Ohio Division of Forestry Online Wildfire Reporting System
Fire Department User Guide

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Introduction

Collecting complete and consistent data regarding wildfires in Ohio is very important to the Ohio Division of Forestry for several reasons. The Ohio Division of Forestry is required to report state wildfire data and statistics to the United States Forest Service annually. Wildfire report information is critical in performing wildfire risk assessments and tracking various wildfire suppression and prevention issues in Ohio. And perhaps most importantly, when Ohio fire departments submit complete and timely wildfire reports to the Ohio Division of Forestry, the Division has the opportunity to support fire departments by providing monetary compensation (see page 23 for details). The Division of Forestry had an online reporting system in place for nearly five years. The system was becoming out of date and many changes were needed. This new version of the online wildfire report will be much easier to use and will be easier to maintain as well. This online wildfire reporting system enables fire departments to file wildfire reports in an easy, user friendly interface, and provides the Ohio Division of Forestry with comprehensive information about each reported occurrence.

Summary

Briefly, the way the online wildfire reporting system works is as follows: a fire department logs on to the system, determines the location of the wildfire to be reported on a digital map (aerial or topographic), creates a report with all necessary information, and clicks a button to submit the report. Upon submission of a wildfire report, an email notification is automatically generated and sent to alert a specified Division of Forestry administrator (usually the local Forest Manager) that a new wildfire report has been submitted and needs approval. The responsible Division of Forestry administrator then logs on to the system, examines and approves the wildfire report, and in doing so automatically generates an invoice for payment to the fire department. The Division of Forestry administrator then emails the generated invoice to Division of Forestry fiscal staff, and payment is processed. Benefits of this reporting system include a map-based wildfire location selector for accurate and easy wildfire position, quick and simple entry of fire report information, automatic archived storage of all fire reports entered, paperless reporting, and faster payments to fire departments.

The Online Wildfire Reporting System has two components: the Wildfire Report Window and the Wildfire Location Window. The Wildfire Report Window allows the user to enter a new wildfire report, view and edit submitted reports, file re-kindle fire reports, print copies of reports and invoices, and change their password. The Location Window allows the user to create and submit a new fire location for the Wildfire Report. Features of both the Location Window and the Report Window will be detailed in this document.

Software Requirements

Due to the nature of the online reporting system, high speed internet is necessary to ensure quality performance. The Division of Forestry Online Wildfire Reporting System was designed to be operated on most internet browsers (Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox, etc.).

Site Access – Production Site and Training Site

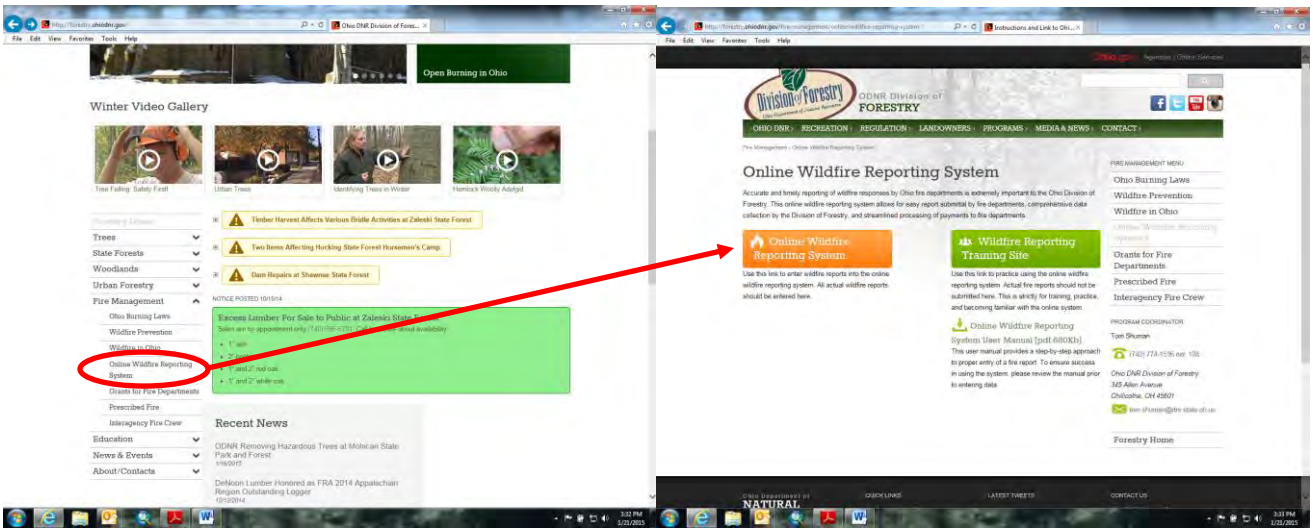
The Wildfire Reporting website can be accessed from the Ohio Division of Forestry website http://forestry.ohiodnr.gov/, then click the Fire Management tab, followed by Online Fire Reporting System - screenshots below). Notice that in addition to the reporting website, a training website is also available. The training site has identical look and functionality of the production reporting site. Its purpose is to allow fire departments to practice submitting reports without entering fictitious data into the production website. Please use the training site as much as needed; however, **be very careful not to mix up the two sites**.

Direct URL for the online wildfire reporting and training websites:
Production site:
https://apps.ohiodnr.gov/forestry/wildfire/
Training site:
https://apps.ohiodnr.gov/forestry/wildfiretrain/

The Online Wildfire Reporting websites are password protected. Your fire department will be provided with a username and password by the Ohio Division of Forestry. You must change your password after the first log-in through the Wildfire Report Management window.

Fire Department:_____

User Name:_____ **Password:**_____



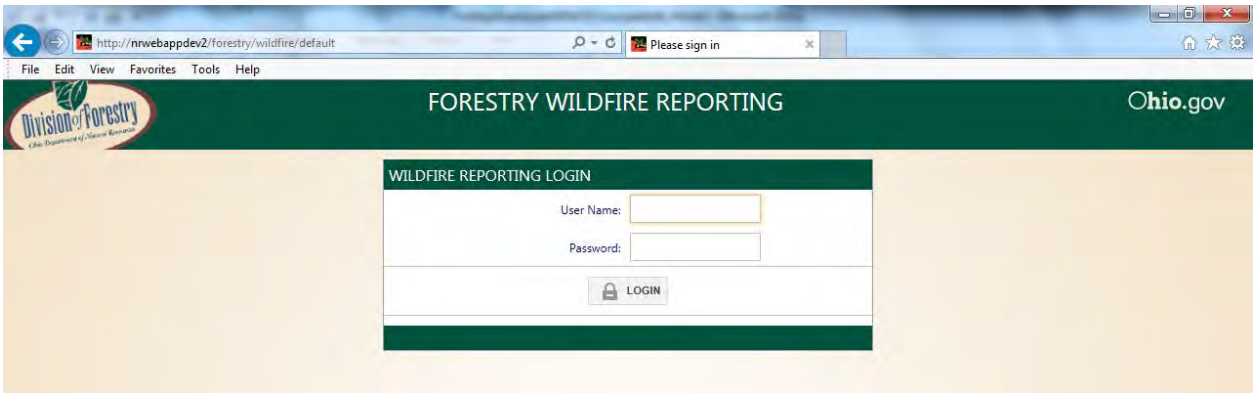
Forestry Wildfire Reporting Features

Log in through this window:

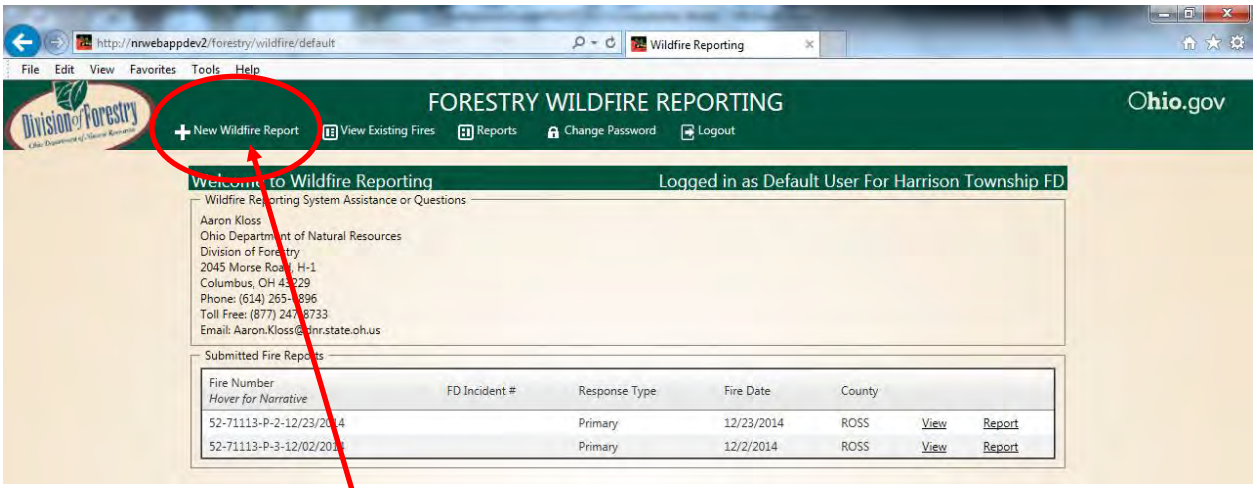
- **To enter a new wildfire report**
- **View, edit, print a report or invoice**

