



**Accountability Report
2012 – 2013**



ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT TRANSMITTAL FORM

Agency Name: South Carolina Forestry Commission

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South Carolina Forestry Commission
Annual Accountability Report
Fiscal Year 2012 – 2013

SECTION I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Agency Purpose, Mission, Vision and Values:

The South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) Purpose:

Protect and develop the forest resources of SC and raise awareness of the importance of this resource to the state's economy.

The SCFC Mission:

The mission of SCFC is to protect, promote, enhance, and nurture the woodlands of SC, and to educate the public about forestry issues, in a manner consistent with achieving the greatest good for its citizens.

The SCFC Vision:

Across all ownerships, South Carolina's forest resources are well-protected and managed sustainably to support an expanding forest products manufacturing industry while providing environmental services such as clean air, clean water, recreation, and wildlife habitat.

The SCFC Values:

- Safety
- Efficiency
- Hard Work
- Integrity
- Fairness
- Respect
- Passion

2. Major achievements from past year:

• **Strategic Plan Implementation/Progress** – The Commissioners, State Forester, Deputy State Forester, and the executive team continue to monitor accomplishments for goals and action items on a quarterly basis. Potential new initiatives for action are identified and initiatives are translated into objectives and success criteria for respective program areas and employees.

• **Raise Awareness About Agency Activities** – In FY 13 the Commission acquired extensive media publicity on its services. Two equipment viewings to roll out South Carolina's first enclosed cab tractors were held in the Piedmont and Coastal Regions. Several legislators and County Forestry Board members attended, viewed the new equipment and compared to older, non-enclosed cabs and made strong remarks supporting efforts to replace open cab tractors. Several SCFC firefighters attended and spoke about the importance of this equipment and the enhanced safety it will provide to them as they do their jobs. In addition, personnel continued to attend and provide presentations at county landowner association meetings and other conservation and economic development events.

SCFC Resource Development Division represented the agency and the forestry community through our partnerships with 42 statewide and regional economic development organizations. The agency participated in regional efforts to grow new markets by participating in foreign trade shows, such as the KH Trade Show in Seoul, South Korea. Forestry's 20/15 Initiative continued making progress toward meeting program goals during FY 13. Major accomplishments included: (1) working on industry recruitment with the agribusiness project manager with the SC Department of Commerce, (2) drafting an article on the completed wood availability study for a peer-reviewed journal, (3) establishing 3 biomass demonstration stands for landowner technology transfer, (4) providing leadership for a national forest markets committee, (5) completing a wood supply study for SC, and (6) completing an IMPLAN study to compare North Carolina and South Carolina's forestry-related industries.

The first summary version of the SCFC Annual Report was produced and distributed to the Governor and General Assembly, and made available to our partners, employees and Commissioners via a link on our website.

- **Budgetary Successes, Planning and Management** - Improvement in the FY 13 budget enabled the agency to retain personnel and restore a small portion of the firefighting capacity lost since 2008. With state funds still significantly below 2008 funding, the SCFC focused on its goals of protecting the forest resources and raising awareness of the importance of forestry to the state's economy. Agency leadership continued long-range budget planning focused on restoring capacity to protect lives, property and firefighter safety. The focus on our key messages continued to pay dividends during budget development by the Legislature. SCFC recurring fund budget was increased by 7.3% for FY 13-14. In addition, the agency received significant non-recurring funding for equipment replacement for the third consecutive year. During FY 13, a Business Management Compliance Review was contracted by the USDA Forest Service. No significant findings, questioned costs, or violations of laws were reported.
- **Legislative Successes** – Building on successes during the last two-year legislative session, SC and its forestry community saw continued success during the FY 13 legislative session with the passage of Senate Bill 635 which stops the discrimination against the use of wood in State facility projects from forests certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) or the American Tree Farm System (ATFS). This statute was needed because the building standard most used by SC government, the LEED standard, would only provide a rating "point" in its system for wood from forests certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and not by the SFI or the ATFS. In SC there are only approximately 81,000 acres of forests certified by FSC; whereas approximately 2.5 million acres of forests are certified by the SFI and ATFS systems. This success was led by the SC Forestry Association (SCFA) with the help of many forestry community members and partners. The bill passed with strong support throughout the General Assembly and the Governor's office.
- **Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP) and Firefighter Program (FFP)** – The FEPP provides equipment on loan to fire departments. In FY 13, the SCFC was recognized at both the regional and national levels by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service as a leader in the management of the FEPP. At the request of the USDA Forest Service, SCFC personnel conducted a two-day workshop on best practices for peers in other states. In 2011, the Commission entered into a new federal excess property program, the FFP. This program enables fire departments to obtain additional fire suppression equipment. With this program, the equipment is not on loan to the fire departments as under the FEPP but the department actually owns the equipment (and in the case of a vehicle will get title). For comparison purposes, the amount and dollar value of equipment currently issued under FEPP is 1,068 items valued at \$22.1 million and the SCFC has participated in this program for over 45 years. Under the FFP, 54 items with a total acquisition cost of \$1.5 million was acquired in FY 13. The YTD (since October 2011) value of equipment acquired and provided to fire departments under FFP is \$3.6 million.
- **Incident Management Team (IMT)** – Our IMT coordinated Emergency Management for the Professional Golfers' Association Championship on Kiawah Island in August, 2012. This was the first time SC hosted a major tournament, and it required our IMT to hold tactics and planning meetings with the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, Charleston County Emergency Medical Services, and St. Johns Fire Department. The IMT also managed the National Disaster Medical Systems exercise at the Columbia Airport in April, 2013. More than 20 agencies and 14 hospitals were involved with over 300 participants. In June, 2013 the IMT assisted the Pee Dee All Hazard IMT and the Lowcountry All Hazard IMT with managing the Fire/Rescue Conference in Myrtle Beach, which was attended by over 3,000 firefighters.
- **Services Program** - Under this program, the SCFC supplies forestry services, such as firebreak plowing, prescribed burning, standby assistance for prescribed burning and waterbar construction, to forest landowners. Conducting these services provides much needed revenue (about \$581,000 in FY 13) critical for maintaining operational budgets to support key agency programs.
- **Technology Updates** - With Microsoft scheduled to stop supporting the Windows XP Operating System and Office 2003 in April, 2014, the agency developed a plan to arrange funding for the upgrading of all computers. This process to upgrade computers started in the latter part of FY 13 and will be completed by April, 2014. A new communication console system was installed in the dispatch centers in FY 13 which provided functions to greatly reduce the time to contact agency employees and cooperators (fire departments,

9-1-1 centers, etc.). This new system enabled the agency to implement the State's Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone system in the dispatch centers (which cut 1-800 call charges by half), and in the three Regional offices; thus replacing the antiquated analog system.

3. *Key strategic goals for present and future years:*

- Protect life, property, and the forest resource from the increasing threat of wildfire and other hazards as the population expands into forested areas. In partnership with the SC Prescribed Fire Council, continue the increased emphasis on the use of prescribed burning as a means for reducing hazardous fuels. And in regards to the population expanding into forested areas, the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), the Firewise and Ready, Set, Go! Programs are reaching out to those communities and educating them about the wildfire risk and how to mitigate such risk.
- Develop additional sources of recurring revenue to provide critical services. Agency purchased its second group of enclosed cab fire suppression tractors in FY 13 increasing the number to 21 of the 160 units needed. This equipment provides greatly improved safety features for firefighters. Agency leaders continue to request adequate funding to replace all fire suppression tractors with enclosed cab units within five years.
- Maintain an effective, well-trained, well-equipped, and diverse workforce, while continuing to assess and realign in response to reduced staffing and the changing needs and desires of customers. Re-build fire response capacity in FY 14 by increasing number of firefighter positions and filling firefighter vacancies as they occur.
- Raise awareness within the public and among decision-makers of the economic, environmental, and social benefits of a well-managed, healthy forest resource and forest industry.
- Continue to train and qualify one State IMT and coordinate the training and qualification of four Regional IMTs. Most members of the State IMT completed classroom training and focus has shifted to incident exercises, training assignments, and completing task books. Retirement of team members will result in the need to fill positions and ensure that training for these new members is scheduled and completed.
- Improve the effectiveness of internal communications, stressing individual employee roles in the implementation of the strategic plan.
- Provide the data needed to assess the forest resource, its condition, and the potential for the development or expansion of sustainable markets for forest products and ecosystem services in support of SC's Competitiveness Initiative.
- Strengthen existing alliances and develop new alliances that will assist with accomplishing key strategic goals.
- Continue to provide technical assistance to forest landowners, communities, and state agencies as funding allows and increase assistance where possible.

4. *Key strategic challenges:*

- Public demands for forestry services, including fire prevention and suppression and forest management, continue to increase while SCFC staffing and budget limitations remain. Foresters and forest technician supervisors have greatly increased areas of responsibility and geographical coverage. Previous budget reductions required many key positions be held vacant for extended periods creating waiting lists for some public services and increasing response times for wildfire response.
- Past budget reductions and increasing equipment costs have made it necessary to lengthen the replacement schedule for firefighting equipment beyond its safe replacement age, e.g. 15 years for dozers (Graph 7.3-4). Rising operating and maintenance costs are increasing the expense of detecting and suppressing wildland fires. These factors decrease the agency's ability to keep pace with technological advances in equipment needed for safe, mission critical functions. Loss of firefighter positions and funds to replace firefighting equipment on a safe and efficient replacement schedule have placed the agency's capacity to respond to critical fire emergency needs in jeopardy. Should wildfire weather conditions change from being mild to average or worse, the agency's ability to respond to wildfires will be inadequate putting more lives and property at great risk. Funding available through FY 18 from Act 271 will support improvement in firefighting equipment replacement and communications technology. However, additional annual funding of \$5 million for the next five years is needed to replace all open cab tractors in 5 versus 15 years to improve employee safety and working conditions.

- Future federal funding reductions - while state funding sources have improved slightly, federal funding is declining.
- Loss of experienced personnel through retirements, more stringent employment requirements and mandated training for firefighters and dispatchers, coupled with very low starting salaries, makes hiring and retaining qualified personnel very difficult. Faced with challenges of a rapidly reduced workforce; training and transfer of knowledge are top priorities for the agency. Also, salaries have not kept pace with increased responsibilities or with salaries in other organizations which makes restoring capacity with qualified personnel extremely challenging as occurred during the FY 13 hiring process with several positions going unfilled.
- The state's changing demographic and population expansion into rural areas have contributed to the fragmentation of forest ownership, increased the risk of fire to lives, homes, and property, and created a large number of new forest landowners. Lacking a rural background, these landowners are unaware of basic management techniques needed to keep their woodlands healthy, safe, and productive. This is having an especially adverse impact on the use of prescribed fire in the state and active forest management. Agency personnel must monitor and assist with proposed regulations at the state and local level to ensure the ability to continue to manage and retain working, productive woodlands.

5. ***How the accountability report is used to improve organizational performance:***

The accountability report is utilized by the SCFC in developing budget requests, monitoring established performance measures, updating or establishing benchmarks, and documenting continuous improvement efforts. Performance measures are tied directly to the agency's mission, strategic plan and implementation/status of goals and action items in the plan. Specific goals and action items are incorporated into employees' performance planning stages.

SECTION II – ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

1. ***Main products and services and the primary methods by which these are delivered:***

Protect the Resource

The SCFC has a statewide wildfire prevention, detection, and control network in place. According to the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-90, "It shall take such action and afford such organized means as may be necessary to prevent, control, and extinguish fires, including the enforcement of any and all laws pertaining to the protection of the forests and woodlands in the State."

The SCFC conducts wildfire prevention and 'Firewise' programs, including the assessment of risk for communities located in areas where wildfires have historically occurred and in new developments with significant fire hazards. Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) are developed to provide homeowners, community planners, fire departments, and SCFC wildland firefighters with an outline of the actions needed to reduce wildfire hazard.

The SCFC provides property owners with wildland fire suppression through a network of firefighters and equipment strategically located throughout SC. Dispatching the closest available firefighting unit is accomplished through three regional dispatch centers. To further minimize the effect of wildfire, SCFC personnel conduct and assist or support others with prescribed burns to reduce hazardous fuels, improve wildlife habitat, and prepare sites for reforestation.

The Law Enforcement Program reduces wildfire occurrence, woods arson and forest product theft and fraud through the enforcement of state laws.

The SCFC trains and develops IMTs to improve the capability of the state to manage wildfires, natural disasters, or other large incidents. The IMT Coordinator facilitates the development of nationally-qualified IMTs within the SCFC and ensures consistency among four multi-disciplinary (non-SCFC) IMTs located in each region of SC.

