

## Senate Resolution 329

By: Senators Gooch of the 51st, Hatchett of the 50th, Burns of the 23rd, Walker III of the 20th, Kennedy of the 18th and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending the Georgia Forestry Commission for serving the State of  
2 Georgia as an emergency response agency; the Worth County Unit on being named the 2024  
3 Unit of the Year for Service; the Fannin/Towns/Union Unit on being named the 2024 Unit  
4 of the Year for Community Engagement; Clark Rountree for being named 2024 Wildland  
5 Firefighter of the Year; and Kevin Lee for being named 2024 Forester of the Year; and for  
6 other purposes.

7 WHEREAS, the Georgia Forestry Commission has worked diligently toward its mission "to  
8 provide leadership, service, and education to protect and conserve Georgia's forest resources"  
9 and its vision of "healthy and abundant forests that support a robust industry while providing  
10 social, environmental, and financial benefits to all of Georgia" since 1921; and

11 WHEREAS, the Georgia Forestry Commission has protected Georgia's forests and citizens  
12 from an average of 3,000 wildfires burning 18,500 acres per year and has responded to  
13 historic wildfire events, including catastrophic fires in 2007, 2011, 2016, and 2017; and

14 WHEREAS, the Georgia Forestry Commission assists public and private landowners in the  
15 established practice of prescribed burning to reduce hazardous fuels, protect communities

16 from extreme wildfires, minimize the spread of insects and diseases, and improve habitats  
17 for threatened and endangered species; and

18 WHEREAS, employees of the Georgia Forestry Commission are trained to meet national  
19 standards as Firefighter Type 1 and Firefighter Type 2 or are POST-certified law  
20 enforcement officers, undergoing specific and rigorous training and assignments to maintain  
21 qualifications to respond to wildfires and all-hazards incidents; and

22 WHEREAS, the Worth County Unit was selected as the Georgia Forestry Commission's  
23 2024 Unit of the Year for Service due to its outstanding accomplishments in serving  
24 landowners through firebreak plowing, prescribed burn assists, and other services; and

25 WHEREAS, the Fannin/Towns/Union Unit was selected as the Georgia Forestry  
26 Commission's 2024 Unit of the Year for Community Engagement due to its exemplary  
27 outreach efforts, including Smokey Bear programs, educational programs, and other  
28 community initiatives; and

29 WHEREAS, Clark Rountree was selected as the Georgia Forestry Commission's 2024  
30 Wildland Firefighter of the Year in recognition of his outstanding accomplishments in all  
31 areas of wildfire mitigation and suppression; and

32 WHEREAS, Kevin Lee was selected as the Georgia Forestry Commission's 2024 Forester  
33 of the Year in recognition of his outstanding accomplishments in all areas of forest  
34 management; and

35 WHEREAS, employees of the Georgia Forestry Commission serve the citizens of the State  
36 of Georgia with dedication, heart, and determination, ensuring the safeguarding of

37 communities as well as the protection and conservation of our forest resources for the next  
38 generation.

39 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
40 recognize the Georgia Forestry Commission as an emergency response agency.

41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this body commend the Worth County  
42 Unit, the Fannin/Towns/Union Unit, Clark Rountree, and Kevin Lee for their outstanding  
43 achievements and recognition as the 2024 Unit of the Year for Service, Unit of the Year for  
44 Community Engagement, Wildland Firefighter of the Year, and Forester of the Year.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
46 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to State Forester John  
47 Sabo.