



## News Release

For Immediate Release

VDOF 10-035

Contact: John W. Campbell Jr. 434.220.9070/434.989.0665

Nov. 17, 2010

### **Reward Offered for Arson Fires in Montgomery County**

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) is offering a reward of **up to \$2,000** for information leading to the arrest and prosecution of the person or people responsible for two woods fires that burned almost 450 acres last week in Montgomery County.

More than 10 homes and several other structures were threatened November 9<sup>th</sup> in the 241-acre fire just west of Blacksburg on Prices Fork Road. On Saturday, a fire off McCoy Road in Montgomery County burned 207 acres near a highly popular recreational area called Big Falls.

Investigators with the VDOF believe the two fires are related and are looking to the community for information that would help solve the cases.

Firefighters from VDOF, Virginia Tech and several local fire departments responded to the two blazes. After the fires were contained, a VDOF investigative team went in to determine the cause and origin of each of the wildland fires. Today, the investigators ruled the causes of both as arson.

Ed Stoots, regional forester in the Western Region, said, "Woods arson is a felony. Whoever started these fires put dozens of citizens' lives and their property at risk. We would very much like to hear from anyone who can help us bring this person or these people to justice."

Anyone with information about either of these fires is asked to call the VDOF Office in Salem at 540.387-5461. Officials with the Virginia Department of Forestry remind everyone that the threat of wildland fires will remain elevated through at least Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>.