The SCFC educates landowners and organizations in how to minimize impacts from non-fire hazards like tornados, ice storms, insects, and disease. In actual incidents, the SCFC assists the public and other agencies with damage and disaster response.

Utilizing federal funds, the SCFC periodically surveys the state for forest insect and disease infestations and provides agency foresters and landowners access to up-to-date information, diagnosis of specific problems and recommendations for control. Agency staff includes an entomologist, a forester, and a technician working from a fully equipped diagnostic lab. The SCFC has instituted a Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) Prevention/Restoration Program to provide advice to landowners and a cost-share program to aid in restoring areas impacted by the beetle and treating areas to minimize future SPB damage.

The SCFC is the designated agency in SC to provide public oversight and guidance for technical forest management practices. The agency has established approved Best Management Practices (BMPs) and routinely monitors compliance with BMP guidelines on sites where timber harvesting or other forestry practices are in progress to ensure protection of water quality and soil productivity and compliance with state and federal laws and policies.

Manage the Resource

SCFC foresters examine woodlands at the request of landowners, with an emphasis on assisting new landowners and landowners that previously have not utilized the assistance of a professional forester. According to the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-90, "It shall give such advice, assistance, and cooperation as may be practical to private owners of land ..."

SCFC foresters write forest management plans that include descriptions of each forest stand, recommended practices to meet the objectives of the landowner, and a property map. Foresters provide guidance relating to timber harvesting, site preparation, timber stand improvement, reforestation, and prescribed burning. They refer landowners to private consulting foresters when assistance needed is extensive or prolonged.

SCFC foresters recommend appropriate financial assistance programs to help landowners complete forestry improvement projects and assist landowners with the application process and implementation of forestry practices. The agency serves as a critical link by acquiring, administering, and delivering state, federal, and private funds to private landowners. Prescribed burning services, firebreak plowing, and timber marking services are offered for a fee.

To assist SC landowners with reforestation, the SCFC produces and sells bareroot and containerized seedlings grown at its nursery in Edgefield, SC. Native pine and hardwood species are available to fill niche markets and demands and ensure citizens have access to high quality growing stock and reforestation expertise. The SCFC Nursery and Tree Improvement (N&TI) Program operates on receipts from seedling, cone, timber, seed sales and federal grants.

The SCFC manages Sand Hills, Manchester, Harbison, Poe Creek and Wee Tee State Forests, and other woodland tracts for sustainable forestry, wildlife management, recreation, and public education purposes. Seventy-five percent of the revenues from state forest activities, primarily sale of forest products, fund all state forest activities and 25% of the revenue is returned to county governments of origin for their school systems. The SCFC provides forest management assistance to other state agencies including the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Corrections, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Department of Mental Health, Department of Transportation and University of South Carolina.

One Urban Forestry Coordinator and two regional urban foresters work with urban residents, city planners, developers, contractors and local governments to improve their capability to manage forest resources within urban environments. They provide technical and/or educational assistance regarding community forest inventories and management plans, community and county tree ordinances, grant project implementation, how to become a Tree City USA, proper tree selection, installation, care and maintenance, distribute educational information, coordinate and conduct training workshops, and promote SC's Arbor Day. Primary

assistance is provided to personnel working for towns, cities, and counties. Secondary assistance is provided to professional associations, civic and volunteer organizations, state agencies, educational institutions, and businesses.

SCFC foresters provide accurate, up-to-date forest inventory data to the forestry community by re-measuring a statewide network of permanent plots. The resulting forest resource data is published online and in fact sheets annually with a full report available every five years. Custom queries of these forest resource data are prepared for forest industry as they plan their wood consumption rates and product lines. SCFC supports the utilization of the forest resource for economic, environmental, and societal needs. The Commission supports the entire wood supply chain from the landowners to wood processors and the mills that make final wood products to ensure a healthy forest and state economy.

Raise Awareness about the Resource

The SCFC is responsible for educating the public about the economic and environmental benefits of a well-managed forest resource. According to the South Carolina Code of laws, Section 48-23-90, “It shall...promote...a proper appreciation by the public of the advantages of forestry and the benefits to be derived from forest culture and preservation.” Loss of resources and budgetary limitations has drastically reduced SCFC capabilities in this area. Information and Education staff produce limited technical and information materials, news releases, web-based material and audio-visual programs to explain forestry programs, promote SCFC services, and educate various publics about the benefits of forests, fire prevention, and forest management. Education staff writes curricula, schedules, and instructs formal forestry education programs for school groups and teachers. SCFC staff support the agency’s popular Wood Magic Forest Fair and Teachers’ Tour programs as feasible.

SCFC personnel, from both headquarters and field offices, actively promote the value of forestry to the state and the benefits of managing the forest resource. Presentations are made at landowner association meetings and tours, professional meetings and civic and environmental organizations. SCFC foresters manage the certified Forest Stewardship Program and actively support the ATFS, recognizing landowners who manage forestland according to professional standards.

State forests provide education about forest management through demonstration of sound forest management, programs, brochures, and signage.

2. *Key Customer groups and their key requirements/expectations:*

Owners and users of forestland

Requirements/expectations: protect their woodlands, lives, and property, help manage forests by providing professional assistance; enhance forest resources to help ensure that SC’s forest industry and markets for forest products remain financially healthy and positively impact forest law and policy to enhance owner opportunities.

Other State Agencies (who own woodlands)

Requirements/expectations: protect their woodlands and property, help manage forests by providing professional assistance, and assist them in being good stewards of the public lands for which they are responsible.

SC Law Enforcement Division/SC Emergency Management Division

Requirements/expectations: enhance state capability to respond to catastrophic events by developing all-hazard IMTs; provide incident command system (ICS) training to other agencies to ensure that natural and man-made disasters are managed effectively.

City and county fire and emergency services

Requirements/expectations: partner with them in wildland/interface fire control and fire prevention; raise the awareness regarding the challenges facing SC with wildland fires, especially the fires occurring in WUI areas.

Rural-Urban interface residents and interest groups

Requirements/expectations: protect their lives and property from wildland fire; raise the awareness regarding the challenges facing SC from wildland fires; especially the fires occurring in WUI areas and educate

residents about measures they can take to reduce this risk, enhance the forest resource to provide better stewardship of all SC's natural resources.

Forest industry

Requirements/expectations: protect their woodlands; provide management assistance to private forest owners to help ensure stable wood supplies; enhance the resource to help ensure future wood supplies and a strong forest industry within the state; address infrastructure and policy issues that inhibit forestry's economic impact; help prepare to meet the future demands that will be placed on our forest resources; provide basic forest resource data to evaluate resource sustainability; and assist in industry retention and growth and full utilization of forest resource opportunities.

Universities and other education institutions

Requirements/expectations: assist in educating SC citizenry on forestry, conservation, and the environment.

State forests visitors and user groups

Requirements/expectations: protect SC owned woodlands, provide management to meet their recreational needs; enhance our state forests by being good stewards of the land; raise awareness about the importance and benefits of our state forests.

Urban residents and businesses

Requirements/expectations: provide management assistance for the urban forests located in the towns and cities of SC; assist in the protection of our urban forests from insect, disease and fire threats; raise awareness about the importance of urban forests and the entire forest resource.

Earth science teachers and students

Requirements/expectations: help raise the awareness about SC forest resources by providing educational training, resources, and opportunities to teachers and students.

3. ***Key stakeholder groups (other than customers):***

- Employees
- Commissioners
- County Forestry Boards
- Local governments: county and city councils
- Governmental Regulatory Agencies
- State Legislative members
- State Congressional members
- SC Governor's office
- Natural resource and conservation-based private organizations
- Citizens of SC

4. ***Key suppliers and partners:***

Suppliers: Vehicle equipment manufacturers, heavy equipment manufacturers and dealers, gasoline vendors, vehicle repair garages and parts suppliers, federal excess property inventory system, communication equipment dealers and repair businesses, forestry equipment suppliers, office supply vendors, printing businesses and media outlets, herbicide contractors, site preparation contractors, tree planting contractors, and consulting foresters

Partners: State and Federal Agencies such as SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, SC Emergency Management Division, SC Department of Natural Resources -State Climatology Office, Clemson University, SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, USDA Forest Service, USDA Farm Services Agency, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Park Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), US Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense, National Weather Service, SC National Guard and United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Other organizations include: National Association of State Foresters (NASF), Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF), SC Wildlife Federation, National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), The Conservation Fund, SC Timber Producers Association, SCFA, Palmetto Agribusiness Council, National Arbor Day Foundation, SC Prescribed Fire Council, Trees SC, Hunting With A Hero, Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), Enrich SC,

Rural Resource Coalition SC, American Forest Foundation (AFF), Society of American Foresters, and Longleaf Alliance

5. *Operating locations:*

Personnel are assigned positions across the state through a series of zone, unit, regional, and headquarter offices. The largest single group of employees, initial attack firefighters, report directly from their residences in responding to wildland fires. Regional administrative and support offices are located in Florence, Newberry and Walterboro. Central emergency dispatch centers are co-located at the regional office sites. A forest seedling nursery is located in Edgefield County, and a forest tree improvement center is located in Jasper County. Major property holdings include Manchester State Forest in Sumter County, Sand Hills State Forest in Chesterfield and Darlington Counties, Harbison State Forest in Richland County, Poe Creek State Forest in Pickens County, and Wee Tee State Forest in Williamsburg County.

6. *Number of employees segmented by employee category:*

The SCFC has a total of 312.30 FTE positions. We currently have 299 employees, 3 temporary grant employees and approximately 40 temporary employees.

7. *Regulatory environment:*

SCFC Operations are authorized by the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-10 to Section 48-23-295.

The major products and services of the SCFC are authorized and required by the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-90, *General Duties of Commission* as stated below:

The Commission shall inquire into and make an annual report to the General Assembly upon the forest conditions in the State, with reference to the preservation of forests, the effect of the destruction of forests upon the general welfare of the State and other matters pertaining to the subject of forestry and tree growth, including recommendations to the public generally as to reforestation.

It shall take such action and afford such organized means as may be necessary to prevent, control and extinguish fires, including the enforcement of any and all laws pertaining to the protection of the forests and woodlands of the State.

It shall give such advice, assistance and cooperation as may be practical to private owners of land and promote, so far as it may be able, a proper appreciation by the public of the advantages of forestry and the benefits to be derived from forest culture and preservation.

It shall cooperate with the Federal Government in the distribution of funds allotted to the State for forestry purposes and shall assist in the enforcement of all laws pertaining thereto. It shall have the control of the expenditure of all funds received by it.

8. *Performance improvement system(s):*

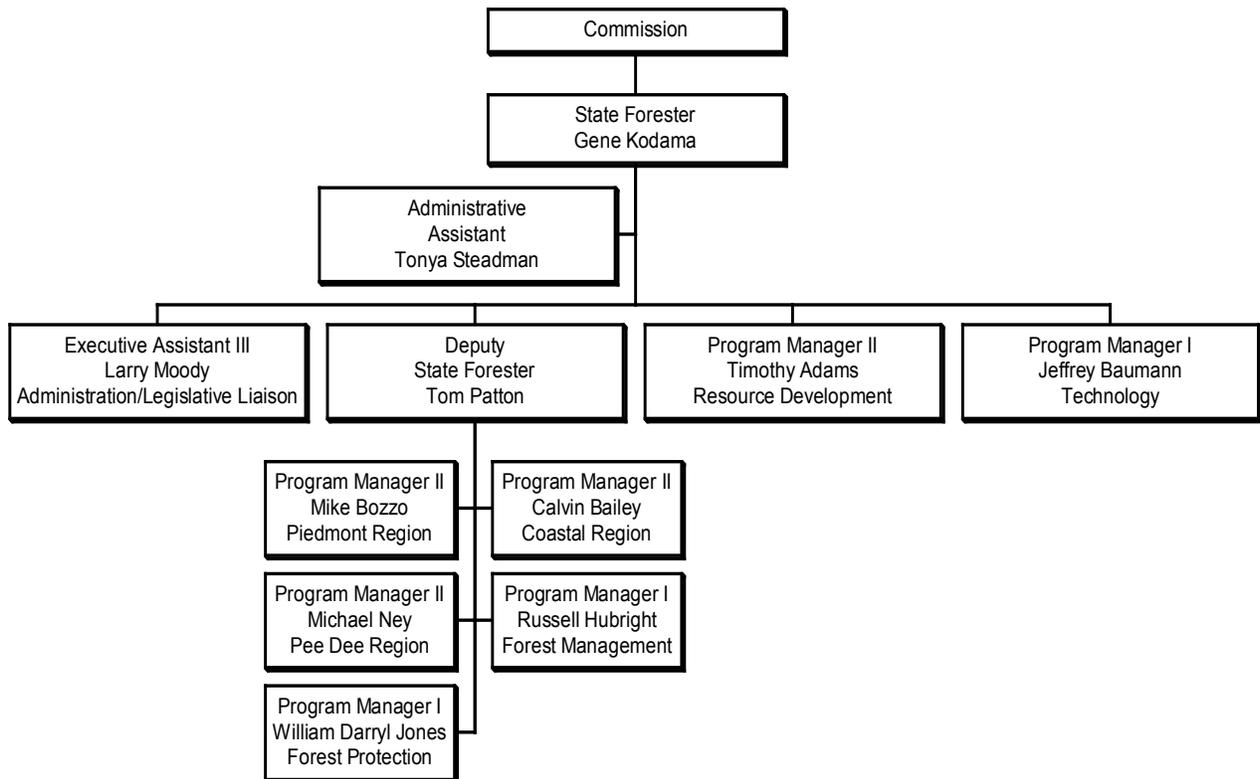
The accountability report is utilized by the SCFC in developing budget requests, monitoring established performance measures, updating or establishing benchmarks, and documenting continuous improvement efforts. Performance measures are tied directly to the agency's mission, strategic plan and implementation/status of goals and action items in the plan.

