

TENTATIVE MINUTES (PENDING COMMISSION APPROVAL)

LOUISIANA FORESTRY COMMISSION

MARCH 10, 2026, 10:00 A.M.

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
VETERANS' MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM
5825 FLORIDA BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LA 70806**

NOTE: THIS IS TENTATIVE MINUTES FROM MARCH 10, 2026, MEETING OF THE LOUISIANA FORESTRY COMMISSION. A FINAL VERSION OF THESE MINUTES WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE AFTER APPROVAL OF THE COMMISSION AT ITS NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING.

CALL TO ORDER

The Louisiana Forestry Commission meeting was called to order by Michael Hudson at 10:07 a.m.

ROLL CALL

The roll call was conducted by Wade Dubea.

Members present: Glynn Pittman, Peggy Hagan, Dennis Aucoin, Dr. Allen Rutherford, Gradon Clemons and Michael Hudson.

LDAF staff present: Wade Dubea, Epney Brasher, Matthew Polk, Jade Saunders, Steve Bary, Tyler Cloud, Nicole Hawes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Wade Dubea commented on the budget being in a very good position with equipment. LDAF has approved Forestry to hire in vacancies.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Gradon Clemons made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 1, 2025, as presented. Glynn Pittman seconded the motion. All were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

BUDGET

Epney Brasher gave the budget report. The budget is at 59% completion for the fiscal year. There are several big items pending purchase. Forestry is concentrating on processing the requests for these items

in a timely manner to ensure they are ordered before the end of the fiscal year. A total of 31 dozers, 36 transport trucks and 29 plows have been ordered since 2022. To date, Forestry has received 31 dozers, 23 transport trucks and 29 plows.

DIVISION REPORTS

Wade Dubea gave the quarterly division reports.

Protection Branch: Wildfire totals across the state decreased overall due to some much-needed precipitation. Predictions are showing an above average spring wildfire season across most of the state, as varying drought conditions persist through Louisiana. The 2025 VFA grant application period began March 1, 2026. We have been receiving and processing 2025 Financial Disbursement forms. The 2025 grant cycle will be completed by June 30, 2026. CDL training courses are being held throughout the state for employees. 45 employees have attended these training courses and are in the process of completing the requirements to obtain a CDL. Forestry has 12 firefighter vacancies. LDAF granted permission to post vacancy announcements for all 12 of these positions. Forestry will begin working through the interview/selection process over the next several weeks.

Enforcement Branch: Total of six complaints received by Enforcement. Of these six complaints, 3 were arson/wildfire complaints, one was fire raising complaint and two were timber theft complaints.

Management and Forest Health Branch: There are currently 31 pre-approved FPP applications for 1972 acres. There have been 27 FPP applications paid out for 1336 acres and \$138140 out of 546 applications. With planting season winding down, payments are expected to start rolling in. There have been 3 Stewardship plans completed so far for 246 acres. 17 prescribed burns, totaling 3353 acres, have been conducted. 13 site-prep burns, totaling 272 acres, have been conducted. Fire crews have installed fire lines on 2569 acres that are to be burned by personnel other than LDAF. Supplies for the 2026 Southern Pine Beetle trapping season have been ordered and distributed. The three-lure combo will be used for trapping. This consists of the sirex sleeve, frontaline and endo-brevicorne flex lure. 46 funnel traps will be deployed and monitored across the state. This trapping period runs late-February through early April. The Office of Forestry will continue monitoring the ongoing issues of Brown Spot Needle Blight and Laurel Wilt in infested parishes. The Cogongrass Treatment Program is gearing up for the 2026 spraying season.

Aviation Branch: Aviation flew 351.1 hours, including hours for Fire Patrol, Maintenance, training and Enforcement flights. During Fire Patrol for the past 3 months, Aviation investigated 2302 “smokes”. Of these smokes, 95 wildfires were detected by LDAF Aircraft.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dennis Aucoin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Allen Rutherford seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:17 pm.