



News from the forest

Investigating Your Environment Workshop

Each year, North Carolina educational state forests come together to conduct an educator workshop called *Investigating Your Environment* (IYE). Due to COVID-19, IYE has not taken place since 2019 but made its return in 2023 when it was held July 15—July 21 in Crossnore, NC at the N.C. Forest Service Mountain Training Facility. Throughout the week, educators engage in activities from four focal areas: forestry, soils, wildlife and water, as well as various team exercises. Along with activities, educators were able to attend field trips to Linville Falls and Grandfather Mountain where they received tours to learn more about the history of the area. For N.C. Forest Service ESF rangers like Ranger Monique, attending the workshop for the first time means attending as a student before being able to shadow as an instructor to eventually lead the activities at the workshop. Check out what was in store for rangers Carrie and Monique during the week!



Visitor Hours

March 1– Oct. 31

Monday: closed

Tuesday-Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday/Sunday: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Nov. 1- end of February

Monday: Closed

Tuesday-Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday: Closed
4803 Sweet Home Church Rd.

Elizabethtown, NC 28337

(910) 588-4161

Turnbullcreekesf.ncfs@ncagr.gov

Visit all of North Carolina's state forests from the coast to the mountains. See N.C. Forest Service website for more information,
www.ncforestservice.gov

Fun Forest Find!

Common Snapping Turtle

Chelydra serpentina



The largest freshwater turtle in North America. A baby was spotted here at Turnbull Creek Educational State Forest.

After burn

On Jan. 12, 2023, Turnbull Creek ESF conducted a prescribed burn in one of our longleaf pine stands. It has now been a little more than 10 months since the burn and the vegetation has come back to life. Check out the images below to see how the stand has transformed following the prescribed burn.



The area before the burn



Five days post burn



Two months post burn



Three months post burn



Six months post burn



10 months post burn

Forest update and improvements

Kiosk installation and signage

TCESF completed and installed the last of the kiosks. The three remaining kiosks were installed at the Turnbull Creek Trail, fire control exhibit and the wildlife observation deck (pictured below). The kiosk at the front office even received updated signage to better direct visitors to the Mountains to Sea Trail (MST) segment and TCESF's 4.5 mile Duncan Trail. In addition to the kiosk signage, other signage was also installed along the MST and the Duncan Trailhead. These signs will offer better direction for hikers in areas where the Duncan Trail and MST overlap. A big thanks to Mike O'Neill, MST volunteer, for creating and installing the signs!



New dozer

TCESF received a “new” dozer for the Fire Control Exhibit from NCFS District 4. The dozer was previously used for fighting wildfires in Pamlico County until it was deemed unfit for active fire duty. The 1990 D5H dozer will be given new life and placed among the other dozer equipment on display. It will allow us to showcase how our firefighting equipment has advanced through time. Did you know that the first dozer used to fight wildfires in Bladen County is on display at TCESF?



Getting Started Outdoors Workshop: Deer Hunting

TCESF hosted its first ever Getting Started Outdoors (GSO) workshop with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. The program focuses on introducing people to hunting who have little to no experience. Attendees receive fundamental information and knowledge from instructors who are experienced hunters. The hope is for TCESF to continue serving as a host site for future workshops, so be on the lookout for more to come!



Difference in a year



During the longleaf pine “rocket stage”, pines begin growing rapidly in a short period of time. The before and after images to the left show just how much the species can grow during this stage. The left image was taken in July 2022 while the right image was taken October 2023. Look at those longleaf pines go!

Turnbull Creek Smokey Bear Poster Contest

TCESF held a Smokey Bear poster contest from Aug. 15 to Sept. 25, where grade school students were tasked creating a poster featured Smokey Bear and showcased at least one service offered by the N.C. Forest Service to the citizens of North Carolina. The theme was “What We Can Do For You”, coinciding with the N.C. Forest Service annual theme for 2023. One winner was selected from elementary, middle and high school. Prizes included Smokey Bear swag, N.C. Forest Service Turnbull Creek swag and N.C. State Fair swag including a family pack of admission tickets and ride tickets. Check out the winners and their posters below!

A special thank you to everyone who submitted a poster for the contest. We received some wonderful submissions and hope that you will join us in participating next year! We also would like to thank Christie Adams and Philip Jackson from the N.C. Forest Service Information and Education Branch as well as our Fire Chief, Gail Bledsoe, for serving as judges!



Elementary school winner Mason Horn



Middle school winner Mario Andrews



High school winner Myron Mckoy



TCESF Smokey Bear Poster Contest 2023 Submissions

State forest vs. state park

Often times people confuse state forests with state parks and therefore confuse park rangers with forest rangers. While there are similarities between the two, it's important to recognize what makes them different. See below for what major differences set us apart.



Upcoming Events:

- Fire focused PLT workshop coming soon! Stay tuned!
- Call today to schedule a visit!



The North Carolina Forest Service is a division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Steve Troxler, Commissioner