Performance expectations are determined through one or more of the following: review of past organizational performance, review of other organizations' performance, input from employees primarily responsible for carrying out and monitoring the program, and feedback from customers. The results of the review and input are assessed and evaluated to ensure current needs of the customers are met. Performance expectations may be modified based on the information. Progress toward strategic goals and objectives is monitored and reported on by the Senior Consultant within the Division of Forest Protection.

Performance expectations are deployed and communicated through the strategic and action plans, the performance review planning process, and follow-up meetings/discussions. Commitment and performance are achieved and supported through periodic and on-going reviews of expectations and progress. Specific goals and action items are incorporated into employees' performance planning stages to the lowest supervisory level within our organization.

9. *Organizational Structure Chart:*

South Carolina Forestry Commission Organization Chart



10. Expenditures/Appropriations Chart

Accountability Report Appropriations/Expenditures Chart

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

Major Budget Categories	FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures		FY 12-13 Actual Expenditures		FY 13-14 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$9,717,381	\$6,165,415	\$9,865,860	\$7,624,401	\$11,053,132	\$8,084,614
Other Operating	\$4,527,291	\$934,091	\$5,365,466	\$1,395,041	\$9,365,935	\$1,987,655
Special Items	\$1,372,260	\$200,000	\$1,155,195	\$200,000	\$1,000,000	\$200,000
Permanent Improvements						
Case Services						
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$1,739,680	\$0	\$1,442,919	\$0	\$1,900,475	\$0
Fringe Benefits	\$3,918,604	\$2,659,772	\$4,220,658	\$3,388,160	\$4,628,543	\$3,533,543
Non-recurring			\$1,334,075	\$1,334,075	\$2,000,000	
Total	\$21,275,216	\$9,959,278	\$23,384,173	\$13,941,677	\$29,948,085	\$13,805,812

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures	FY 12-13 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$0	\$0
Capital Reserve Funds	\$2,512,880	\$403,022
Bonds	\$0	\$0

11. Major Program Areas Chart:

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 11-12 Budget Expenditures	FY 12-13 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross Reference for Financial Results*
II Forest Protection and Development	Forest Protection To ensure their future health, South Carolina’s forests must be protected from harm to include fire, disease, pests and other natural and human-caused factors.	State: \$7,377,477 Federal: \$2,918,546 Other: \$4,900,596 Total: \$15,196,618 % of Total Budget: 64%	State: \$11,085,931 Federal: \$2,829,908 Other: \$1,274,601 Total: \$15,190,440 % of Total Budget: 64%	7.3-1
II Forest Protection and Development	Forest Management The SCFC delivers financial and technical assistance to forest landowners, communities and the public while addressing social and environmental concerns.	State: \$1,202,746 Federal: \$1,014,673 Other: \$1,172,260 Total: \$3,389,679 % of Total Budget: 14%	State: \$1,319,102 Federal: \$915,981 Other: \$955,195 Total: \$3,190,278 % of Total Budget: 14%	7.3-1
III State Forests	State Forests Management, development and protection of timber, wildlife and endangered species and other resources. An ample productive forestland base and an economic climate conducive to forestry based business are essential if forest landowners of SC are to practice sustainable forest management.	State: \$0 Federal: \$0 Other: \$2,560,739 Total: \$2,560,739 % of Total Budget: 11%	State: \$0 Federal: \$0 Other: \$2,698,494 Total: \$2,698,494 % of Total Budget: 11%	

Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds.

Major Program Areas

Remainder of Expenditures	State: \$1,379,056	State: \$1,536,644
Resource Development	Federal: \$596,863	Federal: \$628,263
Best Management Practices	Other: \$665,141	Other: \$543,077
Nurseries and Tree Improvement	Total: \$2,641,059	Total: \$2,707,984
Forest Information & Outreach Administration	% of Total Budget: 11%	% of Total Budget: 11%

*Key Cross-References are a link to the Category 7 – Business Results. These References provide a Chart number that is included in the 7th section of this document.

SECTION III – ELEMENTS OF THE MALCOLM BALDRIGE CRITERIA

CATEGORY I– SENIOR LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

1.1 *How do senior leaders set, deploy, and ensure two-way communication throughout the organization and with customers and stakeholders, as appropriate for:*

1.1a *Short and long term organizational direction and organizational priorities?*

Senior leaders (agency director, his staff, and division directors) meet with Commissioners, employees, stakeholders, and customers during the year to discuss and review direction and priorities. The strategic plan serves as the primary guide for short and long term direction and priorities for the present through the next three to five years. Additionally, agency leadership and staff monitor for new issues that may arise in the Executive & Legislative branches of state government, the federal government, as well as within the forestry community across SC, the region and the nation. The agency director and a number of program managers and employees serve on local, state, regional, and/or national forestry related committees.

Deployment and communication are accomplished through the agency’s news bulletins and various meetings with employees, customers, and stakeholders. Selected action items are included in employee performance evaluation planning stages.

1.1b *Performance expectations?*

Performance expectations are determined through one or more of the following: internal review of past performance, review of other organizations’ performances, input from employees responsible for programs, feedback from customers, audits, program reviews by the USDA Forest Service.

Performance expectations are deployed and communicated through the strategic and action plans, the performance planning stage and review process, monthly staff meetings, and discussions with personnel. Commitment and performance are achieved and supported through periodic and on-going reviews of expectations and progress with employees.

1.1c *Organizational values?*

Organizational values have been reviewed and revised by agency leadership. Agency leadership strives to lead by example and demonstrate their commitment to these values during regular interaction with employees.

1.1d *Ethical behavior?*

The senior leadership of the agency reviewed the mission, vision, and values of the agency. There is a genuine understanding of the concept of leading by example and the senior leaders strive to provide guidance, make decisions, and represent the agency according to SCFC values. Employees of the agency carry out their responsibilities according to the ethical standards of their individual professions (e. g. forestry, accounting, human resources.) There have been conscious efforts and actions taken to demonstrate the stated values of the agency. For example, the lines of communication between senior leadership and employees, partners and stakeholders have increased. This action touches on several of the agency’s values. The agency also solicits feedback from landowners regarding the quality and professionalism of services received.

1.2 *How do senior leaders establish and promote a focus on customers and other stakeholders?*

Agency leaders periodically meet with customers and stakeholders to discuss agency, customer and stakeholder priorities and needs. Customer feedback and input on forestry services and issues such as seedling sales, services work, technical forest management assistance, stewardship management assistance, cost-share assistance, and notification of wildfires are solicited through surveys and frequent interaction with stakeholder groups. Recreational users of state forests participate in advisory councils.

1.3 *How does the organization address the current and potential impact on the public of its programs, services, facilities, and operations, including associated risks?*

Current and potential impacts and risks are identified by seeking Commissioner, employee, customer, public, and partner input/feedback. Impacts and risks are addressed through review by program managers, agency leaders and Commissioners, as well as through legal, financial, and insurance consultations.

1.4 *How do senior leaders maintain fiscal, legal, and regulatory accountability?*

Fiscal, legal, and regulatory accountability are maintained through the use of policies, procedures, and internal and external controls. Controls are in place to maintain a separation of duties in the fiscal area. This, along with the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, ensures fiscal responsibility and eliminates opportunity for fraud. Monthly reviews of budget status in relation to appropriations and adherence to the State Procurement Code sustain legal accountability. Use of the State Attorney General's Office and private attorneys to deal with Human Resource complaints, lawsuits or other legal and regulatory issues ensures accountability. The Internal Auditor, State Auditor's Office and the USDA Forest Service conduct audits and reviews to ensure compliance with State and Federal laws, rules, and regulations.

1.5 *What performance measures do senior leaders regularly review to inform them on needed actions?*

- Customer satisfaction levels for forest tree seedlings, services, forestry assistance, and stewardship assistance (Graphs 7.2-1; 7.2-2; 7.2-3, 7.2-4)
- Forest based economic development impact (Graphs 7.1-1a&b)
- Forest Inventory Analysis Productivity (Graph 7.1-2)
- Fire response times & Southern States average fire sizes (Table 7.1-3; Graphs 7.1-3 & 7.1-4)
- Timber Theft recovery rates (Graph 7.1-5)
- Law Enforcement Investigations/Prosecutions (Graph 7.1-6)
- Best Management Practices compliance trends (Graph 7.1-7)
- Southern Pine Beetle losses (Graph 7.1-8)
- Raise the Awareness About the Resource (Graphs 7.1-9a&b & 7.1-10a&b)
- Financial (Graphs 7.3-1 through 7.3-7)
- Employee satisfaction/turnover rates (Graph 7.4-1)
- Safety and Health (Graph 7.4-2)

1.6 *How do senior leaders use organizational performance review findings and employee feedback to improve their own leadership effectiveness, the effectiveness of management throughout the organization including the head of the organization, and the governance board/policy making body? How do their personal actions reflect a commitment to organizational values?*

The Chairman of the Commission communicates regularly with Agency leadership. Organizational performance is reported and discussed at quarterly Commission meetings.

Senior leaders discuss and use employee feedback and organizational reviews to determine if leadership/management:

- adequately communicates direction and priorities to employees
- identifies and removes barriers that may hinder employees' performance
- sets realistic performance expectations
- should modify or change priorities

Agency leadership maintains an open door approach to business with employees, customers, and stakeholders; participates in the physical fitness work capacity tests with employees; and continues to support additional employee recognition efforts.

1.7 *How do senior leaders promote and personally participate in succession planning and the development of future organizational leaders?*

Senior leaders regularly review an organizational chart that identifies opportunities for succession planning and proactive solutions are sought. The agency director/deputy actively participates in selecting candidates for leadership programs such as the Certified Public Manager (CPM) Program coordinated by the SC Budget and Control Board's Office of Human Resources and the SC Society of Certified Public Managers.

Leadership continues to review and discuss the status of these efforts and identify additional needs/opportunities on a regular basis.

1.8 *How do senior leaders create an environment for performance improvement and the accomplishment of strategic objectives?*

Input for update of the strategic plan was sought from employees at all levels of the organization. Major goals and objectives and their status are discussed at staff meetings and input for performance improvement and innovation is encouraged through various employee councils and program personnel. Committees are charged with identifying opportunities for improvement.

1.9 *How do senior leaders create an environment for organizational and workforce learning?*

An environment for organizational and workforce learning is created by selecting individuals to participate in the CPM Program and other appropriate seminars. Projects completed within the CPM Program are evaluated, considered, and implemented where feasible. Individuals have also previously participated in the Executive Institute and the Associate Public Manager Program. SCFC supports our personnel by assisting them with memberships in professional organizations, registration fees, and related expenses for attending relevant conferences. A Tuition Assistance Policy and Procedure is also in place whereby employees can request assistance for work related courses.

1.10 *How do senior leaders engage, empower, and motivate the entire workforce throughout the organization? How do senior leaders take an active role in reward and recognition processes to reinforce high performance throughout the organization?*

A newsletter is distributed to all personnel. The Agency Director submits an opening article to communicate his activities and current forestry issues.

Senior leaders also participate in regional meetings with staff and other key partners. Senior leaders actively participate in recognition ceremonies for employee service and retirements. They also attend the graduations for employees' major milestones such as completion of the Law Enforcement Training and the CPM Program. Senior leaders also make special efforts to recognize employees upon receipt of letters from customers expressing appreciation for the services delivered. In FY 13, the Agency Director received an award from the ATFS for both the Commission and Director's support of the Tree Farm Program.