Enter a Wildfire Report

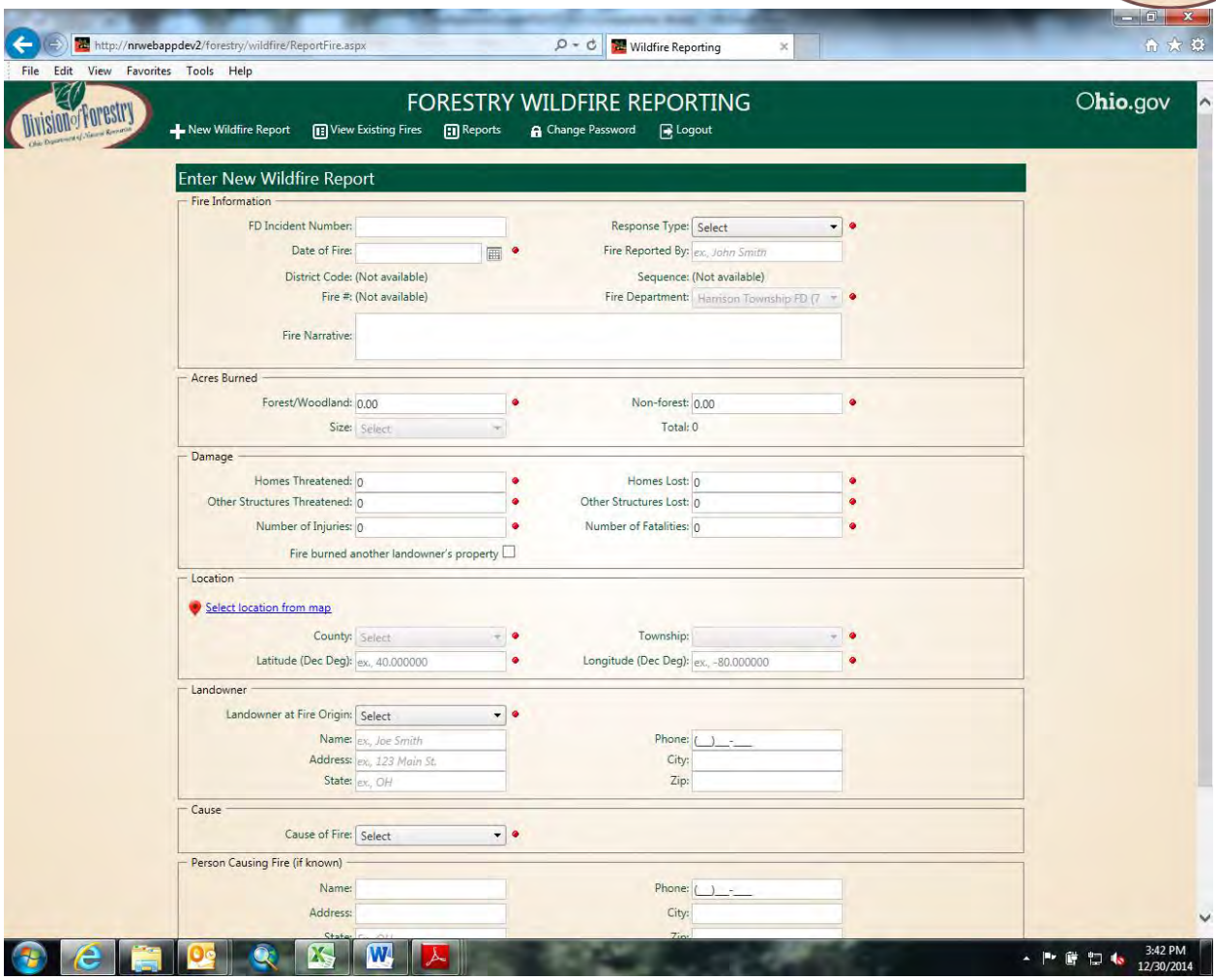
Access the Wildfire Reporting website via the Ohio Division of Forestry wildfire management homepage. **Be sure to select the correct version – Wildfire Reporting or Training.** You will be directed to the screen below.



Enter User name and Password to reach the screen below.



In the **Tool Bar** at the top, click **New Wildfire Report.** This will open the **New Wildfire Report** window. See screen below.



Notice that several fields have a **red dot** next to the box. These are **required fields** and must be filled in before the fire report is submitted. If these fields are not filled in, you will be unable to submit the report until they are filled. If your "number" is 0 under the **Damage** Field, no action is necessary and can be left as the default. If the number is greater than 0 it should be filled in appropriately. Also note the **Size** field is shaded light gray and will not allow you to enter information. This field is automatically generated and may not be edited by the fire department user. Two other areas with gray boxes that you cannot fill information in are the **Fire Department** field and the **Location** fields. The **Fire Department** field is automatically populated based off your log-in (FDID) and the **Location** Field is populated from the mapping window.

To begin entering a fire report, you can follow the outlined steps starting at the top and working left to right:

Fire Information Section:

- **FD Incident Number:** This is an optional field for Fire Departments to use. If you have a tracking number or system and would like to make sure this report cross references that number you may fill in this box. Otherwise you may leave it blank.
- **Response Type:** If the wildfire occurred in the primary response area of the reporting fire department, the Response Type will be **Primary**. If the wildfire occurred outside of the reporting fire department's primary response area, the Response Type must be selected from one of two options. Options are Mutual Aid and Mutual Aid Primary Response. **Mutual Aid** is self-explanatory; **Mutual Aid Primary Response** should be selected when suppressing a wildfire outside of your primary response area without any response from the local (primary) fire department.
- **Date of Fire:** Self-explanatory
- **Fire Reported By:** If known please fill in
- **Fire Narrative:** Please enter as much information as needed to give the person approving the report an idea of what happened on this fire. Information entered in this box is important if there is an investigation needed as well as for your own documentation. Please be sure to put comments in this box if there was an injury or if there were homes or structures lost or damaged. This will help ensure important information is documented and relayed in a timely manner. Please note that there is a three line limit to the amount of information that can be entered in this box. If there is further information that should be relayed please contact your local Division of Forestry Manager or Administrator.

Acres Burned Section:

- One (or both if it applies) category(s) need filled in. Small fires should be reported at a minimum of .01 acres.

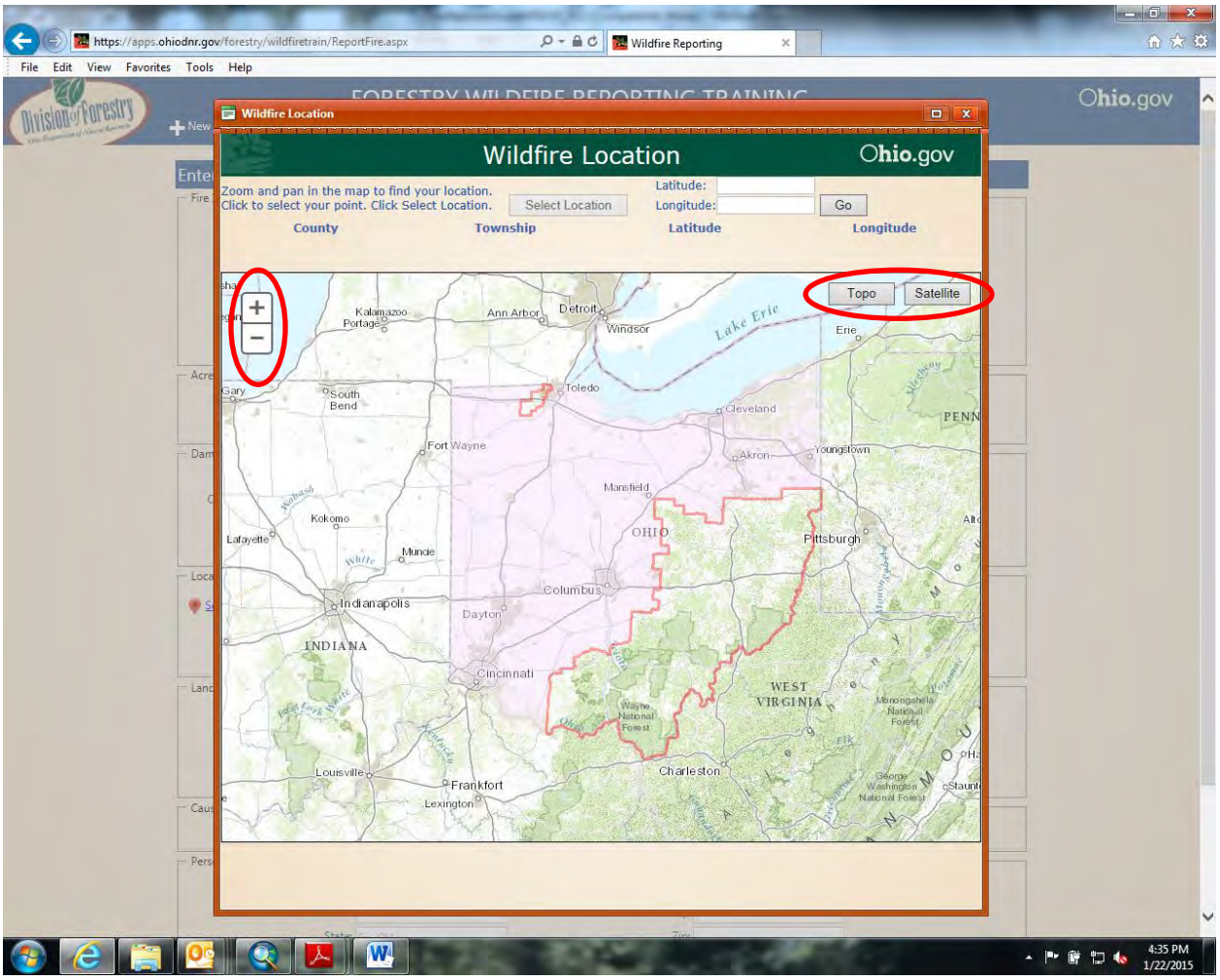
Damage Section:

