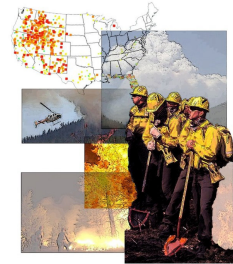


# National Fire Plan

## New trucks improve Louisiana preparedness

### 2003



For years the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry's (LDAF) fire suppression program had tractors, bulldozers and plows but no water support. For water they were dependent on local volunteer fire departments. If the volunteer engines were unavailable, LDAF's only means of attack was to remove fuels.

But now a National Fire Plan preparedness grant has changed all that. The LDAF acquired eight new Ford-350 trucks along with ten 200-gallon slip-on units. They acquired two additional trucks through the Federal Excess Property Program and now have a total of 10 type six engines statewide, affording Louisiana an unprecedented level of firefighting capability.

LDAF's Kirk Casanova is elated with the acquisitions. "These trucks will help us to better service prescribed burns and detect and suppress wildfires, and it gives us additional tools to operate in 'at risk' communities." In Louisiana, most communities are 'at risk' because scattered homes and subdivisions are mostly in forested areas. Until now the growth of the wildland/urban interface far outpaced the growth of rural fire support.

Casanova said the acquisitions will greatly improve the safety of both residents and firefighters and will improve cooperation with the volunteer fire units. The state is in the process of training firefighters in the use of the new equipment, which will make foam another viable tool for fire suppression personnel.

This NFP grant affects thousands of homes across the state by adding another dimension to Louisiana's firefighting resources and vastly improving pre-suppression fuels treatment and suppression capabilities.



New Ford-350 with 200-gallon slip on unit.



New Ford-350 with 200-gallon slip on unit.