1.11 *How do senior leaders actively support and strengthen the communities in which your organization operates? Include how senior leaders determine areas of emphasis for organizational involvement and support, and how senior leaders, the workforce, and the organization contribute to improving these communities.*

Senior leaders actively support and strengthen communities by supporting employee participation in professional and community organizations and associations, with emphasis on encouraging employees to monitor forestry issues at the local level as addressed in our Strategic Plan under Raise the Awareness. The agency also supports local school districts in which state forests are located by returning 25% of the gross receipts generated from the sale of forest products on each forest to the district (Graph 7.3-7). SCFC employees routinely provide advice and assistance, as well as training to communities, organizations, and local governments, especially through the agency's Urban and Community Forestry Program, cooperation with rural and volunteer fire departments, and reforestation efforts. Employees' community involvement includes participation in and support of local fire, law enforcement, and forestry associations; participation in the United Way, Red Cross & Blood Connection blood drives, Harvest Hope food drive, various walk & bike-a-thons, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Good Health Appeal, Special Olympics, Palmetto Pride, Hunting with a Hero, QDMA's outreach, NWTF's Wheelin' Sportsmen, Women in the Outdoors, and the Juniors Acquiring Knowledge Ethics and Sportsmanship program, fishing rodeos for youth, state forests and state park events, as well as festivals in towns, cities, and communities.

CATEGORY 2 - STRATEGIC PLANNING

2.1 *What is your Strategic Planning process, including key participants, and how does it address:*

The agency's strategic plan is the basis for short term, mid-term, and long term planning. In developing the plan, input and data was collected from agency Commissioners, employees, customers, cooperators, and the public. Information/data was analyzed and its content verified, like issues consolidated, strategies identified, the plan developed and disseminated, with reviews and monitoring occurring as the plan is carried out.

2.1a *Organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;*

Through the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) portion of the strategic plan process, we continue to keep focus on our customers and stakeholders. Doing this helps us to identify SWOT that could impact our goals and actions.

2.1b *Financial, regulatory, societal and other potential risks;*

Specific financial, regulatory, societal, or other risks are addressed in goals and individual action items in the strategic plan. This includes reviewing the agency's financial health and staffing levels and needs.

2.1c *Shifts in technology and customer preferences;*

The SCFC evaluates staffing, equipment, and technology to ensure adequate response to all wildfires, forest health issues, and other activities and events within the scope of the SCFC's mission. WUI initiatives, Wildfire Prevention teams, and IMTs are designed to address societal and potential risks to our natural resources and the citizens of SC. When forest health risks are identified, appropriate measures are taken to inform customers. Customer satisfaction surveys assist in determining opinions and needs of our customers and their preferences.

2.1d *Workforce capabilities and needs;*

The strategic plan reflects the agency's intent to plan effectively for the use of human resources, with a strong emphasis on training and safety for firefighters and foresters. In response to ongoing budget concerns and to initiate systematic planning for vacancies created by retirement, the SCFC reviewed its structure, programs, and staffing levels, and reorganized and realigned the workforce. Efforts continue to develop a stronger cross-functional workforce in the performance of forest protection and forest management services through the development of IMTs and Emergency Response Teams. Succession planning strategies continue to be utilized to minimize knowledge loss through attrition.

2.1e *Organizational continuity in emergencies;*

The SCFC is a primary point of contact for 9-1-1 centers, fire departments and the public. SCFC statewide dispatch operations will be kept current with technology, equipment, and staffing to support the agency's fire dispatch, smoke management and emergency communications roles. There is an increased emphasis on training SCFC personnel and cooperators in the ICS and general wildfire suppression tactics. In an effort to ensure continuity of essential functions in the event of a disaster, an agency Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) has been completed. In addition, we have completed the Commission's portion of the COOP at SC Emergency Management Division. Both of these documents will require monitoring and updates to reflect any staff changes etc. Part of this framework is based on the SGSF Disaster Response Handbook. The agency cooperates with the SC Emergency Management Division, fire departments, and other emergency response organizations. The SCFC seeks out opportunities to train and utilize private and/or non-traditional cooperators.

2.1f *Your ability to execute the strategic plan.*

Our efforts have been focused on linking employees' position descriptions and evaluations to the strategic plan. This enables us to provide for an effective way to execute our strategic plan as well as conform to the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria. Targeted goals and action items have been selected as performance objectives for employees in the line organization.

2.2 *How do your strategic objectives address the strategic challenges you identified in your Executive Summary?*

Our strategic objectives lead us toward solutions for the strategic challenges that we have identified. These challenges are closely aligned with our primary strategic plan goals of protecting the resource and raising awareness of forestry issues and the agency's role in addressing those issues.

2.3 *How do you develop and track action plans that address your key strategic objectives, and how do you allocate resources to ensure the accomplishment of your action plans?*

Action items are identified for each goal in the strategic plan and are included in the plan. Agency leaders and program managers further identified steps needed to achieve the action items and the personnel involved. These action items have been included within the Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) and specific employees' planning stages, with managers and supervisors responsible for tracking progress. The action items are tied to performance measures. In addition, the Senior Consultant within the Division of Forest Protection is dedicated to monitoring and reporting on action items toward strategic goals and objectives. This information is reported to the Commissioners, State Forester, Deputy State Forester, and employees quarterly.

2.4 *How do you communicate and deploy your strategic objectives, action plans and related performance measures?*

The agency's strategic plan is published on the SCFC website (see 2.7). All managers review and update strategic plan action items each year when performance appraisals are due. Employees are reminded of objectives, review performance measures, and discuss new action plans to improve performance measures with supervisors at that time. Employees are aware of the progress being made on performance measures via e-mail and on a weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis.

2.5 *How do you measure progress on your action plans?*

Since the action items are used to determine the agency's goals and are incorporated into our daily activities, the measure of them is reflected in the measures which have been developed for this accountability report. For example, Graph 7.1-3, which measures fire response time, relates directly to *Protect the Resource – Goal One – Action Item 4* in our strategic plan which states: "Evaluate staffing, equipment and technology to ensure adequate response to all wildfires and other disasters within the scope of the SCFC's mission". Accomplishments on action plans are tracked and compiled into a quarterly report which is presented to the executive staff and the Commissioners at scheduled Commission meetings.

2.6 *How do you evaluate and improve your strategic planning process?*

The Commissioners, State Forester, Deputy State Forester, and the executive team monitor progress on existing initiatives at Commissioner's meetings and consider potential new initiatives for action. Any new initiatives are translated into objectives and success criteria for relevant program areas and employees. Periodically, additional stakeholders are brought in to evaluate and improve the process as well.

2.7 *If the agency's strategic plan is available to the public through the agency's Internet homepage, please provide a website address for that plan.*

The web address for the agency's strategic plan is www.trees.sc.gov/stratplan.pdf.

2.8 Strategic Planning Chart:

Strategic Planning			
Program	Supported Agency	Related FY 12-13 and beyond	Key Cross
Number	Strategic Planning	Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	References for
and Title	Goal/Objective	and Timeline for Accomplishing the Plan(s)	Performance Measures*
II Forest Protection and Development	<u>Protect the Resource</u> 1. Ensure prompt & effective response to wildfire & other natural disasters. 2. Re-evaluate protection strategies, priorities, capabilities as urban areas expand into woodlands. 3. Lead in law enforcement in wildfire & timber theft & fraud investigation. 4. Ensure prompt response to insect & disease outbreaks. 5. Enhance water quality protection.	1. Utilize technology to reduce average warden fire response time, with a target of 30 minutes or less, by end of FY 13. Conduct training exercises throughout the year for SCFC IMT with other emergency response agencies to ensure collaborative, cooperative, and coordinated response to a large fire or non-fire incident during the current fiscal year. Contact fire departments about VFA grant opportunities in late summer to increase their firefighting capabilities. 2. Involve field personnel (supervisors and foresters) in conducting community wildfire hazard and risk assessment; provide required information for developing CWPPs, and be available to present their findings at homeowner awareness workshops. Conduct Firewise workshops for homeowners in fire-prone areas to educate them about the WUI during FY 13. 3. Utilize appropriate technology (GPS, cameras, arson investigation techniques) to improve conviction rates on wildland arson & timber theft cases during FY 13. 4. Conduct aerial surveys to locate and control insect & disease outbreaks by 2 nd quarter of each fiscal year. 5. Provide BMP assistance on 400 sites. Collect and analyze data for statewide compliance and implementation. Conduct 20 BMP related training programs for forestry professionals and produce a BMP video-based training segment by June 2014.	Graphs 7.1-3, 7.1-4, 7.1-5, 7.1-6, 7.1-7 and 7.1-8
II Forest Protection and Development IV Education	<u>Raise Awareness about the Resource</u> 1. Develop & promote forestry education programs for all audiences. 2. Enhance the image of SCFC as source for forest management information & assistance.	During FY 13, there were 23 field studies conducted at Harbison State Forest. Additionally, 2 programs were conducted at school locations. For FY 14, the goal is to conduct 10 field studies at Harbison State Forest and/or in school programs. The Wood Magic Forest Fair conducted in calendar year 2012 had 858 participants. Two Wood Magic Forest Fairs will be held by the end of 2013, reaching approximately 1,440 students. SC Project Learning Tree will be coordinated by SCFC for FY 14 with the goal of training 500 new teachers/professionals; in FY 13 SC PLT trained 342 people. The 2013 SC Teachers' Tour was coordinated by the SCFA and had 36 participants. The 2014 SC Teachers' Tour will again be coordinated by the SCFA and will be able to accommodate 35 people. Deliver shared state forest revenue to county councils and describe forestry and SCFC importance each fall. Establish demonstration stands for landowner outreach to promote state-of-the-art silvicultural technologies. FY 13 installed a flex/biomass planting at MSF approximately 20 acres, a flex stand at Taylor Nursery, and a Eucalyptus/Pine biomass planting at Niederhof Forestry Center. FY 13 partnered with North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences and began eMammal camera trapping study on Sand Hills State Forest.	Graphs 7.1-9a, 7.1-9b, 7.1-10a, 7.1-10b and 7.3-7
II Forest Protection and Development III State Forests IV Education	<u>Enhance the Resource</u> 1. Serve as catalyst for promotion, development, expansion of forest resource & markets in SC. 3. Provide timely information on forest inventory & health. 4. Provide landowners with optimum quality seedlings.	1. Collaborate with partners to continue work on the 20/15 Initiative to grow forestry's impact to \$20 billion by 2015. 3. Complete measurement of FIA plots in the 2nd panel in cycle 11 by 12/2013. 4. Bring 3 rd cycle loblolly pine seedlings to market. Complete seedling customer satisfaction survey annually by June with goal of 90+% satisfaction.	Graphs 7.1-1a, 7.1-1b, 7.1-2 and 7.2-1
I Administration II Forest Protection and Development III State Forests IV Education	<u>Prepare to Meet Future Demands</u> 1. Maintain a capable, satisfied, diverse work team. 3. Review staffing levels & organizational structure to ensure continued forestry services. 4. Reduce job-related injuries.	1. Complete services and management assistance customer satisfaction surveys for FY 14 with goal of 90+% satisfaction. 3. Increased number of firefighter positions filled in FY 13; Plan to increase firefighter and project forester positions in FY 14. 4. Reduce workers compensation premium by maintaining a low Experience Modification Factor.	Graphs 7.2-2, 7.2-3, 7.2-4 and 7.4-2

CATEGORY 3 – CUSTOMER FOCUS

3.1 *How do you determine who your customers are and what their key requirements are?*

Our key customers were generally identified in the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-90 *General Duties of Commission*. As our services and products have evolved over the years, our customer base has expanded to include other non-traditional forestry customers. For example, urban populations have expanded into the more rural and forested areas of our state, and we are responding to this population's need for assistance on their personal property, as well as providing information on their surrounding natural environment.

Our agency uses a variety of methods to determine requirements, expectations, preferences, and satisfaction of customers and stakeholders:

- Customer Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Public Forums and Workshops
- Collaboration with Partners and User Groups
- Outreach Publications for Targeted Audiences
- Interviews
- County Forestry Board Meetings
- County Council Meetings
- Monitoring of Legislative Activities
- Visiting Congressional Delegation Annually
- Homeowner Association Meetings
- Forest Landowner Association Meetings

The SCFC has conducted surveys of customers to determine their expectations and preferences. Survey forms soliciting feedback are sent to landowners that receive forest management assistance, stewardship management assistance, cost-share assistance, or services. Customers are asked about the length of time it took to complete the service, the results of the service, and courtesy and professionalism of the employees. Periodic mailings, such as surveys to new forest landowners, help the agency acquire new customers and determine their interests and needs.