- **Homes/Structures Threatened:** However many structures that were in the path of the fire that potentially could have been damaged or lost.
- **Homes Lost:** Number of homes that were destroyed past a livable condition by the fire.
- **Other Structures Lost:** Number of structures destroyed past a usable condition (will require being torn down or near complete replacement). These are constructed buildings, usually detached from other structures, such as barns, equipment sheds, loafing sheds, outhouses, etc. They do not include power poles, fences, pipelines, bridges, dog boxes, small woodsheds, RV's or cars, etc.
- **Number of Injuries:** Count only injuries that require overnight hospitalization. Minor cuts, bruises, or other injuries do not need to be reported for the purposes of this report. However, you could include minor injuries in the narrative if you wish to have the information documented.
- **Number of Fatalities:** Self-explanatory. Be sure to report further information immediately to your local Forestry Manager or Administrator.

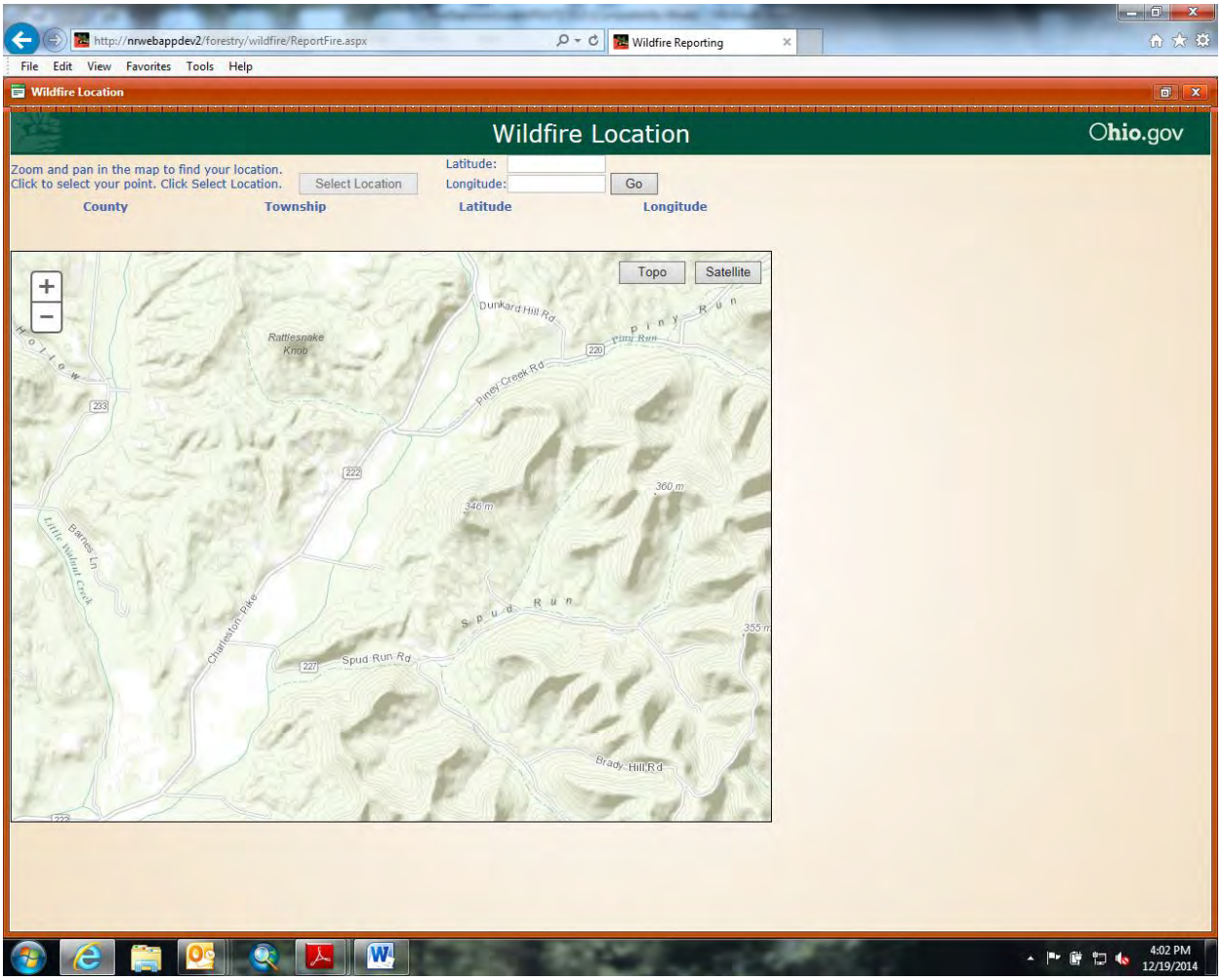
- **Fire Burned on Another Landowners Property:** Check box if it burned across the property line. This is important information if there is an investigation needed or warranted.

Location Section:

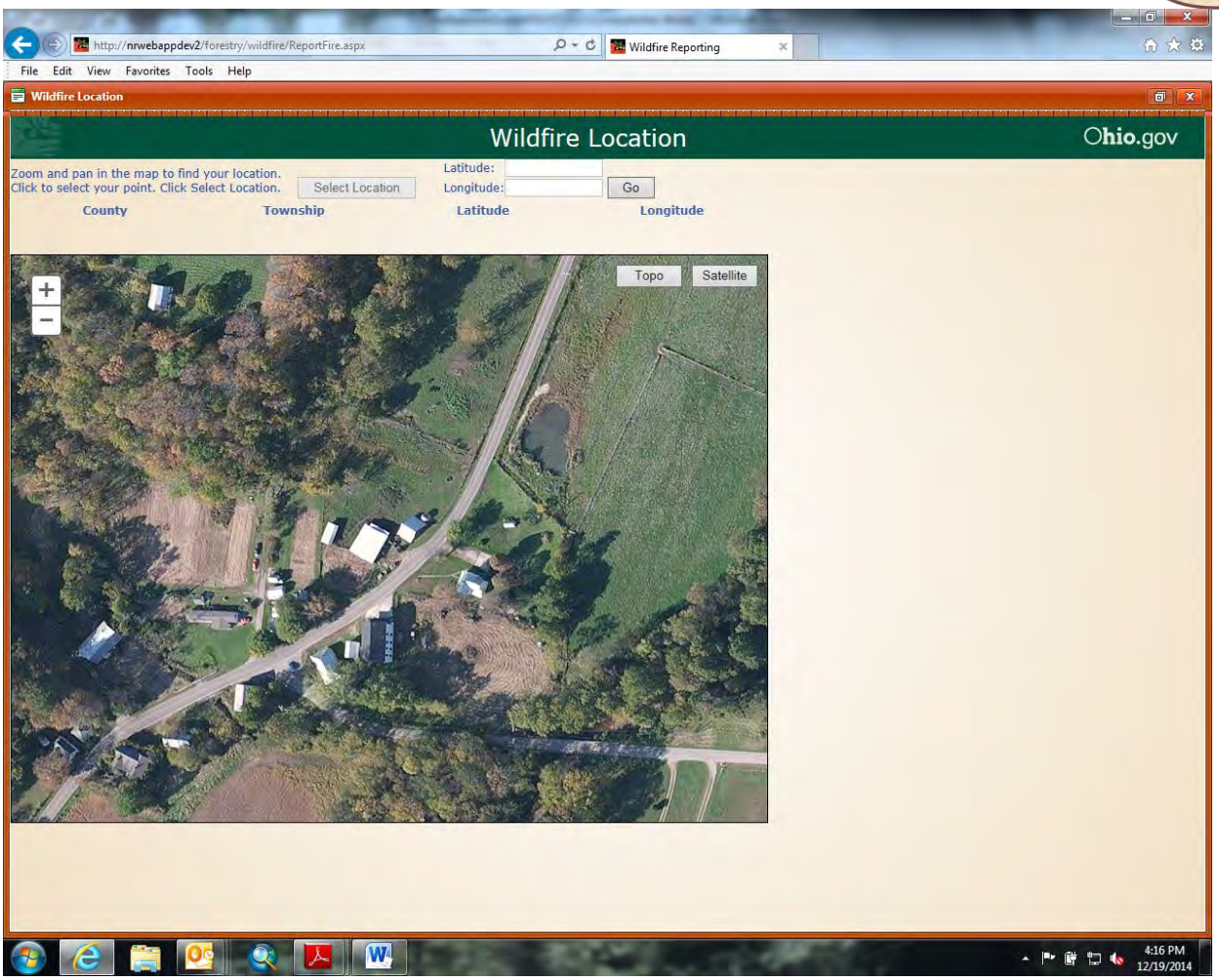
Using the **Select Location from the Map** button, a new **Mapping Window** should open that looks like this:



