



Vol. 3, No. 5, May 2007

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Governor Declares State of Emergency



Wednesday May 8, 2007: The State Emergency Operations Center is now at Level I Activation for Wildfire Response. All sections, branches and emergency support functions have reported to the EOC. Emergency Support Functions that do not have active or potential missions will be released as appropriate. Staffing hours have yet to be determined.

Mark Fuller, Deputy Chief of Operations, FL Division of Emergency Management (850) 528-7530 (cell). (Photo: The Ware Fire in the city of Palm Coast, Florida burned 26,000 acres in 1998. Courtesy Florida Division of Forestry via FEMA)

Tallahassee: May 3, 2007 – Governor Charlie Crist today signed Executive Order 07-86, Emergency Management/Wildfires. With more than 90 percent of Florida suffering from drought conditions and many wildfires causing numerous home evacuations and road closings, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved the state's request for a Fire Management Assistance Grant. State authority, including the authority to order mandatory evacuations, is vested in the Director, Division of Forestry, Michael Long, for the duration of the emergency or until otherwise changed or revoked; the Director is also designated Incident Commander for the Wildfire Emergency

To read the complete text of Governor Crist's recent Executive Order, please go to www.floridadisaster.org/eoc/eoc_Activations/Press06/Reports/Wildfire%20EO%202007.pdf.

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SART Conference Is A Happening Event!



Why attend the SART Conference? Thousands of reasons, but principally because one person can make a difference. Rescue of North Carolina dogs after Hurricane Floyd. (Photo courtesy FEMA, UW-Oshkosh, Center for Fire Research-Australia)

An outstanding agenda for learning and networking with involved agencies, non-profit organizations and concerned individual professionals has been finalized for the 2007 Florida SART Conference at the Tradewinds Island Resort in St. Petersburg Beach! To make reservations – *it is only two+ weeks away* – please go right away to www.flsart.org/calendar/stateconference.htm!

Wednesday Afternoon, May 30

1:00-1:15	Welcome and Opening Remarks Tom Holt, Tim Manning, Joan Dusky
1:15-2:00	Past, Present, and Future of SART Tim Manning, Greg Cristy, Joan Dusky
2:00-2:15	Break
2:15-2:45	Safety and Security of SART Field Responders Tom Ackerman
2:45-3:30	Management Perspective on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response Strategies Craig Fugate
3:30-3:45	Break
3:45-5:00	The Terrorist and Criminal Threat to Agriculture Peter Chalk

Thursday Morning, May 31 (Three sessions to choose from!)

	<i>ANIMAL & PLANT ISSUES</i>	<i>SECURITY & FIELD RESPONSE</i>	<i>INCIDENT COMMAND</i>
8:00-8:50	<i>Foreign Animal Diseases: Part 1 of 2</i> Paul Gibbs	<i>Farm Biosecurity Practices</i> Matt Hersom, Keith Schneider	<i>ICS-700: Part 1 of 2</i> Lee Newsome
8:50-9:00	<i>Break</i>		
9:00-9:50	<i>Foreign Animal Diseases: Part 2 of 2</i> Paul Gibbs	<i>Agricultural Hazardous Materials Awareness</i> Dale Dubberly, Mary Hartney	<i>ICS-700: Part 2 of 2</i> Lee Newsome
9:50-10:00	<i>Break</i>		
10:00- 10:50	Plant Pests of Regulatory Significance Amanda Hodges, Ann Wildman, Richard Miranda	<i>Food Defense</i> Art Johnstone, Greg Cristy	<i>ICS-700: Part 1 of 2</i> Lee Newsome
10:50- 11:00	<i>Break</i>		
11:00- 11:50	<i>Africanized Honey Bee</i> Jerry Hayes	<i>Evidence & Chain of Custody Procedures</i> Art Wade	<i>ICS-700: Part 2 of 2</i> Lee Newsome

Thursday Lunch, May 31

11:50-2:00 Luncheon with Charles Bronson, Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