The SCFC is continuing the 20/15 campaign to proactively grow forestry's economic impact in SC from \$17.4 billion to \$20 billion by 2015. To kick off the campaign, a forestry summit of economic development and forestry leaders in the state was held at the SCFC headquarters in October 2009. A SWOT analysis identified 25 prioritized issues to be addressed. A 2nd 20/15 conference was held in June 2010 to form 6 Task Force committees to address the highest priority issues and offer recommendations for addressing them. In FY 11, the SCFC was awarded a USDA Rural Development and a USDA Forest Service grant to fund elements of the 20/15 Initiative. During FY 13, a wood availability study was completed and has been submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed professional journal. Also, a wood supply outlook study was completed for a 20-year period, ending in 2029. The results of this study will be distributed widely.

Each year, agency leadership also participates in meetings of county forestry boards to discuss current forestry issues and agency programs.

Federal grants dictate to whom we provide assistance in the Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Stewardship, BMP, and WUI programs.

3.2 *How do you keep your listening and learning methods current with changing customer/business needs and expectations?*

The SCFC seeks input and information through customer surveys and employee feedback, as well as through participation in a number of partnerships and councils, to determine changing customer/business needs and expectations. These include: Trees SC, SC Statewide Outreach Council, Wildland Fire Protection

Partnership, the Prescribed Fire Council, SC Foresters Council, SGSF, NASF, SC Emergency Management Division, State Fleet Management Division, SCFA, many local landowner associations, and professional organizations, Firewise Community Homeowner Associations, Lowcountry WUI Council and the SC Firemen's Association.

Microsoft is scheduled to stop supporting the Windows XP Operating System and Office 2003 in April, 2014. Firefighter Supervisors had some of the oldest Windows XP computers in the agency (many purchased in 1999) and this group was earmarked to receive new computers this fiscal year. Meetings were held in each region and these individuals identified what applications they use and whether a desktop, laptop, tablet, or some other device would best meet their needs.

Also, the Forest Protection Section Chief, State Fire Management Officer, and a Regional Forester serve with other fire managers on the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's Wildland Fire Use, Predicted Services and Fire Weather Subcommittees. This service as state representatives allows for the external and internal customer input to be voiced at the national fire management level where policy and procedure is discussed and formulated.

3.3 *What are your key customer access mechanisms, and how do these access mechanisms enable customers to seek information, conduct business, and make complaints?*

Key customer access mechanisms include telephone (landline and cell), mail and fax to SCFC offices (county, unit, region, headquarters and dispatch); personal contact at public meetings, forums, workshops, and individual meetings; internet (website, e-mail and Facebook) and customer satisfaction surveys.

The agency's dispatch centers and statewide 1-800-777-FIRE (3473) number provide customers with 24/7 access to the Forestry Commission for reporting wildfires, burn notifications, smoke complaints and other requests for assistance. The State's VoIP telephone system was incorporated into a new dispatch center communications console system and regional offices. The VoIP system provides the ability to transfer calls from customers between dispatch centers and regional offices; individual phone numbers for region personnel; call forwarding; voice mail messaging; and unified communication capabilities.

An automated system for handling over 400,000 vegetative yard debris notifications per year provides an efficient and consistent message on current fire danger and requirements to conduct an outdoor burn safely. This system was updated in 2010 to allow easier access to these notifications by fire departments and the ability to quickly add or modify messages. The new system can handle more calls; greatly reducing the chances of the public getting a busy signal.

The agency also maintains a web site that is constantly updated to provide an online source for forestry information, point of contacts, and services. Current wildfires and smoke management burn notifications are posted on the agency web site for public access. We also have implemented online permit sales. All of these mechanisms allow customers to obtain information, conduct business, and make complaints either verbally or in writing.

Requested information can be mailed, faxed, e-mailed, and/or delivered in person to the customer. Other government agencies (i.e. SC Department of Natural Resources, Clemson Extension, NRCS, Farm Service Agency, USDA Forest Service, Counties, etc.) have and provide information about SCFC services, programs, and contact information to customers.

3.4 *How do you measure customer/stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and use this information to improve?*

Customer satisfaction surveys regarding forest management plans, stewardship management plans, cost-share assistance and forest services are provided to customers online through the use of SurveyMonkey. This tool is also utilized by our seedling customers. The online satisfaction survey was e-mailed to all customers who provided an e-mail address. The switch to the electronic format was implemented to stream-line the process and be more cost-efficient and cost-effective for the agency. Measurements for the past 5 years are

reflected in Graphs 7.2-1 through 7.2-4. Results from these surveys are reviewed to determine if there are areas that can be improved. SCFC personnel respond to all specific customer complaints on an individual basis. In FY 13, the SCFC used customer satisfaction surveys through SurveyMonkey to obtain feedback from forest landowners that receive reforestation recommendations from our project foresters through state and federal cost-share programs. This additional survey process came as a result of a workflow study that showed there were higher workloads for our project foresters in reforestation cost-share exams over forestland exams associated with rural forestry assistance. The customer base was greater with cost-share exams than the other program.

3.5 *How do you use information and feedback from customers/stakeholders to keep services and programs relevant and provide for continuous improvement?*

Input is reviewed by program managers and agency leaders and evaluated to ensure that services and programs in five key areas (forest protection, forest management, state forests, resource development, and forestry education) are not only relevant to the current needs of customers/stakeholders but also to our mission and strategic goals. Positive services and programs are continued and those less effective are improved or eliminated. This information is also used to identify new services and programs needed.

3.6 *How do you build positive relationships with customers and stakeholders to meet and exceed their expectations? Indicate any key distinctions between different customer and stakeholder groups.*

SCFC strives to build positive relationships with customers and stakeholders and to meet and exceed their expectations. However, when complaints are received they are recorded, promptly investigated, and where problems identified efforts are made to expeditiously resolve them.

The Forest Manager of Harbison State Forest meets with the Friends of Harbison State Forest regularly to discuss plans for improvements to the trail system. Staff at Manchester State Forest utilizes Facebook to communicate to forest visitors about activity that may affect them. Sand Hills State Forest and Poe Creek State Forest (in cooperation with SC Department of Natural Resources) hosted fishing rodeos during FY 13 which were very popular with the public.

The SCFC's WUI Program reaches out to community planners, developers, residents, and business owners in the state's expanding wildland urban interfaces. WUI is a hazard mitigation and education program designed to help these customers reduce the risks of wildfire in their communities and to protect lives and property.

The SCFC reaches educators, young people, and other interested citizens with exhibits and interpretive signage on Harbison State Forest. The agency cooperates with other natural resource agencies and organizations as well as forest industry to provide two popular forestry education programs. The Wood Magic Forest Fair is an award-winning, weeklong program on the benefits of forests and forestry offered to 4th grade classes statewide (Graph 7.1-9). The agency also provides the state coordinator for the Project Learning Tree (PLT) program, an environmental education program that strives to enable educators to teach students how to think about complex environmental issues. Many stakeholders from forest industry, the education profession, and other natural resource agencies work with the SCFC provided state coordinator to make this SC PLT program possible (Graph 7.1-10a). The SC Teachers' Tour is offered for graduate credit during the summer (Graph 7.1-10b).

An online-based voice mail system is being used at a SCFC Regional Office. The voicemail service provided by the local telephone coop allows the caller to leave a full voice message when the office is not staffed to answer calls. The voice message is e-mailed to the Regional Forester and Administrative Assistant for review and processing. The recorded voice mail from the customer embedded in an email is then forwarded to the employee responsible for handling the service request. The use of paper messages are eliminated in the process and the requested employee receives the exact message from the customer. Items discussed in this paragraph and those paragraphs immediately preceding show how the SCFC strives to meet and exceed the expectations of their customers and stakeholders.

CATEGORY 4 – MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

4.1 *How do you decide which operations, processes and systems to measure for tracking financial and operational performance, including progress relative to strategic objectives and action plans?*

Historically, measures have been used to monitor program accomplishments based on the primary mission and funding sources. Financial data and performance is tracked continuously to ensure that strategic objectives, action plans and the mission of the agency are being met. While state funding sources have improved slightly, the agency is negatively impacted by the federal sequestration and has experienced a decline in this funding source. See Graphs (7.3-1 & 7.3-3) with this, the agency may need to re-visit the strategic plan to make strategic decisions in regard to objectives and prioritization. SCFC continues to strengthen the focus on improving efficiency, effectiveness, quality, and outcome measures. The SCFC has defined our key customer groups and related key requirements. The use of a variety of approaches to listen and learn from our customers provides opportunities for process improvements.

4.2 *How do you select, collect, align, and integrate data/information for analysis to provide effective support for decision making and innovation throughout your organization?*

New data/information is reviewed to determine accuracy and relevance to our strategic goals. Data and/or information which meet these criteria are utilized to encourage the continuation of positive processes and to improve less effective aspects of our operations.

Financial information is collected, discussed with and provided to program managers on a regular basis in order for them to have the necessary data to facilitate effective decision making concerning their program and the agency. We also conduct cost/benefit analysis on new technology as it becomes available and relevant to our organization. The SGSF has sponsored Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment and Forest Assessment projects. These Geographic Information System (GIS) based assessments have facilitated strategic decisions related to the prioritization of services and delivery of them in key program areas such as the deployment of Wildfire Prevention Teams, Firewise USA Communities, hazardous fuel reduction projects, and Forest Stewardship Management Plans. Technology and data is a resource used to address staffing and aid in overall decision making.

The Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment graphically illustrates wildfire risk to communities across the state. Utilizing this tool, the SCFC has identified communities at risk to wildfires, and targeted wildfire prevention efforts based on this information. Communities with high or moderate risk of wildfire are identified, and community assessments are conducted to determine the factors that put the community at risk. CWPPs are written to identify specific issues within the community, along with mitigation measures that can be accomplished to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. In interested communities, homeowner associations are given the opportunity to form a Firewise Board, conduct community work days to reduce risk, and to seek recognition as a Firewise Community. Nineteen communities in SC have achieved recognition as Firewise Communities USA.

In the Forest Renewal Program, cost-share funds are allocated on a county basis based on two criteria. The first criterion is the amount of non-industrial private forestland in that county that is capable of producing 50 cubic feet of wood per acre per year. The second criterion is the amount of potential reforestation that is needed in each county as determined by a Timber Producer's Output survey.

In SC a significant number of Forest Stewardship Plans have been written by private consulting foresters. Demand for plans written by consultants is high and frequently exceeds the funding available for these plans. To ensure Forest Stewardship funds are being delivered to areas of strategic importance the SCFC has adopted a strategic allocation system for the funding of consultant written Forest Stewardship Plans. Currently, this system is based on the Conserve Working Forest priority layer from our Forest Action Plan as the base layer for this analysis. The implementation of our strategic allocation system allows the agency to focus program delivery on areas designated as being of significance at the Regional and/or State level. These areas of significance are geographically dispersed and occur in all counties in SC. The system evaluates and ranks applications based on two criteria:

- Percent High Priority Area - more priority points will be given to applications where the tract represented has a larger proportion designated high priority by the Southern Forest Land Assessment.
- Date application received - more priority points will be given to applications that were received earlier versus later.

A new version of a GIS-based project has been designed and is pending testing. Following testing and implementation said project will aid in managing BMP Courtesy Exam data, including field notes, contact information, and site evaluation results. This project streamlines data collection and reporting to regulatory agencies and stakeholders.

Meetings were held in each region with Firefighter Supervisors to identify how and what applications they use or needed to determine if a desktop, laptop, tablet or some other device would best meet their needs. The BMP mobile GIS application was included on this group's new laptops giving them access to aerial photo, property ownership information, critical infrastructure locations, and other data needed to make a wildfire suppression decision and in providing services to landowners.

4.3 *What are your key measures, how do you review them, and how do you keep them current with organizational service needs and directions?*

In FY 11, we revised our process of distributing Customer Satisfaction Surveys. Surveys are now e-mailed to customers utilizing an online survey tool, SurveyMonkey, which is more cost-efficient and cost-effective given our limited resources.

Each year, the agency reviews cost records for services work (prescribed burning, firebreak plowing, standby for prescribed burning, and waterbar construction) to see if charges for these services are in line with the cost to the agency of providing these services. When disparities are found, Forest Management Staff present recommendations for changes to services rates to the Commissioners. In addition, the agency collects cost data related to reforestation practices. This data is used to adjust cost-share rates in the state Forest Renewal Program and Southern Pine Beetle Program as needed to maintain an average landowner share of 60% and 50% respectively.

Each year, the SCFC Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program measures 20% of the total number of FIA plots across the state. The USDA Forest Service - Southern Research Station FIA Unit provides annual updates of the data online. Every two years, the SCFC FIA Foresters conduct a survey of the primary forest product mills in SC. Timber harvest data is reported and summarized by county. Directories for primary and secondary forest product mills in SC are provided online in Excel spreadsheets and Google Earth applications. The SCFC periodically publishes data on the export of forest products from SC. These data are used to track trends in the movement of forest products from SC to global markets.