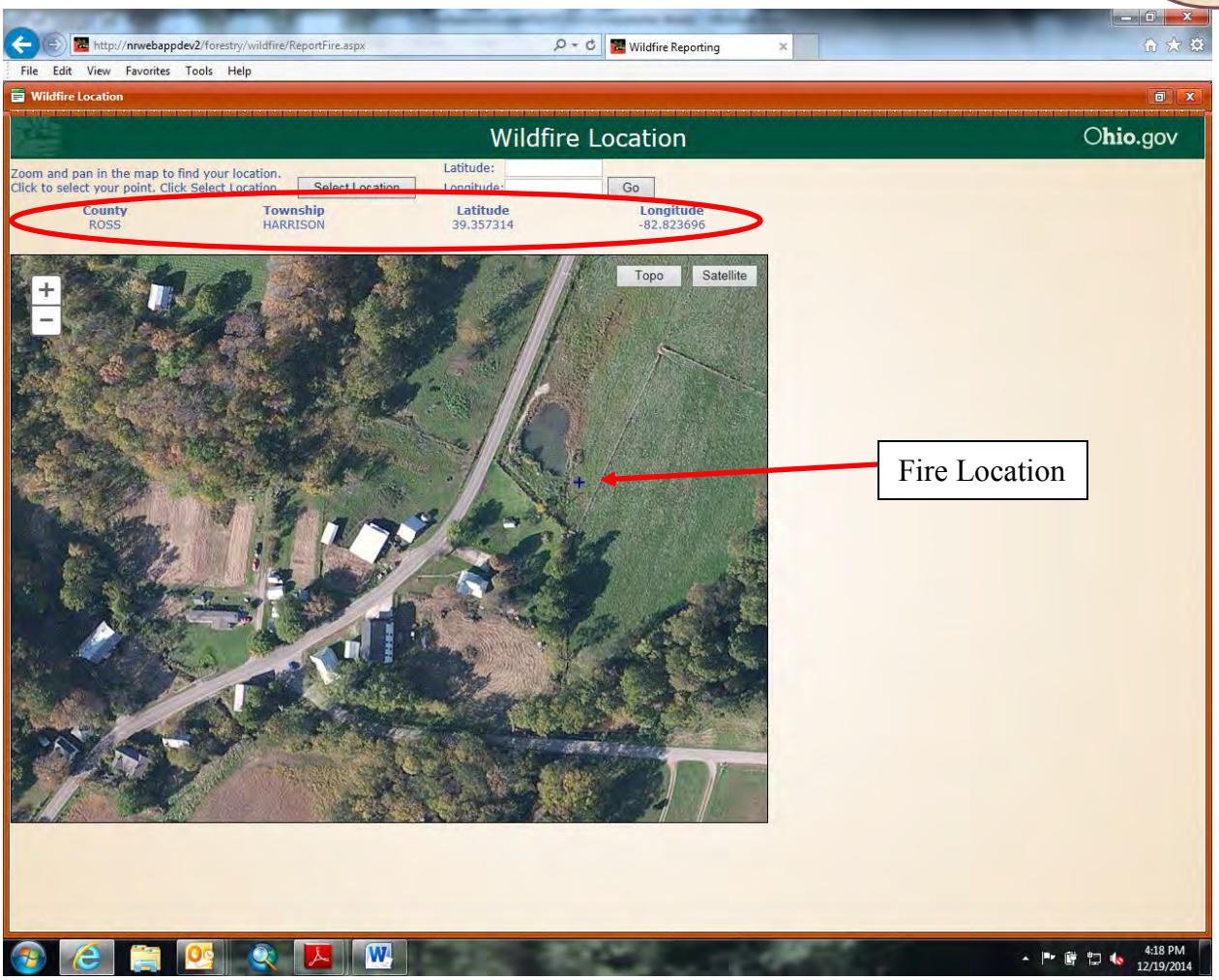
Here you may either enter GPS coordinates if known, or you can use the zoom to scroll to the area of interest. This map is similar to "Google Maps" or other web based mapping tools and should be familiar to use. The **+** is to zoom in and the **–** is to zoom out. You can use your cursor to pan the map back and forth in the direction you wish. If you are using a mouse with a roller button in the middle, this will zoom in and out as well. You will also see a **Topo** button and a **Satellite** button in the top right hand corner. You can use whichever base layer image you are more comfortable with. The **Topo** base layer includes county names, city and town labels, roads and rivers/streams. The **Satellite** view does not include this information. It is recommended that you use the **Topo** feature to zoom into the approximate location of the fire. You can then switch to the **Satellite** view once you are at the approximate location (if you desire to do so) to further refine the location of the fire. For example, you can start in **Topo** mode and zoom to your county and the nearest road intersection.



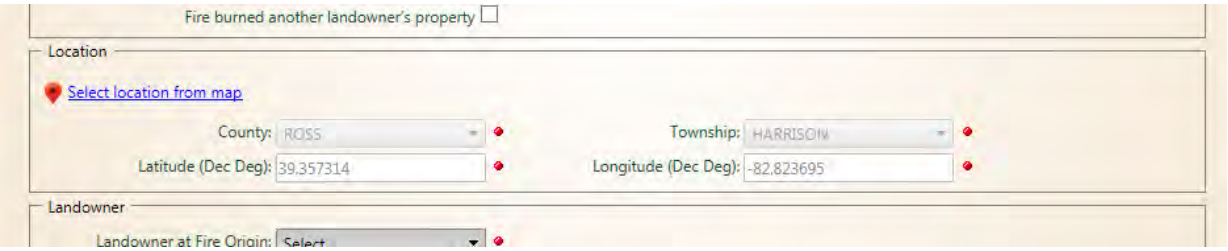
Now that you have the approximate location of the fire you can switch to the **Satellite** mode and further refine your fire location or you can choose to stay in **Topo** mode and use the topographic contour lines for your fire location. In this example we will switch to **Satellite** mode and zoom into a location just north of the intersection of Charleston Pike and Piney Creek Roads near the pond.



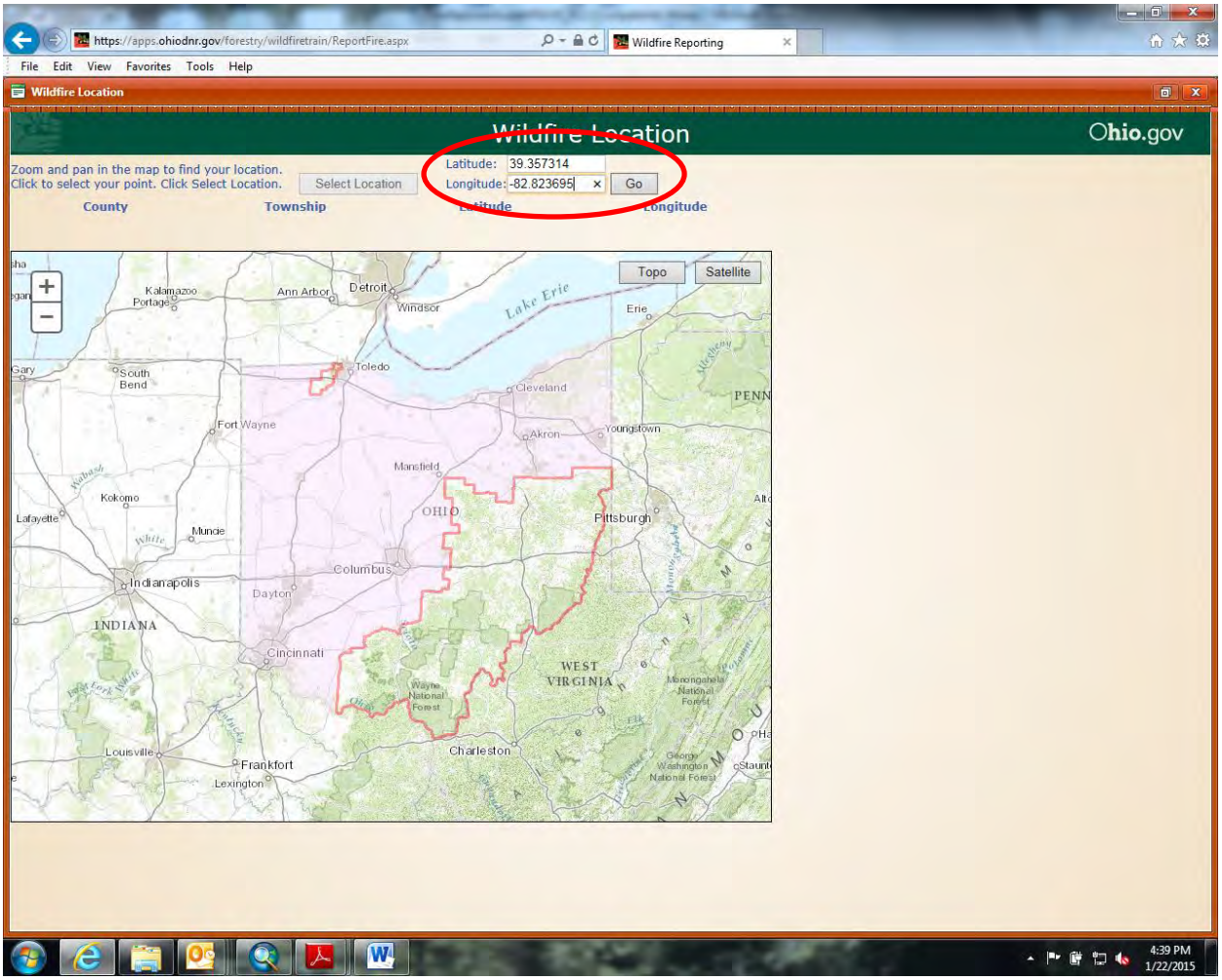
Once you find your fire location you will click on that location and a blue colored **+** symbol should appear. If you choose the wrong location you can keep clicking on the map until you find the correct location.



