

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND FORESTRY

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**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Additional resources ordered for NW Oklahoma wildfire**

Oklahoma Forestry Services has ordered regional and national resources, including firefighters, equipment, aircraft and a Type 1 incident management team to provide support and management of the large wildfire incident that has burned across northwest Oklahoma. The scope and complexity of the three fires, being called the Northwest Oklahoma Complex, warrants the need for specialized resources.

“Local fire departments, along with county and state firefighters, have done an excellent job of initial attack on the fires, but incidents of this magnitude take weeks to contain and firefighters in our state need some relief,” said Oklahoma Forestry Services Director George Geissler. “We are in the process of bringing in wildland firefighters, dozers and engines from Arkansas, Louisiana and Kentucky to provide that relief. We have also ordered additional aircraft to support suppression of this fire and others around the state.”

Oklahoma Forestry Services has been battling the fires in unified command with the Woodward, Buffalo, Laverne, Slapout and Mooreland fire departments since Monday and will be transferring command on Friday morning to the Southern Region Red Team, a Type 1 Incident Management Team. This type of team is utilized on the most complex incidents, utilizing national resources and establishing a system of procedures for organizing and managing personnel, facilities, equipment and communications.

“Having this incident management team focused on the NW Oklahoma Complex Fire will enable local fire departments to return to their regular duties and Oklahoma Forestry Services is able to maintain focus on statewide wildfire suppression,” said Geissler. “We are in an excellent position to handle additional wildfires.”

Aircraft has also been deployed to Oklahoma to support fire suppression, including single engine air tankers (SEATs), Type 1 Helicopters, CL-415 (Super Scoopers), an Air Attack Platform and has established an Air Tanker Base at Ardmore.

While Oklahoma Forestry Services is well positioned for new fire activity, officials are asking the public to remain vigilant in their fire prevention efforts and to prepare for the possibility of an increase in the number and severity of wildfires. The public is asked to use fire prevention tactics such as heeding burn bans, avoiding any activities that can spark a blaze, not allowing chains to drag from vehicles and not parking on dry grass.

Additionally OFS is asking the public to report any wildfires immediately through 911, avoid the vicinity of wildfires to allow firefighters faster access for initial attack and to heed all evacuation notices. Families are advised to have a plan for wildfire incidents. Homeowners can also make their home more defensible by moving trash, debris and other flammable items like firewood piles or portable propane tanks a safe distance away from their home.

Oklahoma Forestry Services is the state's lead agency related to wildland fire prevention and protection. For additional information about wildfires, visit [www.forestry.ok.gov/wildfire-information](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/wildfire-information).

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**Note to Media:**

For questions regarding the **NW Oklahoma Complex fire**, contact the PIO office at 405-586-0404

For the latest Oklahoma "Daily Wildfire Situation Report" visit [www.forestry.ok.gov](http://www.forestry.ok.gov) and click the link on the homepage (green box on right hand side.) The report contains information about recent fire activity, predicted fire weather and a link for current burn bans.

**About Oklahoma Forestry Services**

Oklahoma Forestry Services, a division of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, is committed to conserving, enhancing and protecting Oklahoma's 12.5 million acres of forests and woodlands. Since 1925, Oklahoma Forestry Services has worked with individuals and communities throughout the state to create resilient landscapes, fire-adaptive communities and provide wildfire response. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the division also has regional offices in Broken Bow, Wilburton and Tahlequah. For more information, visit <http://www.forestry.ok.gov>.