Implementation of BMP measures is constantly being monitored with field inspections by the Environmental Management Section to ensure that a high level of compliance is maintained.

Wildland fire occurrence and suppression efforts are reviewed monthly to track trends for the current year.

Additional measures are collected and analyzed annually to be used in our mid- to long-range planning.

Enhance the Resource

- Forest-Based Economic Development Impact (Graphs 7.1-1a&b)
- Forest Inventory and Analysis Plot Production (Graph 7.1-2)

Protect the Resource

- Average Fire Response Time in Minutes (Table 7.1-3 & Graph 7.1-3)
- Ten Year Average Fire Size for Southern States (Graph 7.1-4)
- Timber Theft and Fraud Cases Settled (Graph 7.1-5)

- Five Year Fire Occurrence, Extended Investigations, and Prosecutions (Graph 7.1-6)
- BMP Harvesting Compliance Trends (Graph 7.1-7)
- SPB Losses in SC (Graph 7.1-8)
- Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Reproductive Data (Graph 7.1-11)

Raise Awareness about the Resource

- Participation and Demand for Wood Magic (Graph 7.1-9a) and Test Results (Graph 7.1-9b)
- Participation in Project Learning Tree (Graph 7.1-10a)
- Participation and Demand for SC Teachers’ Tour (Graph 7.1-10b)

Customer Satisfaction

- Customer Satisfaction Level for Seedling Products (Graph 7.2-1)
- Customer Satisfaction with Forestry Services (Graph 7.2-2)
- Customer Satisfaction with Forest Management Plans (Graph 7.2-3)
- Customer Satisfaction with Stewardship Management Plans (Graph 7.2-4)

Financial

- Appropriations – State General Funds (Graph 7.3-1)
- Agency Fuel Costs (Graph 7.3-2)
- Federal Grants (Graph 7.3-3)
- Number of Dozers by Year Model (Graph 7.3-4)
- 1-800 Charges per 10,000 Calls Received (Graph 7.3-6)
- State Forests Payments to Counties (Graph 7.3-7)

Employee Satisfaction, Involvement, and Development

- Employee Turnover Rate (Graph 7.4-1)
- E-Mod Factor (Graph 7.4-2)

Regulatory/Legal Compliance

- Smoke Management Notifications Average Processing Time (Graph 7.5-1)

4.4 *How do you select and use key comparative data and information to support operational and strategic decision making and innovation?*

Comparative data from before and after changes or innovations are made is used to measure its impact on the agency or its operations. Examples include cost savings achieved in 1-800 calls by routing more types of burn notifications to an automated system; improved dispatching times with a new computer aided dispatch system (CADS); and others.

During joint meetings with program managers from other forestry agencies in southeastern states, common issues are discussed. Comparative data from similar state forestry organizations is available on a limited basis and each state records data differently. However, we strive to get the best comparative data available. Contacts made with southeastern states reveal that most state forestry organizations are just beginning to track meaningful performance measures. SC was the first southeastern state to track dispatch response times through a statewide real time CADS.

Trips to other states and phone surveys have been used to collect information about operational decisions in other forestry agencies. Consultation with our stakeholders and partners is used to gain insight for improving our agency.

4.5 *How do you ensure data integrity, reliability, timeliness, accuracy, security and availability for decision making?*

Auditing and accounting standards are used to ensure these functions are being achieved. Standards, procedures, and principles are in place to ensure that data is reliable and accurate, security is maintained, and a proper segregation of duties adhered to. In response to the security breach at the Department of Revenue and in coordination with the Inspector General’s office and a Governor's Executive Order, an internal review and assessment of computer security and an inventory of personal identifiable and confidential information was conducted. The agency also reviewed 11 short term remediation steps recommended by the Inspector

General and the Division of State Information Technology and implemented ones applicable to our unique business environment. The agency is in the process of upgrading its Information Technology assets to more secure and current versions of software and hardware as funds become available.

Measures and data have been used during program reviews at the unit/region and state levels. Senior management has instructed regional foresters and division directors to share performance data with personnel at all levels as a means of improving processes and generating feedback.

Our CADS was updated in 2005 to streamline our internal dispatch processes to improve our service to the public and data reliability. This has improved our data collection, data analysis and process improvement efforts. Calculations to determine if a burn notification is compliant with smoke management guidelines have been automated with the new system to reduce human errors. Numerous processes and checks have been added to ensure spatial locations (latitudes and longitudes values) of notifications, wildfires and other incidents entered in CADS and the Records Management System are valid locations within SC. Field personnel are regularly provided reports associated with dispatch and initial attack responses to help ensure data accuracy. Dispatch Center telephone and two-way radio communications are also recorded and time stamped. This system has instant recall capability and can be used to verify caller information and when reviewing the accuracy of information recorded in CADS.

The SCFC is continuing development of a new enterprise geo-database and web-based GIS application to facilitate data collection and analysis. Once operational, this system will consolidate data collection for several programs and facilitate tracking and reporting of outcomes for new federal and state reporting systems.

The FIA Program must adhere to the requirements developed by the USDA Forest Service – Southern Research Station – FIA Unit for data integrity and accuracy. All FIA employees are required to successfully pass a certification exam with a minimum score of 80% and maintain an annual average of 87%, thereafter. The USDA Forest Service – Southern Research Station conducts a minimum of 8% field checks on data collected by SCFC employees.

4.6 *How do you translate organizational performance review findings into priorities for continuous improvement?*

The SCFC has outside reviews conducted by state and federal entities. Almost each fiscal year, the SCFC is required to go through some type of review of its forest protection and forest management programs. Improvements recommended by these reviews are studied to determine cost/benefit ratios, feasibility of implementation, and effectiveness. Questionnaires are also completed each year to determine the cost-effectiveness of operations at each SCFC shop. Suggestions on improving cost-effectiveness are submitted by State Fleet Management and implemented as needed. The SCFC regards all reviews as opportunities to improve our overall operations. In addition, SCFC uses various program meetings as opportunities to benchmark with other state and federal forestry agencies to enhance continuous improvement with their forest protection and forest management programs.

4.7 *How do you collect, transfer, and maintain organizational and workforce knowledge (knowledge assets)? How do you identify, share and implement best practices, as appropriate?*

The SCFC has a state of the art CADS that captures a tremendous amount of data about our daily operations. In addition, we utilize customer surveys, staff meetings, and work teams to brainstorm solutions to challenges facing us. We share this information using communication tools such as a news bulletin, which is distributed to every employee and an annual report. Critical positions, occupied by personnel with known retirement dates, are targeted for early hiring of replacements to facilitate transfer of knowledge. However, opportunities for improvement still exist in this area due to our shallow workforce. Some positions within the agency are only one deep and only that individual has detailed knowledge of the tasks to be performed. Efforts are underway to address this with one possible solution being the EPMS process.

In FY 13, the SCFC was recognized at both the regional and national level by the USDA Forest Service as a leader in the management of our FEPP. At the request of the USDA Forest Service, SCFC personnel conducted a two-day workshop for peers from the Alabama Forestry Commission.

CATEGORY 5 – WORKFORCE FOCUS

5.1 *How does management organize and measure work to enable your workforce to 1) develop to their full potential, aligned with the organization’s objectives, strategies, and action plans; and 2) promote cooperation, initiative, empowerment, teamwork, innovation and your organizational culture?*

The SC Forest Fire Protection Act states the State Commission of Forestry shall direct forest fire protection work. The agency leadership developed the agency mission on the responsibility directed by the Forest Fire Protection Act. The Commissioners and senior managers, including regional foresters and program managers, define the strategic goals and objectives to accomplish this responsibility. Unit foresters, state forest directors, and supervisors develop action plans. Division and department employees complete the tasks. The agency provides professional development training covering topics such as diversity, ethics, and hiring practices to aid employees in fulfilling their supervisory responsibilities.

The agency accomplishes forest protection and management activities through established regions, which are further subdivided into units. The regions include Coastal, Pee Dee and Piedmont. The regions have common goals and objectives, and the implementation of protection and management activities within the regions take into account geographical concerns and other considerations. The unit forester, supervisor, specialty foresters (BMP, Stewardship, Urban, and FIA) develop specific implementation tasks for the area. The unit management considers employee input before implementing the tasks. The state forest system, which is comprised of five (5) locations, also establishes specific action plans. Employee involvement at all levels increases the commitment to the agency’s mission and goals.

The agency uses teams to accomplish several activities. For example, IMTs, fire review teams, accountability report, and interview and selection teams. The use of teams allows collaboration and cooperation among work units. In addition, the teams allow for knowledge sharing and employee empowerment and input toward the agency’s goals and objectives. Job responsibilities of foresters and firefighters require them to make decisions on the front line. Therefore, employee empowerment is a part of the assigned responsibilities. For example, when dealing with a forest fire, the employee must assess and make decisions based on the situation at hand. In addition, the BMP foresters make assessments concerning logging sites that could result in a “stop work” order. The agency emphasizes extensive training, which prepares the employees to respond appropriately to situations at hand.

The structure of the organization encourages and requires cooperation among divisions and departments to accomplish the mission of the agency. There is great cooperation among departments, particularly with forest fire activities. Employees whose normal day-to-day activities may involve forest management are fireline qualified and available to assist with fire suppression when necessary. The agency’s dispatch centers, which are critical to the forest protection division, continually utilize technology to assist the staff in accomplishing tasks and assessing the results. For example, the CADS provides information on response times, number of acres burned, and initial responder.

Employees’ input and involvement are encouraged locally, regionally and nationally. Employees make presentations to civic organizations and local government and they represent the SCFC on committees. Since the agency’s core competency is forest protection, employees have opportunities to serve on external teams with other law enforcement and protection agencies as subject matter experts.

The SCFC values its employees and appreciates their work ethic, professionalism, and team approach to create a cohesive and cooperative work environment. The agency understands that the professional development and satisfaction of our employees is an essential component in reaching the agency’s mission and strategic initiatives. The agency continues to review and align our workforce planning to support the agency’s mission and strategic goals. We understand this is an on-going, across-the-board process to provide

management a resource to make positive hiring decisions, retain key talent, and promote within the agency.

5.2 *How do you achieve effective communication and knowledge/skill/best practice sharing across departments, jobs, and locations?*

Communication within the agency occurs daily with an intranet morning report, which indicates employees who are out of the office for the day or traveling, program and administrative information. The agency distributes the e-mail to approximately 70% of the workforce. The agency distributes Tree Country SC, the agency bulletin, to all employees semi-monthly via e-mail. Due to staff reductions and budget cuts in recent years, supervisors are responsible for communicating information to employees without e-mail access. The bulletin captures department updates, highlights of agency information, or employees, agency history, etc. The senior management conducts bi-monthly employee meetings with program and department managers. The agenda for the meeting includes program updates, changes, problems and lessons learned. The program and department managers communicate the information to their respective employee groups or departments. The firefighters hold monthly meetings to exchange administrative information and any job specific discussions. In addition, specific programs or departments have regularly scheduled meetings on a quarterly basis. In addition to meetings, portable radios, cell phones, and dispatch calls/messages are communication methods utilized.

Some specific formal methods of knowledge/skills/best practice sharing include fire reviews, annual fireline refresher sessions, training and safety council, and program manager meetings. When appropriate, the agency utilizes conference call meetings to discuss specific procedural or fact-finding items. The agency also conducts internal self-assessments for forest protection and forest management activities. In addition, several employees are instructors for established training programs. Employees, who are CPM participants, share project information results.

5.3 *How does management recruit, hire, place, and retain new employees? Describe any barriers that you may encounter.*

The agency continues to utilize the State Office of Human Resources electronic recruiting system as its main recruitment source. It is an internet based system that reaches a broad and diverse applicant pool both nationally and internationally. In addition to the electronic state system, when recruiting for critical need positions or executive management vacancies, the agency also advertises in local newspapers particularly in rural areas, and forestry journals/bulletins/periodicals.

Recruitment barriers the agency faces include minority recruitment, decline in the number of forestry graduates, and non-competitive salaries, particularly for foresters and firefighters. The agency participates in school and community career fairs. The agency utilizes individual and group interview methods during the recruitment and selection process. A candidate may interview for a specific location or several locations depending on the position. The Human Resources Office provides state benefit and state government related web addresses to new hires as an information resource and to assist during the orientation process.

The agency's workforce has discretion and flexibility within established guidelines and goals to achieve their job functions which positively affects the retention of employees.