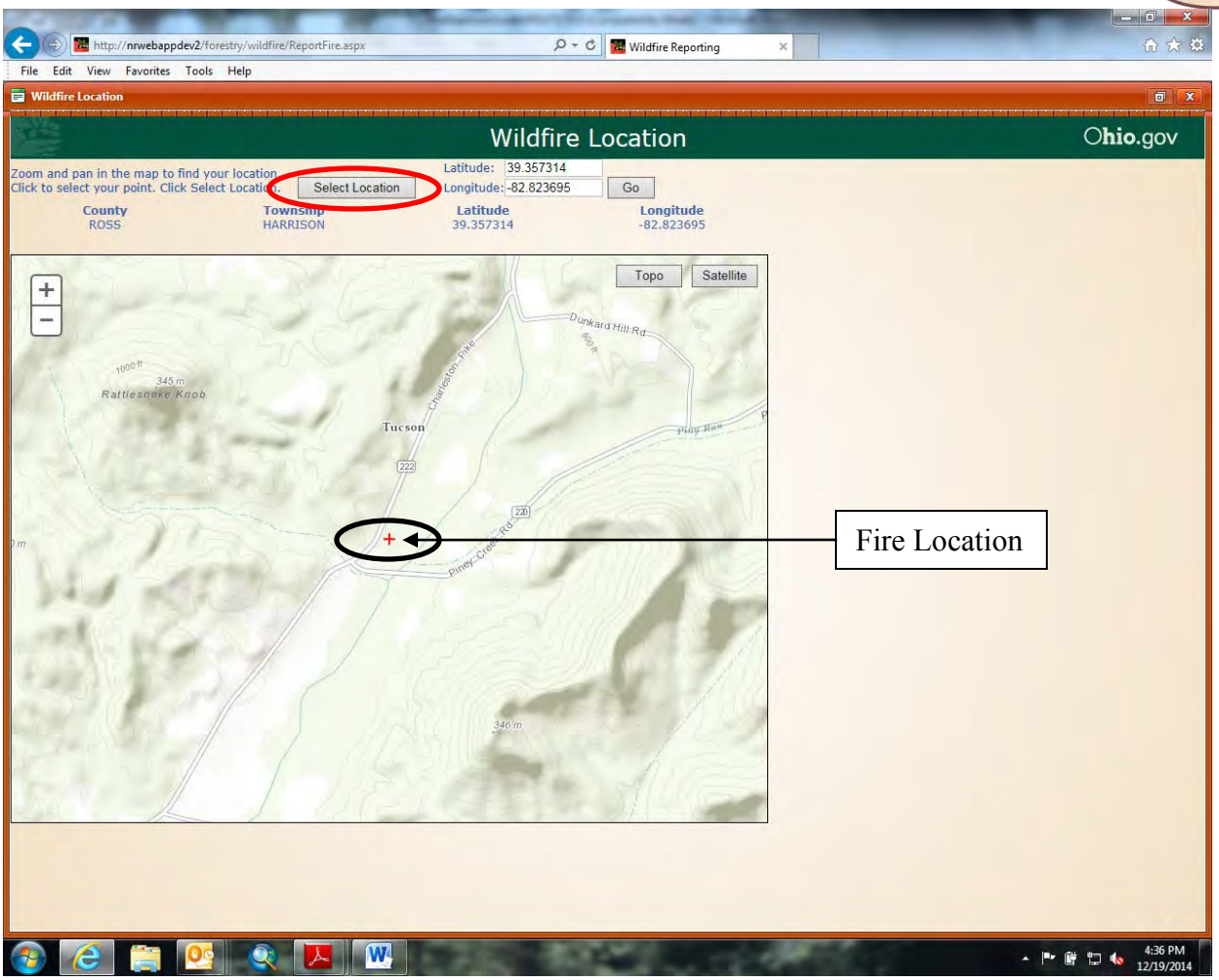
Notice the **County, Township, Latitude and Logitude** now show up. If the location of the fire is correct you can click on the **Select Location** box. This should take you back to the fire report page and the information should show up in the **Location** Field.



There is one other method you can use if you know the GPS coordinates of the fire. The format must be in Decimal Degrees (ex: Lat 40.00000 and Long -81.000000). First click on the **Select location from map** button. It will take you to the **Mapping Window**.



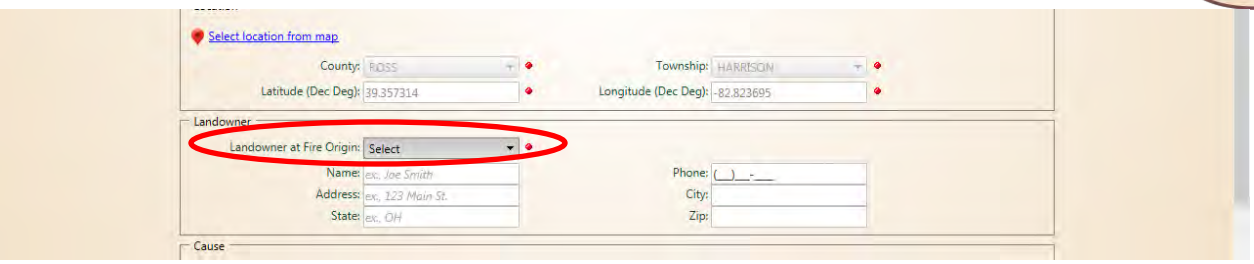
Then enter your **Latitude** and **Longitude** in the respective boxes in this window in Decimal Degrees format. Then click the **Go** box and it should take you to the fire location.



You should now be at your fire location. Notice that the **Topo** mode is the default view. You can choose the **Satellite** view if you wish and zoom in further if you would like to verify the location that was entered. However, you will need to be careful to not click on the map itself because it will change the location of the fire to wherever you just clicked; not the location you entered. If the location entered is suitable to you, you will then click the **Select Location** button which takes you back to the **Reporting Window** and populates the county, township, latitude, and longitude location fields appropriately.

Landowner Section:

- **Landowner at Fire Origin:** Pull down the drop down box and select from the different categories listed. **DNR** is used for all Ohio Department of Natural Resources properties; ex: State Forest, State Park, State Wildlife Area. **Federal** is used for US Forest Service Properties. **Other Public** is used for county or local parks, non-DNR State properties and any other publicly owned properties. **Private** is self explanatory.
- **Name, Address and Phone** are not required fields, however it is helpful information to list if an investigation is needed as well as information that can be used later if there are repeat occurrences at the same property.



Cause Section:

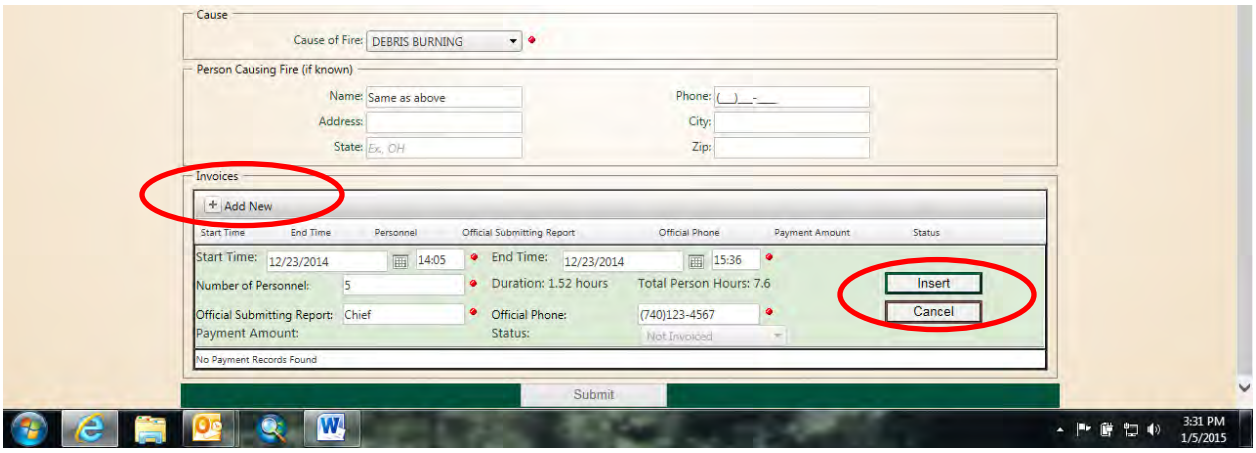
The fire cause categories are self-explanatory. If the cause is **Miscellaneous**, comments in the fire narrative box are helpful to explain the circumstances of the fire. **Structure** should be used if the fire was caused by a structure already on fire which then spread to the wildland. The reporting agency should use their best judgment to determine cause. This cause determination is not legally binding and is not meant to necessarily reflect the result of an official investigation.

