



**Texas  
Sunset  
Advisory  
Commission**

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**STAFF EVALUATION**

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*Office of the State Forester  
Office of the State Entomologist  
State Soil and Water Conservation Board  
Texas Department on Aging  
Texas Commission for the Deaf  
Texas Advisory Board of Occupational Therapy*

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**A Staff Report  
to the  
Sunset Advisory Commission**

**1984**

**OFFICE OF THE STATE FORESTER**

**March 1984**

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## **SUMMARY**

The Office of the State Forester was established at Texas A&M in 1915 and was given broad responsibility for directing "all forest interests and all matters pertaining to forestry within the jurisdiction of the state." During the early years of the office's existence, the person holding the office was engaged primarily in teaching forestry courses. However, today the state forester actually serves as the director of the Texas Forest Service and bears no responsibilities independent of that position. The director of the Forest Service is appointed by the Board of Regents of the Texas A&M University System.

The results of the review indicated that the state forester is involved solely in directing the Texas Forest Service, which is under the jurisdiction of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents. These findings have led to the following recommendations:

### **Approaches for Sunset Commission Consideration**

#### **A. Evaluation of Programs**

The title of "state forester" should be changed to the "Director of the Texas Forest Service" to more accurately reflect the current duties of the office.



**AGENCY EVALUATION**

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The review of the current operations of an agency is based on several criteria contained in the Sunset Act. The analysis made under these criteria is intended to give answers to the following basic questions:

1. Does the policy-making structure of the agency fairly reflect the interests served by the agency?
  2. Does the agency operate efficiently?
  3. Has the agency been effective in meeting its statutory requirements?
  4. Do the agency's programs overlap or duplicate programs of other agencies to a degree that presents serious problems?
  5. Is the agency carrying out only those programs authorized by the legislature?
  6. If the agency is abolished, could the state reasonably expect federal intervention or a substantial loss of federal funds?
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## **REVIEW OF OPERATIONS**

### **Background**

The Office of the State Forester was created in 1915 and is currently active. The state forester is the director of the Texas Forest Service which operates under the Texas A&M University System at College Station. The state forester is appointed by the Board of Regents of the Texas A&M University System and administers the Texas Forest Service. This review addresses only the Office of the State Forester and does not cover the operations of the Texas Forest Service as a whole.

When the Office of the State Forester was established, it was given broad responsibility for promoting and assisting in the practice of forestry by Texas land and timber owners. The state forester also was given the title of Chief of the Division of Forestry (which was once a component of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station) and was professor of forestry in the academic division of Texas A&M University. At that time, the state forester was primarily involved in teaching forestry courses at Texas A&M. However, in 1921, the state legislature eliminated the teaching responsibilities of the state forester, thereby allowing him to devote full attention to forest related activities conducted by the Division of Forestry. In 1926, the Division of Forestry was renamed the Texas Forest Service and the state forester was given the additional title of director of the Texas Forest Service. Since that time, the state forester continues to act as director of the Texas Forest Service and bears no responsibilities or duties independent of that position.

The Texas Forest Service, which is under the jurisdiction of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, currently employs approximately 400 persons who carry out various forestry programs on an annual budget of approximately \$11 million from general revenue and other sources for fiscal year 1984.

### **Evaluation of Programs**

As noted above, the review of the Office of the State Forester focused only on that office and did not extend to an evaluation of the Texas Forest Service as a whole. The review focused on identifying the various responsibilities of the State Forester beyond that of the Director of the Forest Service to determine whether

these duties were appropriately assigned to the forester. The results of the review follow.

**The title of "state forester" should be updated to reflect current duties.**

Through the review, it was determined that the sole remaining responsibility of the State Forester is to direct the Texas Forest Service. Historically, the Office of the State Forester was established in 1915 for the purpose of assisting and promoting the practice of forestry by landowners. Originally, this was accomplished through the educational process, with the state forester primarily being engaged in teaching forestry courses at Texas A&M. By 1926, the state forester had been given the title of director of the Texas Forest Service and had been relieved of teaching duties in order to devote full attention to forest service activities. From this time to the present, all duties of the forester have been related to his position as director of the forest service.

In order to reduce possible misunderstanding, it is a general rule that agency and position titles should accurately reflect their duties and operations. Currently, the state forester has no duties or responsibilities which are separate from his activities as director of the forest service. Therefore, in order to more accurately reflect actual duties and responsibilities, the title of "State Forester" should be changed to the "Director of the Texas Forest Service."