5.4 *How do you assess your workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills, competencies, and staffing levels?*

Methods to determine workforce capability include observation, interviews between management and employee, exit interviews, group meetings, review of data and reports, evaluation and response to concerns/issues, and post training tests. Capacity needs are determined based on evaluations of data related to forest protection and forest management such as number and size of fires, response times, management plans completed versus number of requests. Comparisons are made to other southern states in regards to the number and size of fires. The senior managers, regional and program managers evaluate and assess the data results. The agency utilizes outside consultants or interns for specialized short-term skill, competencies, and staffing needs.

5.5 *How does your workforce performance management system, including feedback to and from individual members of the workforce, support high performance work and contribute to the achievement of your action plans?*

The agency assesses and evaluates employee performance with the EPMS designed for SC state government agencies. The EPMS process is a continuous performance process that consists of three components: the planning stage, on-going communication between the supervisor and the employee, and the evaluation stage. A planning stage is conducted at the beginning of each rating period for an employee. The supervisor and the employee participate in drafting the planning stage document using the employee's position description. The success criteria are defined in quantity/quality measures that would allow the employee to successfully accomplish the job duties/objectives. The employee's job functions (which include job duties and success criteria), objectives, and performance characteristics for the next rating period are discussed between the supervisor and the employee at the beginning of the rating period.

The supervisor should use the planning stage document as a communication tool during the review period to provide performance feedback to the employee. At the end of the review period, the employee's performance is evaluated based on the planning stage document. The three levels of performance the supervisor uses to rate each job function is as follows: *Exceptional; Successful; and Unsuccessful*. The agency incorporates a universal review date for employees. The universal review date assists managers and supervisors with establishing annual goals for employees within a consistent timeframe.

The agency continues aligning individual employee's performance success criteria to stated strategic objectives. For example, one goal outlined in the agency's strategic plan is to improve contacts and communication with state and local levels of government concerning forestry related issues. The action item to accomplish this goal is to increase participation in public hearings, including county council, planning commission meetings and landowner association meetings. The employee attending the meetings submits a summary report, which is a standard operating practice. The agency follows up with any forestry related issues on the agenda. Thus far, the following job groups' EPMS have components directly linked to strategic objectives: regional foresters, unit foresters, project foresters, warden technicians, law enforcement, and firefighting supervisors. The requirement of a reviewer in the supervisor's chain of command, to review the employee's final evaluation assists in assuring deployment of success criteria linked to strategic plan items.

5.6 *How does your development and learning system for leaders address the following:*

- a. development of personal leadership attributes***
- b. development of organizational knowledge***
- c. ethical practices***
- d. your core competencies, strategic challenges, and accomplishment of action plans***

The agency director proactively continues to build relationships with agency partners, stakeholders and customers. The agency director and deputy director participate with the Agency Director Organization programs and SC Human Affairs Commission programs that cover the importance of senior leadership and support for programs the agency may be implementing.

A key component of our development and learning system for leaders is a genuine understanding of the concept of leading by example, and the senior leaders strive to provide guidance, make decisions, and represent the agency according to SCFC values. Employees of the agency carry out their responsibilities according to the ethical standards of their individual professions (i.e. forestry, accounting, human resources.) Program managers provide monthly and quarterly reports to agency leaders concerning core competencies, strategic challenges, and accomplishments of action plans.

5.7 *How do you identify and address key developmental training needs for your workforce, including job skills training, performance excellence training, diversity training, management/leadership development, new employee orientation and safety training?*

Program managers recommend training needs for employees. The SCFC's training council developed training guides to set minimum training requirements for each position. The council meets periodically to

review changes or additions to training needs. The SCFC implements new national wildfire training standards and revises current courses as needed. The Training Director schedules necessary training and maintains a training record database for each employee. In FY 10, the agency implemented SC Enterprise Information System (SCEIS). The Human Resources Office ensures new hires are provided the initial SCEIS training, Quick Reference Cards and training guides. Because of the complexity and continued enhancements of SCEIS, training will continue for agency employees.

The agency utilizes the State Office of Human Resources/Supervisory Practices, 4-day training for its new supervisors. Management attends professional development workshops/meetings within their professions for continuous professional development and to stay abreast of current professional trends.

Supervisors complete training guides for new employees upon completion of orientation and training on agency and safety policies. For example, equipment operators must complete 'Fire Suppression Equipment Operator Essential Task Orientation' within 30 days of employment.

Familiarity with new technology helps an employee complete his or her work more efficiently. For example, foresters take GIS mapping training in order to provide required data to the USDA Forest Service for stewardship plans. The Deputy State Forester makes expectations clear to supervisors about training that is required to develop new skills. Established training goals/objectives for the specific review period are included in the employees' EPMS process.

5.8 *How do you encourage on the job use of new knowledge and skills?*

The agency recognizes the importance of continuous professional development and training of its workforce. As budget permits, the agency uses the State Office of Human Resources compensation system to award salary increases for specified completion of training programs. For example, a salary increase is awarded for attaining forestry registration, completion of the forestry technician program, progression through established career paths (i.e. foresters, dispatchers, and mechanics) and criminal justice academy graduation.

Experienced employees are instructors for the forestry technician program, community educational programs, and agency representatives on state and regional committees. The agency has established IMTs and employees are encouraged to participate. While many of the positions on the teams are for employees with forestry and wildfire background, there are available positions for administrative staff. Participation on the teams provides opportunities for employees to increase their skills and knowledge outside of normal day-to-day responsibilities and allows development of leadership skills.

The agency offers additional assignments or greater responsibilities to employees as an opportunity for them to use their new skills and knowledge. We encourage employee participation when challenging opportunities become available.

5.9 *How does employee training contribute to the achievement of your action plans?*

Employee training will allow the SCFC to meet future demands and provide quality service with well-trained, qualified staff that enjoys a safe and rewarding work environment. Training is particularly critical for firefighters. Our main achievements would be:

- Maintain a capable, satisfied, and diverse work team.
- Enhance professional development for agency personnel to efficiently, safely, and professionally provide better services.
- Review staffing levels and organizational structure to ensure the agency is in a position to supply needed services.
- Implement plans and establish performance measures to reduce the number of job-related injuries.
- Establish goals and implement vehicle and equipment operations safety training to reduce the number of accidents.

5.10 *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your workforce and leader training and development systems?*

Indicators of the effectiveness of training include application on the job and successful mock exercises. The agency's forestry technician training program is a combination of classroom and fieldwork. The employees take a test on the objectives of the classroom training and the application of the skills is through fieldwork under supervision. The comprehensive training program takes approximately 2 years to complete. The duration allows employees to experience real time fire and forest management situations discussed and simulated during training. The agency has established IMTs. There have been numerous classroom training hours and exercises for these teams.

Employees who have completed CPM and Executive Institute programs are successfully handling additional responsibilities for the agency. This is another indicator of the effectiveness of developmental skills taught in the respective programs. In addition, employees completing job specific training are evaluated based on improved performance. The agency completes a review of accidents and incidents to determine if employees followed safety-training procedures. Based on the review, the agency determines if employees need supplemental training.

5.11 *How do you motivate your workforce to develop and utilize their full potential?*

The continuing budget situation during the year created a difficult situation for awarding monetary recognitions for some established programs. The agency realized the increase in communication and the state of the agency and the budget were vital to employee well-being. However, the agency utilizes the following tools and mechanisms to assist with motivating employees to develop and utilize their full potential:

- Service Award Presentations for 10, 20, 30 and 40 years of state service;
- Agency Service Awards for 5, 15, 25, 35 and 45 years of service;
- Public Service Recognition Week acknowledgement with lunch or gift;
- Recognition of accomplishment and achievements in the Bulletin News;
- SCFC Challenge Coin awarded to employees and others for deploying extraordinary excellence in mission accomplishment or assistance in mission accomplishment;
- Career path development defined by agency structure or specific job groups;
- Recognition and compensation increase for Forester Registration;
- Tuition assistance for course work related to job responsibilities; Flexible work schedules allow employees opportunities to balance professional and personal responsibilities;
- Successful completion of specific training courses provides opportunities for out of state fire detail and selection on IMTs;
- Performance increases and bonuses for work performance or task completion which has a significant impact on the agency;
- Manager discussion with employees on career goals;
- Periodically individuals have represented senior management at designated meetings, which leads to professional development.

The tools and mechanisms provide a means for the agency to recognize employee milestones related to service time, professional growth and individual development. The agency recognizes and shows appreciation to the employees for their contributions. The recognition of accomplishments also provides an opportunity for other employees to learn from their coworkers and to share professional knowledge.

5.12 *What formal and/or informal assessment methods and measures do you use to obtain information on workforce well-being, satisfaction, and motivation? How do you use other measures such as employee retention and grievances?*

Major assessment methods and measures the agency uses as indicators to determine employee well-being, satisfaction, and motivation include: visits with the State Forester; exit interview information; follow up with managers and employees; open door policy; flexible work schedules; employee assistance program; and career path development. The family-friendly, professional work environment at SCFC is conducive for employees to feel comfortable expressing thoughts/ideas and suggestions regarding new and existing programs. The agency reviews its employee retention rates as another indicator of employee satisfaction and

motivation. The agency assesses employee complaints, formal or informal, for improvement of applicable processes and communication with employees.

The agency reviews and analyzes information and data collected from these methods and measures. Priorities for improvement are determined based on meeting the agency's mission, employee well-being, and budget availability. The agency recognizes the importance of employee well-being, satisfaction, and motivation with successful accomplishment of goals and objectives.

5.13 *How do you manage effective career progression and effective succession planning for your entire workforce throughout the organization?*

The Human Resources Office continues to identify employees who are retirement eligible or who are currently participating in the Teacher and Employee Retention Incentive (TERI) program. We currently have seven employees who have retired and participate in the TERI program. We have approximately 56 employees who are retirement eligible and approximately 52 who will become eligible within the next five years by service or age. The agency will continue to work with innovative ways to capture knowledge from targeted critical-need positions to ensure a smooth transition for the remaining workforce.

The agency has a career progression path for most endemic positions. However, due to the significant number of the senior workforce that retired over the past couple of years, the agency continues to prepare individuals for internal development and growth potential. The agency uses job rotation as a method to bridge filling critical need positions and to prepare employees for internal opportunities. The agency utilizes temporary job assignments to fulfill short-term needs but also as a method to broaden employees experience and prepare for other responsibilities.

5.14 *How do you maintain a safe, secure, and healthy work environment? (Include your workplace preparedness for emergencies and disasters.)*

The agency reviews worker compensation injuries/illnesses claims by the types and number of claims filed to determine if repetitive or increased safety violations are occurring. By determining the occurrence/concentration of injuries/illnesses, the Training Director can customize training for staff safety, productivity, and cost effectiveness.

SCFC has pushed hard for improved equipment, replacement, and maintenance funding to lessen the risk of injury and deaths from unsafe equipment utilization with inadequate success. Equipment that is believed to be unsafe is removed from use. While some funding improvements have been realized, additional funding is critically needed.

The SCFC stresses safety throughout its training and operations. It is a standard procedure for staff meetings to begin with a discussion of safety issues. The training program for many employees includes First Aid/CPR, Driver Improvement, and an annual refresher for fireline employees on the use of a fire shelter and other fire safety measures.

The SCFC requires wildland firefighters to participate and encourages voluntary participation in the Physical Fitness Program. The agency has an incentive program to complete the physical fitness test but due to budget reductions, this program is currently suspended. Normally, approximately 80% of the agency employees participate in the Physical Fitness Program. The SCFC puts an emphasis on personal safety and has policies and procedures on the use of Personal Protective Equipment and safe fireline procedures. Employees are encouraged to participate in health screenings and health fairs.

The Safety Coordinator reviews all accidents and injuries to look for developing trends and to make recommendations to reduce future problems. He performs an annual inspection of agency facilities to ensure the agency and employees are following Occupational Safety Health Administration and state regulations. The agency continues to review the evacuation plans for its facilities. The evacuation plan for the Columbia headquarters is posted. The agency conducted shop safety inspections and completed nine during FY 13.

Facilities that allow public access have audible alarms on doors away from the main reception area. The agency locks the entrance to the Dispatch Centers after business hours to increase security to the area. In addition, a keyless entry system assists with security to the area. Dispatch Centers have permanently mounted hurricane wind proof protective covers over windows and equipped with emergency backup power and communication systems. The agency provides transportation in four-wheel drive vehicles during severe weather events.

The SCFC has developed the framework for a COOP, which includes preparedness for a pandemic and plans for creating employee awareness about pandemics and the plan.

