



Many milestones have influenced how the division has changed over the last 100 years, but its initial priorities have remained the same: protecting forests from wildfire, assisting landowners with forest stewardship, and producing tree seedlings for reforestation projects. From the early days of the Kentucky Division of Forestry to the celebration of our centennial the following timeline tracks significant events in the history of the Kentucky Division of Forestry and forestry events in our state.

1912

Creation of the Board of Forestry

By the early 1900s, Kentucky's forests had been over-harvested, cleared for agriculture, and charred by wildfires. In response to the depleting resource, the Kentucky General Assembly empowered a new Board of Agriculture, Forestry and Irrigation to act as a forestry commission for the state that included Kentucky's first State Forester, John Earle Barton.



Celebrating the Kentucky Division of Forestry's Centennial: Timeline of Forestry in Kentucky

1913

First Fire Protection Association

Under the guidance of the Board of Forestry, the first Fire Protection Association was organized in 1913 in Harlan County. Landowners paid a yearly one-cent-per-acre forest protection tax, and by 1915, the area of protection encompassed 200,000 acres and extended to neighboring counties.

First Tree Nurseries

Two state-owned tree nurseries were established in 1914 to raise tree seedlings and create state forest reserves. The first and largest nursery was located at the fairgrounds in Louisville, and a smaller nursery was created in Frankfort.



1914

First State Forest

In 1919, the Board of Forestry acquired its first state-owned forest. The property, located in Harlan County on the south side of Pine Mountain, was deeded to the Commonwealth by the Kentenia-Cartron Corporation and subsequently named Kentenia State Forest. The initial tracts of land at Kentenia totaled 3,624 acres. Today, KDF owns and manages ten state forest properties across the state encompassing over 43,000 acres.

1933

Civilian Conservation Corps Come to Kentucky

The Great Depression of the 1930s, as devastating as it was to the nation, had a positive impact on forestry. One of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). From 1933 to 1942, CCC camps were established in every state, including Kentucky.

Among other duties, the young men in these camps worked to reclaim forests by erecting fire towers, fighting forest fires, and planting trees. CCC markers, like the one located near Cumberland Falls, can be found throughout Kentucky.



1970

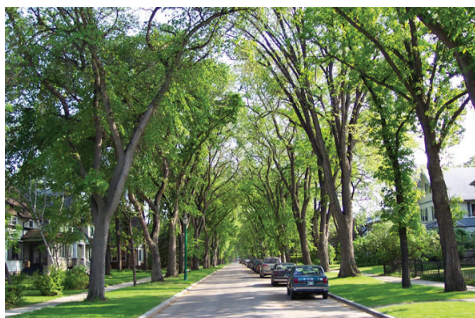
Fire Towers Give Way to Aerial Detection

The 1970s brought changes to the way the division located forest fires. Fire towers were retired from service, and the division began using aerial detection to spot fires. This method has proven effective in locating and suppressing wildfires.

1980

Kentucky Establishes an Urban and Community Forestry Program

The division established a program to provide technical assistance and funding to address the importance of urban trees for their social, environmental, and economic benefits.



1948

General Assembly Enacts Laws for Forest Management

The Kentucky General Assembly enacted laws in 1948 that provided for guidance in forest management. These laws serve as the foundation for the Kentucky Forest Stewardship program that provides technical assistance to private landowners for the purpose of sustaining forest resources.

1964

Arbor Day in Kentucky Designated as the First Friday in April

Although the Kentucky General Assembly established Arbor Day in our state in 1896 as a day set aside for recognizing the importance of trees, the actual day changed several times until the 1960's. At the request of the Kentucky Division of Forestry (KDF), in 1964, the Kentucky legislature designated the first Friday of April as Arbor Day in Kentucky.

1990

Forest Management Makes Strides

In 1990, the division's forest-management program was upgraded to encompass the federal Forest Stewardship Program. In 1993, the National Woodland Owners Association honored the division's Forest Stewardship Program as the finest in the United States.



**100 Years of Forestry
in Kentucky**



1998

Kentucky Forest Conservation Act

Two years after the creation of the Kentucky Forest Conservation Act (KFCA) in 1998, the division became responsible for inspecting commercial timber-harvesting operations. In accordance with KFCA regulations, a master logger must be on site and in charge of all commercial timber harvests and they must ensure that best management practices are being used to reduce and prevent nonpoint source water pollution.



2009

Discovery of Emerald Ash Borer in Kentucky Brings Attention to Forest Health

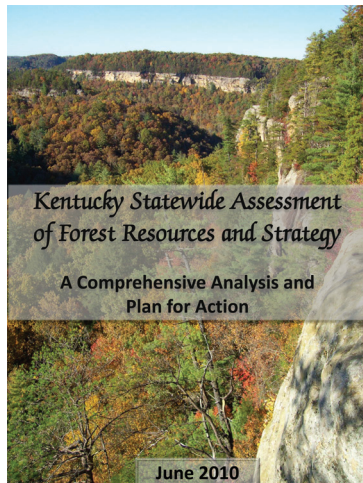
In 2009, one of the worst insect threats in recent history was found to have spread to Kentucky. The insect, known as the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), was initially discovered in southeastern Michigan near Detroit in the summer of 2002.



2010

Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources and Strategy

In 2010, KDF developed and published the "Kentucky Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources and Strategy" to serve as a resource for partners involved in forest-land management. The document also serves to inform the public and policymakers about the status and health of Kentucky's forest resources. Ultimately, the document, also known as Kentucky's Forest Action Plan, will influence projects and funding with respect to managing our forestlands.



2012

KDF Today and Tomorrow

KDF celebrates a rich history in forestry. Historically, the division has enforced forest fire protection laws, provided fire suppression on private land, conducted fire prevention activities, maintained a tree-seedling program and provided technical assistance to private landowners. In more recent years, the division has taken on community- and urban-forestry programs, timber-harvesting inspections, forest-health assessments, and environmental education. Our state is fortunate to have a forest resource that remains productive and diverse and with proper management, our forests will continue to provide economic and environmental benefits for hundreds of years to come.



100 Years of

Forestry in Kentucky