



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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K-9 Wildfire Arson Unit Investigates Fire in Knox County

Finding suspect is a different kind of Magic

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 2, 2015) – It wasn't slight of hand but more a matter of following the nose.

Tuesday, Magic, a K-9 wildfire arson dog, and his Kentucky Department of Corrections handlers, Adam Sloan and Josh Brock, were called to help investigate a fire on Warrior's Path in Knox County, near Stinking Creek.

Division of Forestry (KDF) personnel knew where the wildfire started, but were uncertain who started it.

While the KDF Knox County fire crew worked at the head of the fire trying to keep the fire away from homes, the K-9 unit started its investigation at the fire's point of origin – a fence that had been cleared below the black top road.

Investigators found barbed wire rolls and a fencing tool present at the origin. Magic immediately traced the scent back down the road to a black Mazda truck parked in a shed at a nearby home.

The Kentucky State Police were notified and responded quickly.

State Trooper Sammy Faris was first on the scene, soon followed by Detective Joshua Bunch, an arson investigator for KSP, Detective Bunch questioned several individuals in the area, including a person of interest who had driven the truck.

The driver admitted to setting the fire trying to burn out a fence row. KDF did not issue a citation for burning and allowing the fire to escape. The division did notify the driver that he will receive a bill for the cost to the state for controlling the fire.

"It was impressive that the dog took the scent from the fencing tool and followed the scent several hundred feet down the road to the person of interest's truck and then house," said Division Director Leah MacSwords. "The person responsible for the fire actually left the scene in a vehicle, and Magic was still able to track him."

MacSwords said her division owes a great deal of thanks to the K-9 unit from the Bell County Forestry Camp and to Detective Bunch and Trooper Faris from KSP.

Individuals who witness or suspect an arson fire are encouraged to call the Arson Hotline toll free at 1-800-27ARSON (1-800-272-7766).

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