Thursday Afternoon, May 31

	<i>ANIMAL & PLANT ISSUES</i>	<i>SECURITY & FIELD RESPONSE</i>	<i>INCIDENT COMMAND</i>
2:00-2:50	<i>Pet Evacuation and Sheltering</i> Laura Bevan, Raquel Aluisy	<i>Field Response: Part 1 of 3: Activating SART</i> David Perry, Greg Cristy	<i>ICS-700: Part 1 of 2</i> Lee Newsome

2:50-3:00	Break		
3:00-3:50	Animal Rescue and Identification John Haven, Dennis McCullough	Field Response – Part 2 of 3: Role of Responders Tom Ackerman, Travis Kelley, Daron Swearinges	ICS-700: Part 2 of 2 Lee Newsome
3:50-4:00	Break		
4:00-4:50	Aquaculture Issues Kathleen Hartman	Field Response: Part 3 of 3: Future Challenges Tim Manning, Greg Cristy, Joan Dusky	FEMA Reimbursement Requirements Joe Kight, Charles Bartel, Michele Rallent

Friday Morning, June 1

8:00-9:00	Managing Critical Incident and Post-Incident Stress Heidi Radunovich		
9:00-9:15	Break		
9:15-9:30	Regional Domestic Security Taskforce Operations Art Johnstone		
9:30-10:15	The State of SART Programs Nationwide Elizabeth Wang, John Haven		
10:15-10:30	Break		
10:30-11:00	Role of the Florida State Emergency Board Kevin Kelly, Tim Manning		
11:00-11:45	Establishing a County SART Liz Wang, Travis Kelley, Raquel Aluisy		
11:45-12:00	Conference Evaluation and Closing Remarks Tom Holt, Tim Manning, Joan Dusky		

Noon: Conference Adjourns

Remember, go to www.flsart.org/calendar/stateconference.htm to register for this outstanding and informative event.

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Through the Grapevine

Partnerships

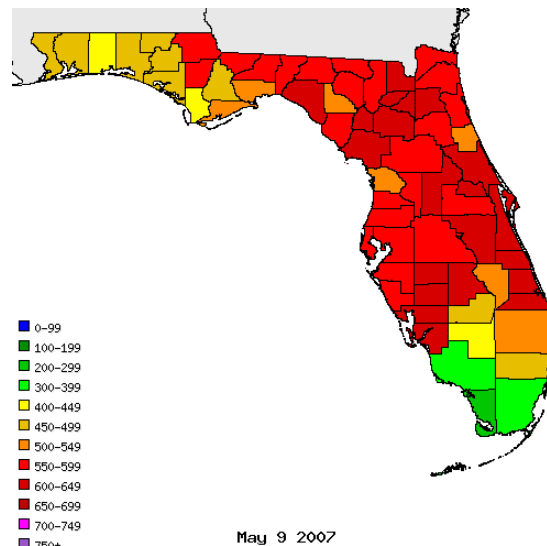
According to Shawn Crocker, president of the Hillsborough County Farm Bureau, “A partnership in these efforts will make our communities more efficient in handling animal and agricultural emergencies.”

Shawn Crocker

www.chaart.org/files/workshops.html

Drought and Fire

As I write this, I am past tired of smelling smoke from the fire in SW Georgia (and as of this moment in my home county of Alachua), but now there is an even more menacing presence, and closer to home: neighborhood evacuations and smoke from dozens – scores, of fires – several of which are burning out of control – in Florida. And it seems that every day now Chris Floyd, Chief Operations Officer of the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross in Tallahassee, sends an email about Florida’s worsening drought situation. So, I suppose the fires are a natural consequence of the lack of rain, other atmospheric conditions, general human carelessness and perhaps a touch of bad luck, as well.



Florida’s Keetch-Byram Drought Index.