Person Causing Fire Section:

If you know who started the fire and have information to provide, please fill out as much information as possible. If the information is the same as the landowner you may wish to simply put **"Same as above"** in the **Name** box.

Invoice Section:

Here you will enter start and end times as well as number of personnel on the fire. Click **Add New** to begin entering an invoice. See screen shot below for an example.



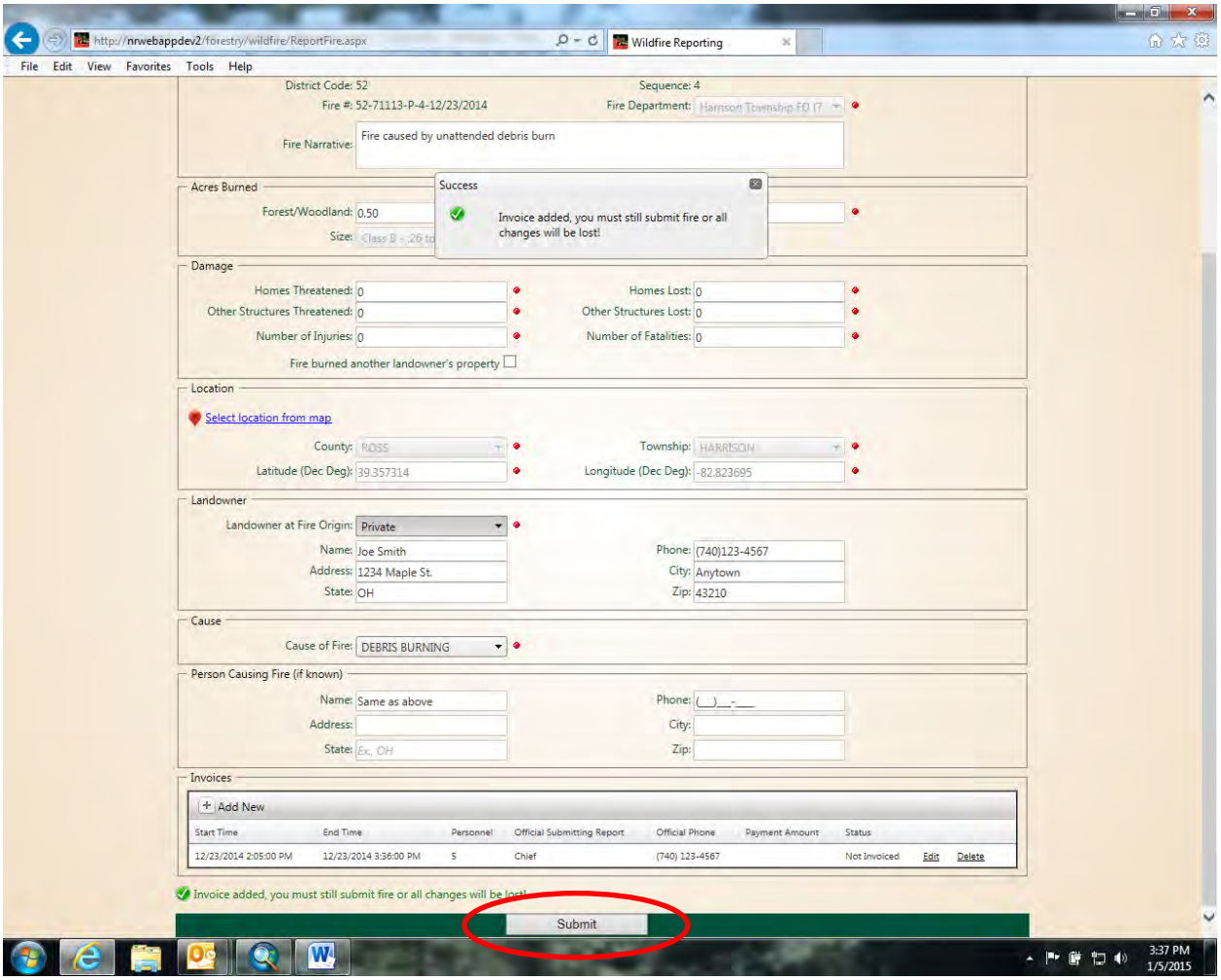
- **Start Time:** From the time your trucks leave the station.
- **End Time:** The time your trucks get back to station.

  * <u>If the hours worked on the fire span two days,</u> for example 22:00 – 02:00, be sure to change the dates, as the default is the date on which the fire started.

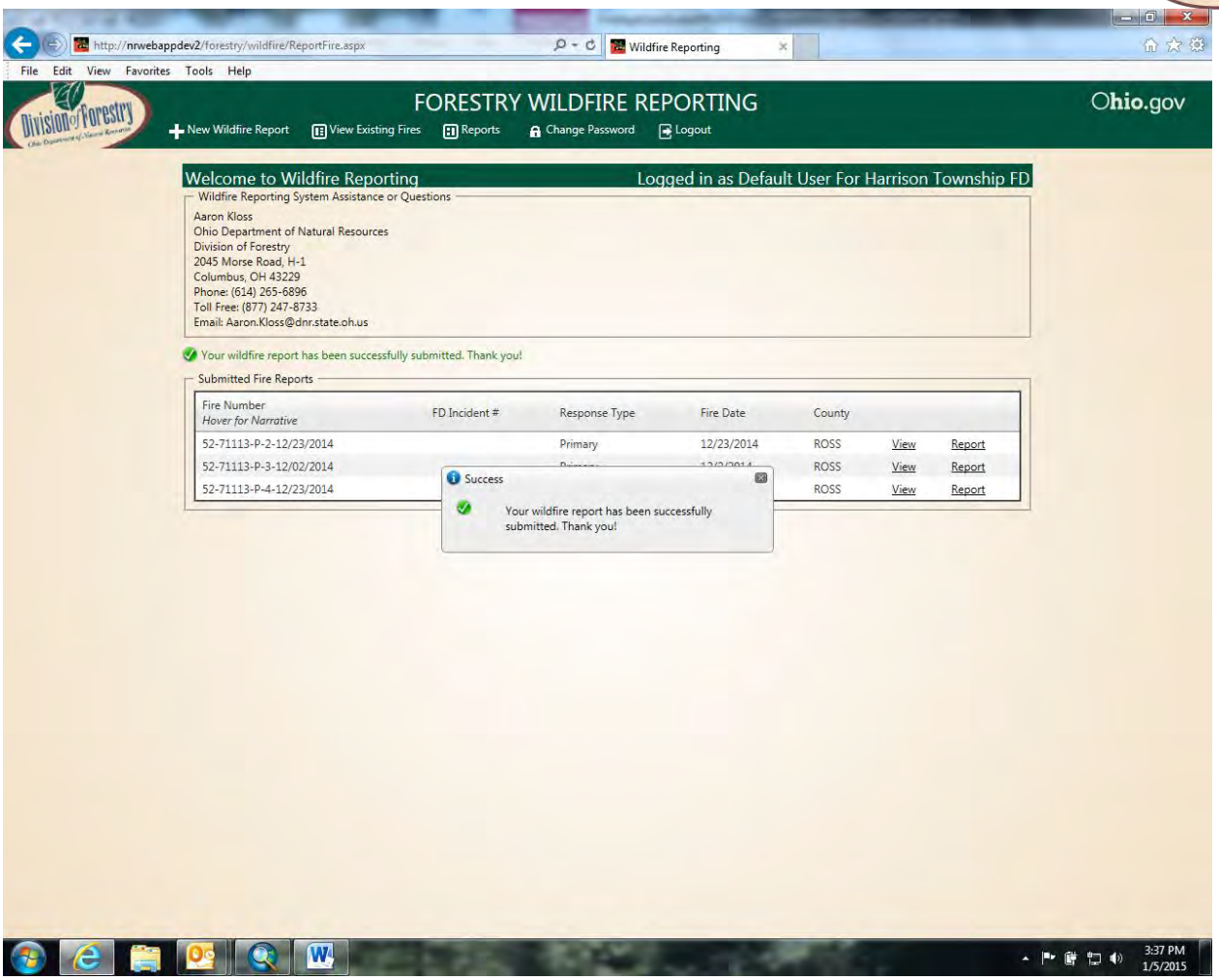
Note: Multiple "Invoice" records may be added to a fire report during one session. If a firefighter creates a fire report and has two sets of hours worked on that incident (first response and subsequent rekindle later on), he would add the first set of hours worked, click "Insert", then prior to submitting the fire report, click "Add New" on Invoice again to add the second set of hours worked.

