



News Release

For more information, contact:
Wendy Burnett
478.751.3535
wburnett@gfc.state.ga.us
GaTrees.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...JUNE 11, 2012

FORESTERS WITH LOCAL ROOTS **PROMOTED AT GEORGIA FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Three south Georgia forestry professionals have been promoted to new positions in the Georgia Forestry Commission's 17-county Satilla District, headquartered in Waycross. Each brings expertise and experience that will enhance local residents' protection from wildfire and provide a wide range of forest management services.

"We are fortunate to have these outstanding people working on behalf of residents in the Satilla District," said Rick Hatten, Director of Field Operations for the Georgia Forestry Commission. "This 5.5 million-acre district is no stranger to fire, and neither are these professionals, who can be depended on to provide expert leadership, service and education in the protection and conservation of this area's valuable forest resource."

Jason Gillis has assumed the role of Satilla District Manager. The 34 year old Coffee County native is a graduate of the University of Georgia's forestry school. In 2000, he joined the Georgia Forestry Commission, where his father also worked as Chief Ranger of Coffee County. As District Manager, Gillis will direct a diverse range of support, operational and program activities for the district, including emergency response, administration functions and long term planning.

"I never dreamed I'd do anything else," said Gillis. "I look forward to the challenges and rewards of managing this very special part of our state." Gillis and his wife, Sara, live in Douglas with their six year old son, Tymer and their newborn daughter, Eva.



Buck Kline and Bo Chesser have been promoted to Satilla Assistant District Managers. Both will have responsibilities in managing all district operations and activities.

Buck Kline, 42, joined the Georgia Forestry Commission as a forest patrolman in 1989, after graduating from Lanier County High School and attending Valdosta Technical College. Kline was chief ranger for Echols/Lanier/Lowndes Counties, a job previously held by his father in law, David Westbery. Kline lives in Naylor with his wife, Valerie, and their three children, Austin, Darsey and Jordan. Kline said he is looking forward to the adventure of his new job, especially in the area of fire control, and the "benefits I can bring to my district as a whole."

Bo Chesser, 31, joined the Georgia Forestry Commission in 2006 as a rural management forester in the Satilla District. Three years later he became chief ranger in Brantley County, where his hometown of Nahunta is located, and where his father also served as chief ranger from 1987-2003. Chesser attended Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and the University of Georgia, from which he graduated with forestry and wildlife degrees. Chesser said he has "always enjoyed the outdoors," and is excited about serving the area in which he grew up and still lives. Chesser and his wife, Cristina, have a three year old son, with another son due in October. They live in Nahunta.

Supporting the Satilla district operations as administration assistant is Jessica Lee, who joined the Georgia Forestry Commission last year. Lee and her husband, Kevin live in Waresboro. They have two sons, aged two and seven months.

For more information about the forestry industry and services provided by the Georgia Forestry Commission, visit GaTrees.org.

#