Chris’ emails read: “Today’s Florida Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) from the State of Florida Division of Forestry can be found at the following URL: <http://redcross.tallytown.com/graphics/kbdi-01.png>.” The map at that address is astonishingly red, suggesting that the Sunshine State is bone dry. As of this date, however, nothing is purple ... yet.

In an effort to understand the “Keetch-Byram Drought Index” I ran across a map with even more sinister red marks, the FMIS or Fire Management Information System for

Florida at <http://tlhforweb2.doacs.state.fl.us>. (If this leads to an *Under Construction* page, go to http://flame.fl-dof.com/wildfire/tools_fm.html#FMIS and read down to the FMIS Mapping System “hot button.” That seems to always work.) This map updates as incidents occur, and they are apparently occurring now with great regularity. And it almost seems as if there is a pattern, with lines of fire following US Highways 19/98 north from St. Petersburg and Interstates 4 and 95 in North Central Florida, but that may be illusory

So here is the Division of Forestry link for understanding Keetch-Byram: http://www.fl-dof.com/fire_weather/information/kbdi.html. First proposed in 1968, it is based on measuring the moisture content of the soil and its covering layer of duff.

Now that we understand, let’s all pray for rain. (An odd request isn’t it with statewide hurricane preparedness tests underway and the June 1 opening of hurricane season rapidly approaching.) And hope there is no plague of locusts to follow

The Editor

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Through The Grapevine

Life Changing Experiences

“Our Katrina volunteers went to Hattiesburg [Mississippi] where most of the animals from the Gulf Coast were sent. It was the kind of job that is never ending. They never got enough volunteers to go to two shifts, so people would get up at five o’clock in the morning and go to bed at one o’clock [in the morning]. They said it was very sad to see all these animals and so many of them in such a sad state. Constantly feeding and cleaning kennels and walking them – they felt guilty, they said, if they stopped to take a nap. For the majority of us who are never involved in a disaster or an incident, we never know how far we can push ourselves or how long we can keep going when something like that really matters.”

Haven Cook
U.S. Forest Service
Member Big Bend DART

Red Cross DAT Training Workshops



Since it was founded after the U.S. Civil War, the American Red Cross has organized millions of volunteers to help their friends and neighbors following a disaster. (Red Cross photo)

According to Chris Floyd, Chief Operations Officer, Capital Area Chapter, American Red Cross (www.cacarc.org), “We recently completed two simple on-line, self-paced workshops to strengthen the response and casework abilities of Red Cross Disaster Action Teams. They are titled *Disaster Action Team Response Workshop* and *Disaster Action Team Casework Workshop* and both lesson plans can be found in PowerPoint form at <http://redcross.tallytown.com/dsu.html#datw>. Please feel free to share these with your Disaster Action Teams.”

Each of the Red Cross modules is illustrated. The purpose of the 37-page *Response Workshop* is to prepare Disaster Action Team members to be effective “first Red Cross responders” to home fires and local disasters and it gives guidelines for action at a disaster site. At 62 pages, the *Casework Workshop* is significantly more involved and its purpose is to complete client-related paperwork accurately.

These modules can be studied quickly and they help those of us who support but are not trained Red Cross volunteers understand the role of the agency Clara Barton founded during the American Civil War. Questions can be directed to Chris or to his office at (850) 878-6080 or by Email to ds@redcross.tallytown.com.

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Big Bend DART Sponsors Training – May 18-20



Big Bend DART holds yard sales and car washes to raise money for relief supplies for animal care.

Set aside Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday, May 18-20 for DART training in Tallahassee, and Haven Cook of Big Bend DART (www.bigbenddart.org) says you won’t be disappointed. Featuring intensive, but friendly hands-on sessions, you will learn to plan for your animals (and for yourself) so that a disaster will not find you disorganized. You will learn about disaster stress management, emergency pet shelters and how to handle large and small pets that may suddenly have been snatched from comfortable, familiar surroundings, handled

roughly and stuffed into trunks, small cages or even pillowcases. Disasters tend to be disorienting for humans and for their animals, and one of DART’s roles is to promote animal safety and well being in an emergency. It is also charged with being attentive to the needs of emergency animal caregivers.

