may not be utilized for active Fiscal Year 2023
47 Headcount. It shall be the agency's responsibility to ensure that
48 the funds provided for vacancies are used to increase headcount
49 and not for promotions, title changes, in-range salary adjustments
50 or any other mechanism for increasing salaries for current
51 employees. It is the Legislature's intention that no employee
52 salary falls below the minimum salary established by the
53 Mississippi State Personnel Board.

54 Additionally, the State Personnel Board shall determine and
55 publish the projected annualized payroll costs based on current
56 employees. It shall be the responsibility of the agency head to
57 ensure that actual personnel expenditures for Fiscal Year 2024 do
58 not exceed the data provided by the Legislative Budget Office. If
59 the agency's Fiscal Year 2024 projected cost exceeds the
60 annualized costs, no salary actions shall be processed by the
61 State Personnel Board except for new hires determined to be
62 essential for the agency.

63 Any transfers or escalations shall be made in accordance with
64 the terms, conditions, and procedures established by law or
65 allowable under the terms set forth within this act. The State
66 Personnel Board shall not escalate positions without written
67 approval from the Department of Finance and Administration. The
68 Department of Finance and Administration shall not provide written



69 approval to escalate any funds for salaries and/or positions
70 without proof of availability of new or additional funds above the
71 appropriated level.

72 No general funds authorized to be expended herein shall be
73 used to replace federal funds and/or other special funds used for
74 salaries authorized under the provisions of this act and which are
75 withdrawn and no longer available.

76 None of the funds herein appropriated shall be used in
77 violation of the Internal Revenue Service's Publication 15-A
78 relating to the reporting of income paid to contract employees, as
79 interpreted by the Office of the State Auditor.

80 **SECTION 4.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the
81 State Forestry Commission shall maintain complete accounting and
82 personnel records related to the expenditure of all funds
83 appropriated under this act and that such records shall be in the
84 same format and level of detail as maintained for Fiscal Year
85 2023. It is further the intention of the Legislature that the
86 agency's budget request for Fiscal Year 2025 shall be submitted to
87 the Joint Legislative Budget Committee in a format and level of
88 detail comparable to the format and level of detail provided
89 during the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request process.

90 **SECTION 5.** In compliance with the "Mississippi Performance
91 Budget and Strategic Planning Act of 1994," it is the intent of
92 the Legislature that the funds provided herein shall be utilized
93 in the most efficient and effective manner possible to achieve the



94 intended mission of this agency. Based on the funding authorized,
95 this agency shall make every effort to attain the targeted
96 performance measures provided below:

97 FY2024

98 Performance Measures Target

99 Forest Protection & Information

100 Average Suppression Time (Hrs from
101 Detection to Control) 1

102 Number of Acres Burned Under a
103 Prescribed Burn Program 17,750

104 Percent of Fires Suppressed at 100 Acres
105 or Less 95.00

106 Forest Management

107 Forest Resource Development Program
108 Acres Regenerated or Improved 35,000

109 Acres Monitored for Insect, Storm or Disease 19,800,000
110 Re-Inventory 20% of State's Forest Lands

111 (% of Regions) 20.00

112 Percent Increase of Re-Inventory of
113 State Forest Land 20.00

114 A reporting of the degree to which the performance targets
115 set above have been or are being achieved shall be provided in the
116 agency's budget request submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget
117 Committee for Fiscal Year 2025.



118 **SECTION 6.** There is created in the State Treasury a fund
119 designated as the Volunteer Fire Department Equipment Conversion
120 Revolving Fund to be used by the State Forestry Commission to
121 assist in the conversion of vehicles acquired by the State
122 Forestry Commission through the Federal Excess Personal Property
123 Program or by volunteer fire departments through other means to
124 adapt them for use in the suppression of wildland fires. This
125 assistance shall be in the form of fabrication of water tanks or
126 other accessories necessary for the operation of fire suppression
127 units, installation of piping and valves, painting or other
128 similar or associated component work necessary to place fire
129 suppression equipment into service. It is not for general vehicle
130 maintenance or repair.

131 The Volunteer Fire Department Equipment Conversion Revolving
132 Fund shall be funded by monies received from charges for work and
133 services performed for volunteer fire departments by the State
134 Forestry Commission. Monies collected from such charges shall be
135 deposited into the Volunteer Fire Department Equipment Conversion
136 Revolving Fund. The State Treasurer shall make disbursements
137 therefrom for payment of materials, supplies and labor upon
138 requisition of the Forestry Commission and upon the issuance of
139 warrants therefor by the Department of Finance and Administration.

140 The amount of monies deposited into the Volunteer Fire
141 Department Equipment Conversion Fund through this work shall not
142 exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00). Funds in excess of



143 Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) shall be placed in the State
144 Forestry Commission's regular appropriated special funds. Monies
145 in this revolving fund are to be considered special funds and
146 shall be carried forward from one fiscal year to the next.

147 **SECTION 7.** There is created in the State Treasury a fund
148 designated as the Camden State Forest Revolving Fund to be used by
149 the State Forestry Commission to direct forest management
150 activities on the Camden State Forest in Madison County,
151 Mississippi. The forest management activities will include, but
152 not be limited to, maintenance of property, timber sale activities
153 and regeneration work.

154 The Camden State Forest Revolving Fund shall be funded by
155 monies received from timber sales, leases, and any other source.
156 Monies collected from these income sources shall be deposited into
157 the Camden State Forest Revolving Fund. The State Treasurer shall
158 make disbursements therefrom for payments of materials, supplies
159 and labor upon requisition of the State Forestry Commission and
160 upon the issuance of warrants therefor by the Department of
161 Finance and Administration.

162 It is the intention of the Legislature that any revolving
163 funds in excess of the budgeted amount needed for the necessary
164 operation and maintenance of all properties under the direct
165 supervision and management of the State Forestry Commission shall
166 remain in the Camden State Forest Revolving Fund for use in future
167 years.



168 **SECTION 8.** Of the funds appropriated in Section 2, it is the
169 intention of the Legislature that Two Hundred Thousand Dollars
170 (\$200,000.00) shall be transferred to the Department of
171 Agriculture and Commerce for the Beaver Control or Eradication
172 Program during the Fiscal Year 2024.

173 **SECTION 9.** Any funds in the Salary, Wages and Fringe
174 Benefits major object of expenditure may be used to purchase
175 accumulated compensatory time within the funds available.

176 **SECTION 10.** It is the intention of the Legislature that
177 whenever two (2) or more bids are received by this agency for the
178 purchase of commodities or equipment, and whenever all things
179 stated in such received bids are equal with respect to price,
180 quality and service, the Mississippi Industries for the Blind
181 shall be given preference. A similar preference shall be given to
182 the Mississippi Industries for the Blind whenever purchases are
183 made without competitive bids.

184 **SECTION 11.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the
185 funds herein appropriated shall be expended in compliance with
186 Section 27-104-25, Mississippi Code of 1972, that no state agency
187 shall incur obligations or indebtedness in excess of their
188 appropriation and that the responsible officers, either personally
189 or upon their official bonds, shall be held responsible for
190 actions contrary to this provision.

191 **SECTION 12.** The money herein appropriated shall be paid by
192 the State Treasurer out of any money in the State Treasury to the



193 credit of the proper fund or funds as set forth in this act, upon
194 warrants issued by the State Fiscal Officer; and the State Fiscal
195 Officer shall issue his warrants upon requisitions signed by the
196 proper person, officer or officers, in the manner provided by law.

197 **SECTION 13.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
198 and after July 1, 2023.