- **Number of Personnel:** Number of personnel respondingfrom <u>your</u> department.
- **Official Submitting Report:** Title or name of person submitting report
- **Official Phone:** Please use the best number to reach the person submitting the report. If there are questions regarding the report we will use this number to reach you. A cell or home phone is best unless someone is at the station regularly.

Click the **Insert** button to submit invoice information. You should then get this screen.



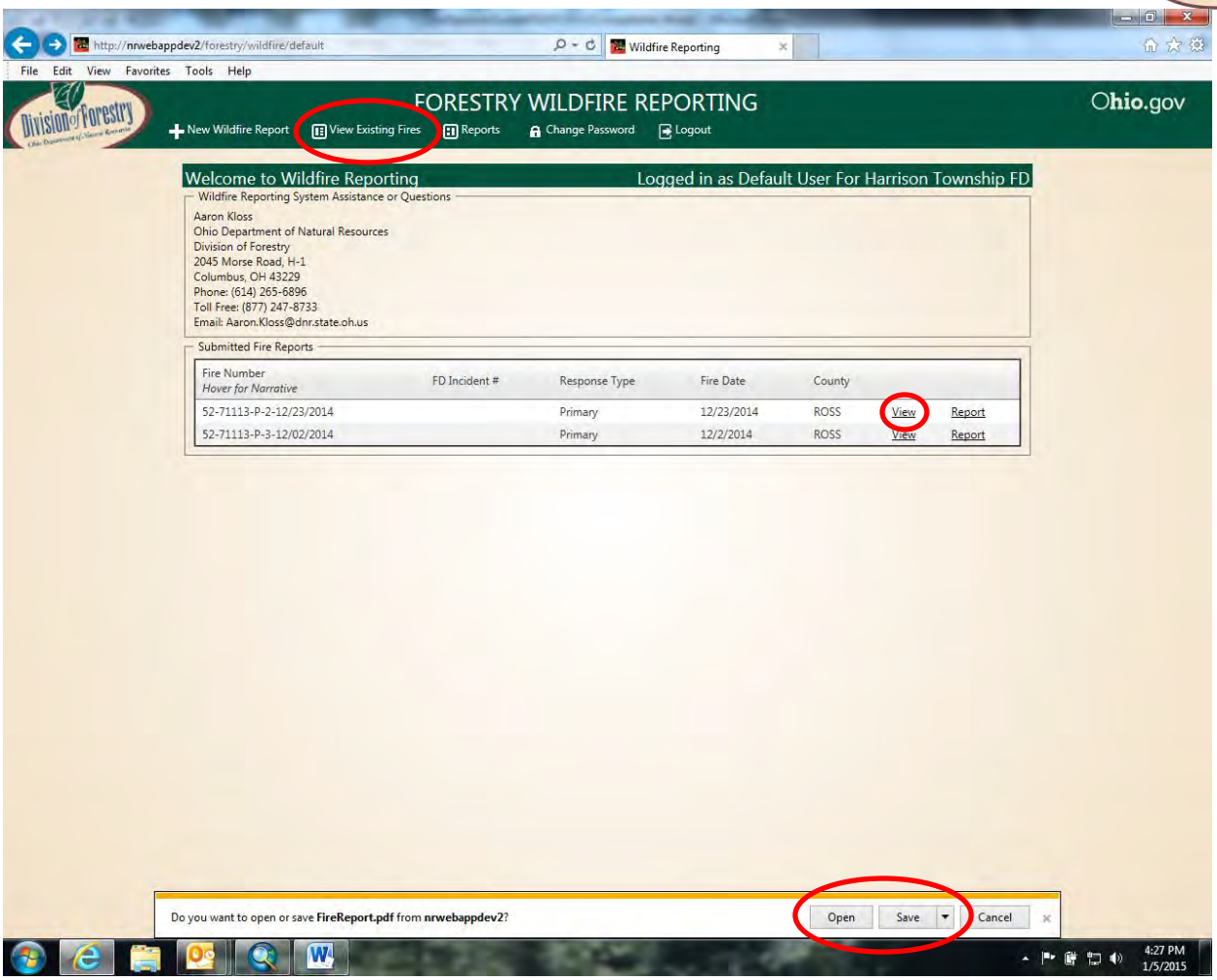
If everything appears correct and you are ready to submit, you can press the **Submit** button. It should then take you to this screen.



If you do not see the message that your fire report saved, you should go back into the system to see if in fact it saved or not. Checking past fire reports will be a topic covered later in this guide.

You have now successfully submitted a fire report.

OPTIONAL – Print or save a hardcopy of the report. All reports entered by fire departments will be maintained in the database and fire departments will be able to view and print them when needed, therefore this step is optional. Click the **View Existing Fires** button to generate the screen below. Then click the **Report** button. It should ask you if you wish to "Open" or "Save". You can open the report to view and then save the report where you wish or you can save the PDF directly to your computer.



Either way once you open the report it will look like the screen below. Again, the report may be printed or saved. Once the report is open you can use the Print button near the top left to print and the "File" – "Save As" button to save.

FireReport.pdf - Adobe Reader

ODNR Divison of
FORESTRY

Fire Number: 52-71113-P-2-12/23/2014

RESPONSE INFORMATION

Fire Department: Harrison Township FD
Response Type: Primary
FIDI: 71113
Landowner at Fire Origin: Private
Date of Fire: 12/23/2014
Fire Cause: Debris Burning
Date Wildfire Report Submitted by FD: 12/23/2014

FIRE LOCATION

County: Ross
Latitude: 39.357314
Township: Harrison
Longitude: -82.823695
District Code: 52

DAMAGE

Forest Acres Burned: 0.50
Homes threatened: 0
Homes Destroyed: 0
Non-Forest Acres Burned: 2
Other Structures Threatened: 0
Other Structures Destroyed: 0
Total Acres Burned: 2.50
Injuries: 0
Fatalities: 0
Size Class: Class B - .26 To 9.9 Acres
Fire burned another landowner's property: No

CONTACTS

Landowner at Fire Origin
Name: Joe Smith
Address: 1234 Maple St
City/State/Zip: Anytown, OH 43210
Phone: (740) 123-4567

Person Causing Fire
Name: Same As Above
Address:
City/State/Zip:
Phone:

FIRE NARRATIVE

Fire caused by unattended debris burn.

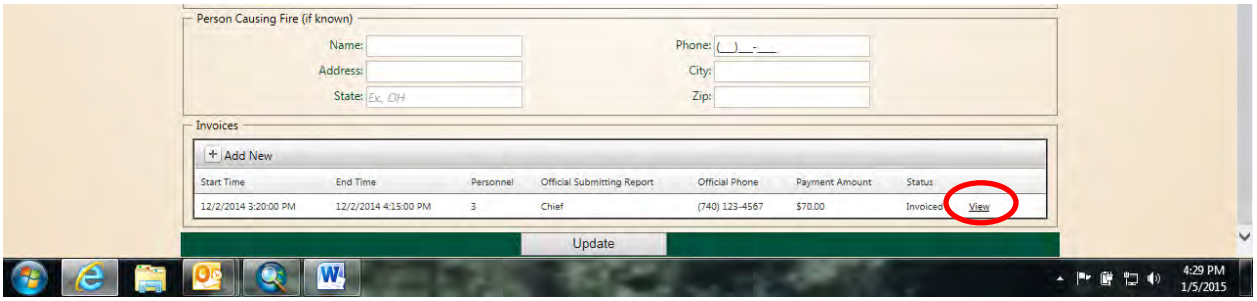
HOURS WORKED

Start Time	End Time	Duration	Personnel	Payment	Status
12/23/2014 2:05:00 PM	12/23/2014 2:36:00 PM	0.52	5	$70.00	Not Invoiced

View or edit a report or print an invoice

Notice that all fire reports filed by the specific user within the past year are listed.
Click **view** next to the desired record to activate that report. This will open the wildfire report form that was completed for that incident.
If edits are made to the report, such as a change in acres burned, the user must click **Update** to save the changes.
To view and print a payment invoice, click **View** under the **Invoices** bar. It will ask if you wish to "Open" or "Save" just like the report. If you open, this will bring up the invoice and you can print or save as needed.

Note: Invoices are not able to be viewed, printed, or saved by fire departments until the invoice is approved by an ODNR Forestry Administrator. Invoices that have not been approved will not have the option to View Invoice. The example below shows an approved invoice that can be viewed.