To learn more about the training opportunities on the weekend of May 18-20, visit www.bigbenddart.org/index.htm. The weekend session costs \$75 and includes training materials plus lunch on Saturday and Sunday. The event takes place at the Prescribed Fire Training Center, 3250 Capital Circle SW. You can contact Big Bend DART at (850) 531-9759 or via email to DARTcat@comcast.com.

DART programs are affiliated with The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS: www.hsus.org). The Florida DART web site is www.fldart.org.

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Through the Grapevine

Worst Nightmares?

A former employee of Florida Power & Light (FP&L) forwarded photos that illustrate the unexpected wildlife situations that we in the Sunshine State – half in the Tropics, half in the Temperate Zone – encounter almost every day. A crew from FP&L was, he says, “putting in lines for an addition to the Orlando International Airport [and] found the following in a culvert they were using.”



The alligator was 18 feet, 2 inches long.



This pile of rattlers yielded 87 snakes.

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NFHR Merges With HfH



Daily grooming helps overcome damage caused by abuse.
(Photo courtesy Willamette University)

Acronyms can drive you crazy, but this headline means that NFHR – North Florida Horse Rescue, headquartered in Keystone Heights – has merged into HfH – Habitat for Horses (P.O. Box 213, Hitchcock, TX 77563 (866) 434-5737). Chris Dunn, the recent president and founder of NFHR, says that her organization will actually work for Habitat for Horses throughout the southeastern states, not just in Florida.

“The merger gives us a better foundation, broader scope and better financial resources, for taking care of horses,” Chris says, noting that the name, NFHR, is a bit behind the times now because her organization is multi-state and not only concentrates on rescuing horses following disasters, but also works to care for equines that have been abandoned, abused and neglected.

The NFHR web site at www.northfloridahorserescue.com is highly informative as is the HfH web site at www.habitatforhorses.org. Chris Dunn can be reached by email at cdunn@habitatforhorses.org or on her cellular telephone at (904) 626-1990.

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Note: Florida SART Web Site Honored



The team of web designers that has made the Florida SART Internet site so useful and easy to navigate at www.flsart.org was recently honored by University of Florida – Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences with a Gold level award. Kimberly Mansfield at the Institute for External and Media Relations said, “The UF/IFAS IMAGE Awards Program encourages and recognizes excellence in the events, products, services, and projects developed by UF/IFAS faculty and staff, including county extension personnel.” Awards were given at three levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold. **Go Team!**

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The Tropical Soda Apple



Botanist Charles Bryson clips tropical soda apple (*Solanum viarum*) plants in field experiments. The weed is found throughout the Southeast. (Photo by Peggy Greb)

Tropical Soda Apple. Sounds as though it ought to be on the grocery shelves alongside the mangos and carambolas, kiwis and papayas, pineapples and bananas.

According to the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) tropical soda apple is instead “a serious weed problem in many perennial grass pastures” Here are a few of this plant’s less glamorous attributes. To find out more about tropical soda apple, visit <http://tsa.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html>:

- The foliage, resembling some oak or fig leaves, is unpalatable to livestock.
- Produces 60,000+ highly viable seeds per plant.
- Can totally infest a pasture or native land in one to two years.
- Each soda apple fruit has about 400 seeds.
- A plant can grow up to six feet high ... and wide.
- The entire plant is armed with $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch long straight prickles.
- Fruit is a mottled mix of white and dark greens resembling watermelon. Mature fruit is yellow and $\frac{3}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter.
- Can form dense, impenetrable stands.
- Native to South America, it was first recognized in Florida in 1988.

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About the SART Sentinel

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The SART SENTINEL is an E-mail newsletter prepared monthly by Rick Sapp and the members of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team. Past issues of the *Sentinel* are archived on the Florida SART Web Site, www.flsart.org.

If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in *The SART SENTINEL*, please contact the Editors.

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