Add additional hours worked on a rekindle event

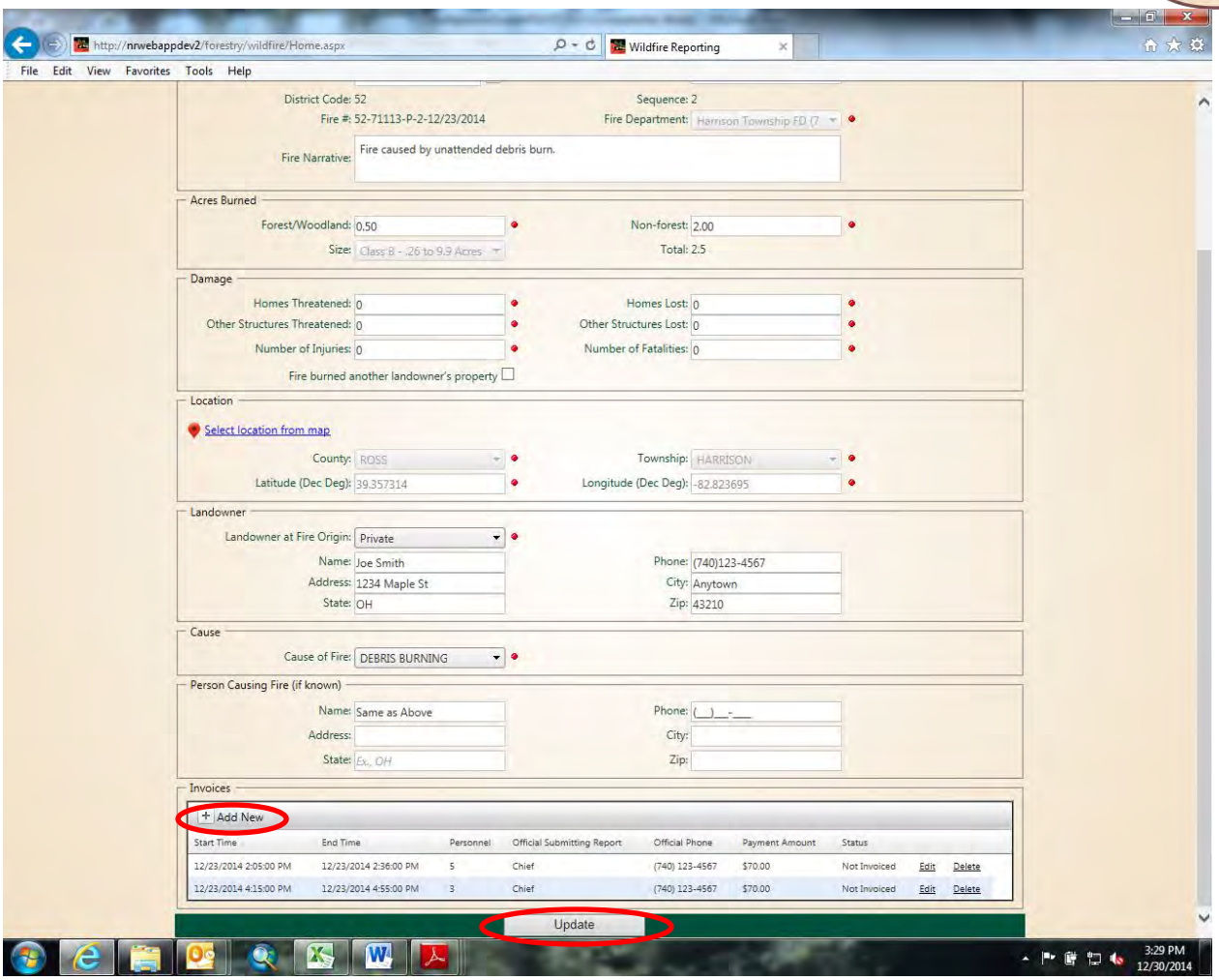
Do not create a new wildfire report for response to a previously reported rekindled fire. Simply add additional hours worked to the original wildfire report. This will prevent duplicate reports for the same wildfire.
If a wildfire incident lasts multiple days, this same procedure is to be used to report hours worked each day.

When a fire department must file a report for responding to a rekindle:

1. Log in to the Wildfire Reporting System
2. Locate the fire report for the incident that has rekindled and click **View**
3. Click **Add New** under "Invoices"
4. Enter time and date information as with a primary wildfire report.

NOTE - If the times and dates entered overlap with the first set of times and dates entered by the FD, the report will not be accepted and an error message will appear. Make corrections and continue.

5. Click **Insert**.
6. Edit **Acres Burned** and **Fire Narrative** if needed.
7. Click **Update.** Task is complete and the new invoice should be added. See screen below.



Change the password

Click **Change Password** and complete the process. **You must change your password after the initial log-in.** If the user forgets the password, contact the local ODNR Forestry Manager for help in restoring access to the system.

Common Questions:

What should I do if I lose my password?
If you lose your password, contact your local Forest Manager or other Division of Forestry administrative staff and they can assist in resetting it.

How can I become more familiar with using the new wildfire reporting system?
A training website has been developed for fire departments to practice entering wildfire reports and become comfortable with the process. This allows for actual entry of practice reports without contaminating the real report database. **Be sure to not mix up the training website with the actual wildfire reporting website.** A link to the training site can be found on the Ohio Division of Forestry wildfire management website. The direct URL is located at:
https://apps.ohiodnr.gov/forestry/wildfiretrain/

What do I do if Map Window permissions do not allow my fire department to create a wildfire report in a location that my Department responded to?
The Cooperative Agreement between your Fire Department and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Forestry only covers fire payments for fires that occur within the State's Wildfire Protection Area (shown as a red outlined area on the map). In some counties, this only covers certain townships within the county. The boundary for this area is drawn based on a number of factors but is generally the un-glaciated hill country in South, Southeast and Eastern Ohio. It also covers several townships surrounding Maumee and Mohican State Forests in the northern half of the State. While we value the work done suppressing fires outside of the Fire Protection Area, the agreements in place do not allow for payment of fire reports for suppression action in these areas.

What if I provide the only response to a fire that occurred outside of my primary fire department response area?
This is a situation where the Mutual Aid Primary Response Type should be selected.

What do I do if I create and submit a wildfire report and then realize that I placed it in the wrong spot?
1. If you add a fire on the map in an incorrect location and have NOT clicked create new wildfire report, simply reposition your fire location and continue reporting.

2. If you add a fire on the map in an incorrect location and click **Submit,** then the fire is committed to the system. You should note the fire number and notify your local Manager, as they have the ability to delete records from the system. If you have entered payment information into the report, you need to scroll to the record in the "Invoice" box and click **Delete**.

Finally, re-enter the wildfire report at the correct location and submit as usual.

Can multiple Fire Departments be logged into the system and submitting wildfire reports simultaneously?
Yes they can.

Help Contact:

Tom Shuman
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry
345 Allen Ave
Chillicothe, OH 45601
Phone: (740) 774-1506 ext. 108
email: Tom.Shuman@dnr.state.oh.us

Or Contact Your Local Ohio Division of Forestry Forest Manager or Administrator

Southern District Office:
Nate Jester – (740) 774-1506 ext. 101

Blue Rock State Forest:
(Guernsey, Licking, Muskingum, Noble & Perry Counties)
Dave Glass – (740) 385-4402

Dean State Forest:
(South ½ Gallia & Lawrence Counties)
Matt Morgan – (740) 532-7228

Hocking State Forest:
(Fairfield, Hocking, Monroe, Morgan & Washington Counties)
Dave Glass – (740) 385-4402

Pike State Forest:
(Highland and Pike Counties)
Greg Smith – (740) 774-1506 ext. 106

Scioto Trail State Forest:
(North ½ Gallia, Jackson & Ross Counties)
Brian Kelly – (740) 663-2538

Shawnee State Forest:
(Adams & Scioto Counties)
Dale Egbert – (740) 858-6685

Zaleski State Forest:
(Athens, Meigs & Vinton Counties)
Courtney Streithorst – (740) 596-5781

Northern District Office:
Gregg Maxfield – (419) 424-5004

Fernwood State Forest:
(Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Jefferson, Stark & Tuscarawas Counties)
Justin Law – (740) 266-6021

Maumee State Forest:
(Fulton, Henry & Lucas Counties)
Don Schmenk – (419) 822-3052

Mohican State Forest:
(Ashland, Coshocton, Holmes, Knox & Richland Co)
Chad Sanders – (419) 938-6222

Wildfire Report Payment Information:

The purpose of payments to fire departments is compensate fire departments for reporting accurate information on wildland fire incidents. It is not intended for full compensation for firefighting costs or equipment use. Payment is provided only if wildfire reports are submitted in a timely fashion and with complete information. Payment is based upon hours worked on wildfire suppression and location of the wildfire. Responses to any type of incident other than wildfires will not be paid.

Payments are provided as follows:
For wildfires originating on private lands within the State fire protection area:
Minimum Payment: Seventy ($70.00) dollars.
Applies to: Wildfires of two (2) hours or less suppression time.

For wildfires originating on lands owned by the Wayne National Forest or Ohio Department of Natural Resources within the State fire protection area:
Minimum Payment: One-hundred ($100.00) dollars.
Applies to: Wildfires of two (2) hours or less suppression time.

For wildfires within the State fire protection area exceeding two (2) hours of suppression duration, regardless of ownership at origin
Minimum Payment: Thirty-five ($35.00) dollars per hour.
Applies to: Suppression time greater than two (2) hours up to a maximum of ten (10) additional hours (12 hours total) rounded to the nearest whole hour.

Payments to fire departments are provided through the wildfire suppression fund, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 1503.141. The source of the funds is the continued sustainable timber harvesting program on state forests.

Payments are sent via Ohio Shared Services (OSS), a division of the Ohio Office of Budget and Management. All departments are responsible for ensuring their vendor information is correct within OSS. **If you are not receiving payments or they are not being delivered to the correct location, please contact your Division of Forestry Manager or Administrator so the address can be verified.**