CATEGORY 6 – PROCESS MANAGEMENT

6.1 *How do you determine and what are your organization’s core competencies, and how do they relate to your mission, competitive environment, and action plans?*

Core competencies are identified within our agency’s mission and strategic plan. Through Memorandums of Understanding with other natural resource agencies we attempt to focus on our core competencies and eliminate any overlap or duplication. Some of our core competencies are listed below:

- Fire Suppression & Detection
- Fire Dispatch
- Burn Notifications and Vegetative Smoke Management Regulations
- Forest Resource Data Collection & Interpretation
- Forest Management Prescriptions and Advice for Forest Landowners
- Incident Management Teams
- Forestry Law Enforcement (Timber Theft/Woods Arson etc.)
- Forest Resource Development
- Educate the public and decision-makers on the importance of forests and the forest industry

6.2 *How do you determine and what are your key work processes that produce, create or add value for your customers and your organization and how do they relate to your core competencies? How do you ensure these processes are used?*

The agency Strategic Plan and Legislative Mandates are the main factors in determining our key processes.

The agency offers products and services to forest landowners and the general public in these key areas: forest protection, forest management, state forests, seedling production, and forestry education. The SCFC also provides forest management assistance to other state agencies that own woodlands.

Forest Protection

The SCFC provides landowners with wildland firefighting assistance through a network of firefighters and equipment stationed throughout the state. Dispatching the closest available firefighting unit is a key process in protecting the forest resource. The agency has three dispatch centers, located in Florence, Newberry and Walterboro. These centers operate using a CADS. A Statewide Dispatch Operations Coordinator provides operational and technical oversight of the dispatch centers. At this level, detailed and independent analyses of key success criteria are performed to facilitate consistency. Fire Managers are provided with the tools to monitor fire activities. Reports with information such as response times, individual fire reports, monthly fire reports and non-emergency dispatches are distributed to supervisors monthly.

The SCFC uses a commercial “off the shelf” 9-1-1 software system to dispatch resources for wildfire and other emergencies. CADS has improved the efficiency of our dispatch efforts (Graph 7.3-6) to wildland fire incidents (Graph 7.1-3). This technology gives us state-of-the-art dispatching capabilities unique throughout the nation. Such improved dispatch operations have helped to reduce the losses of life, property, and natural resources to wildland fires.

A critical function of the dispatch centers is communications. Communications include receiving notification of wildfires from the general public, fire departments, 9-1-1 centers and agency employees; receiving vegetative burn notification requests, dispatching and mission critical voice communications with resources on wildfires and other incidents; and records of those communications. The radio communications console, telephone and voice recording systems used in the dispatch centers were 10-16 years old, beyond end-of-life, parts no longer available, or becoming more difficult to support. In 2012, a Request for Proposals was developed with input from dispatchers, dispatch managers, and communications managers for a new dispatch communications console system. The new system was to leverage existing infrastructure, integrate radio and telephone communications (including the State's VoIP telephone system) to best meet the functional requirements of the agency.

The SCFC takes notifications of forestry, agriculture, and wildlife outdoor burning at the regional dispatch centers. All other notifications for outdoor vegetative debris burning, including construction debris, right-of-way debris, trade waste and yard debris, are received by an automated voice mail system. The SCFC upgraded to a new automated system hosted by SPIRIT Telecom that replaced a 15 year old, "end-of-life", in house system in November 2010. This system is an efficient way to process large numbers of calls (a record high of 452,224 calls in FY 2012) in a timely fashion and to deliver a consistent fire safety message to the caller (Graphs 7.3-5 & 7.3-6). This new system allows notifications to be automatically forwarded to County Fire Services, has improved search capabilities and provides an easier process to update fire safety messages.

New technology for detection of forest pests is constantly being evaluated. An example of technological advance is the use of the Global Positioning System (GPS) in conducting aerial surveys. By using a preprogrammed GPS, the SCFC was able to eliminate one of three personnel required for the survey. GPS technology reduces the time required for each survey by providing the aircraft pilot a constant and continuous flight track throughout the survey.

The SCFC has conducted community wildfire risk assessments on 791 communities throughout the state since 2002. Of those 735 are rated from moderate to high to extreme levels of risk from wildfire. These on-going assessments, conducted with National Fire Plan grant funds, provide homeowners, community planners, fire departments, and SCFC wildland firefighters information on access, vegetation, building construction, fire protection capacity. These assessments often come at the request of either interested homeowners or community leaders within the WUI. Once the assessment is completed, information and pictures from the community are assembled into a CWPP. The CWPP contains descriptions of the community followed by fuels mitigation recommendations for reducing the wildfire hazards within and for that community. Over 126 CWPPs (for individual communities and fire districts) have been developed to cover 244 communities at risk. These plans are reviewed by community leaders, the Firewise recommendations are prioritized, and the selected recommendations are implemented. A community that takes action to reduce the risk of wildfire by following the recommendations within the CWPP also becomes eligible to receive national recognition as a "Firewise Community/USA". There are currently 19 communities with Firewise Community/USA status in SC with several others to reach that status by the end of the year.

The planning and conducting of homeowner and community leader education workshops is on-going throughout SC. This year, 25 Firewise presentations, community and homeowner workshops and Firewise exhibits were made at various venues including community events, fire department open houses, safety expos and the SC Firefighters Association annual meeting. Presentations included information about Firewise and the Ready, Set, Go! Program. Efforts have primarily been concentrated in Oconee County and in Horry/Georgetown Counties where interest has been greatest.

The Firewise mobile exhibit and Firewise Table Top exhibit were used 11 times by SCFC and USF&WS personnel during the year to reach over 12,500 people at such places as fire department open houses, safety days, community festivals and events, and community chipping days. Over 6,500 Firewise and wildfire prevention materials were distributed at these events.

Cooperative efforts with Clemson Extension Service were made to promote Firewise with the use of Title III funds. Extension agents were asked to promote Firewise and the fire prevention “*Think Before You Burn*” (TBYB) effort in their seven county coverage area within the Piedmont.

The Firewise Field Coordinator worked with local SCFC supervisors identifying communities at-risk, conducting community assessments, contacting local fire departments, developing CWPPs, constructing Power Point presentations, and assisting with Firewise presentations ensuring homeowners, planners, and developers receive the technical assistance and information needed to reduce the risk of wildfires in their communities.

National Fire Plan grant funds were awarded to 15 communities for projects in the amount of \$103,369 for various projects including installation of a leaf disposal site, underbrushing of undeveloped lots and common areas such as entrance roads, and assistance with community chipping days to reduce the fuel buildups within their communities. Additional funds were used for fuels reduction and mitigation projects involving prescribed burning, underbrushing and fuelbreak installation on 30 tracts (2,397 acres) for \$142,723.

The SCFC administers National Fire Plan Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant funds to assist fire departments in purchasing wildland firefighting equipment, communication equipment, and personal protective equipment. Some of the funds are used by fire departments for Wildland fire training especially for learning how to fight wildfires and assist the SCFC in the WUI. This cooperative effort between the SCFC and fire departments is critical in achieving success in reducing losses to life, property, and our natural resources. For 2013, VFA grant funds in the amount of \$186,811 were allocated to 64 participating fire departments.

The SCFC offers federal excess property to assist fire departments in acquiring firefighting equipment to increase their rural firefighting capacity through two programs administered by the USDA Forest Service; the FEPP Program and the FFP Program.

For fiscal year 2013, we received 54 items in FFP for a value of over 1.5 million dollars benefiting both the SCFC and several fire departments located around the state. Under the old FEPP, approximately 1,068 items for \$22.1 million are allocated throughout the state.

Forest Management

The SCFC provides forest landowners with assistance in managing their woodlands and information on private forest consultant services as needed. This involves a wide range of services including the development of management plans, the monitoring of environmental guidelines, and the re-inventory of South Carolina’s forests. We perform on-site completion checks to ensure reforestation plans were followed and work was performed properly, especially for customers receiving cost-share funds. We also provide training for loggers and contractors and provide courtesy exams while they are still on-the-job site performing the work. We utilize forest inventory data to encourage industry growth and development in SC. We share this information with various development boards and the Department of Commerce.

Compliance with agency-approved environmental guidelines is monitored biannually on federal, state, industrial, and private woodlands. Results are published and widely distributed both in hard copy and via the Internet.

Resource Development

A key activity of the SCFC is continuous inventory of SC's forestland. Three two-person crews measure FIA sample plot locations every five years to exacting national standards. The USDA Forest Service - Southern Research Station is required to check the accuracy of our plot work to ensure quality control at a minimum rate of 4% of the total number of locations as mandated by the program nationally, but strive for 8% of the total number of locations regionally.

State Forests

The SCFC's state forests demonstrate sustainable multiple-use management to forest landowners and the general public. In FY 01, the state forests began developing a long-range plan. The plan was completed in June 2002 and approved by the Commissioners and is in use. Each State Forest has completed individual management plan revisions during FY 13. These plans also share common formatting and layouts.

The SCFC has completed a process to enhance management of the state forest system. This process combined a formal financial analysis and implementation of a Forest Resource Information System to provide managers with better information to ensure sustainable management and more predictable cash flow. The system was developed by combining GIS and data-based management systems with common forestry applications, including forest inventory software, growth and yield models, and forest planning models. Completion of this project is allowing the SCFC to optimize revenue from the state forests while ensuring multiple uses and ecological values are maintained. The SCFC has awarded a contract to have additional inventory data processed and a new harvest schedule developed.

In accordance with the SC Code of Laws, twenty-five percent of revenue received from the sale of timber products on state forests is returned to the applicable county for their school system (Graph 7.3-7).

Resource Development

The N&TI Section of the SCFC supplies forest landowners with high-quality forest tree seedlings. Approximately 3.6 million seedlings were produced during FY 13. A customer survey is implemented annually as a feedback mechanism to direct future product design. This year, the survey was e-mailed to all customers who supplied us with an e-mail address. Of the 476 surveys e-mailed out, 204 (43%) customers responded. 95.6 percent of those responding are satisfied with the overall quality of the products and services provided by the N&TI Section of the SCFC (Graph 7.2-1). In response to our survey, we learned that:

- Most customers are generally satisfied with their seedling purchases from the SCFC.
- Dissatisfaction is highly correlated with seedling mortality after planting. Customers acknowledge that weather, seedling quality, and planting techniques all affect mortality. Customers expressed a range of concerns this year including flexibility of pick-up times at Taylor Nursery, seedling cost, the desire for additional tree species to be grown, and stricter grading of seedling before shipping. The results of this survey will be considered for program improvement into the nursery program.

Forestry Education

One of SCFC's primary missions is to promote an awareness and appreciation by the public of the ecological, social, and economic functions and benefits of the state's forests. The agency's Environmental Education Program has been decimated by budget cuts and loss of dedicated personnel due to retirements, internal restructuring, and termination of "At will" (TERI & working retirees) employees. Though the number of programs has been significantly reduced, the agency and its employees continue to support the popular Wood Magic Forest Fair, Project Learning Tree, the Teachers' Tour and school programs and produce technical and general informational materials on forestry and forest-related subjects. School groups from throughout the state continue to use Harbison State Forest as a resource for forestry education and the staff at Harbison conducts numerous activities each year for these field studies. With fewer staff available for direct classroom instruction, formal and non-formal educators in grades K-12 have become focal points for professional development training. All programs and training are content oriented and many are curriculum standards-based to ensure they meet the requirements of the State Department of Education. Partnerships have been formed with federal and state agencies and the private sector to provide our remaining educational programs at low cost. All educational programs offered by SCFC are evaluated and adjusted to meet perceived needs. The demand for these quality programs exceeds SCFC's ability to accommodate requests (Graphs 7.1-9a & 7.1-10b).

State Lands

The SCFC provides forest management assistance to other state agencies that own woodlands, providing for the opportunity to manage for multiple uses, including wildlife habitat, recreation, environmental education,

and sustainable forest products. SCFC foresters assist in developing forest management plans for these properties, provide timber marking and cruising services, and assist in obtaining the best price for forest products. During FY 13 the SCFC provided assistance to five state agencies (SC Department of Corrections, SC Department of Transportation, SC Department of Natural Resources, SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and SC State University).

6.3 *How do you incorporate organizational knowledge, new technology, cost controls, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors such as cycle time into process design and delivery?*

CADS has features, functions, and enhancements recommended by dispatchers, fire managers, and information technology professionals. An “off-the-shelf” solution was selected over a custom developed system to control costs and to utilize technology and functions developed for 9-1-1 systems. Enhancements utilizing the power of GIS software and 911 address data have improved the efficiency in taking Smoke Management Burn Notifications, locating wildfires, and identifying and notifying the closest available resources to an incident.

In FY 11 we began providing information on current wildfires and smoke management burn notifications on the agency's website. Information is updated every 10 minutes and displayed using a "free" Google Maps service. This provides a simple, low maintenance and easy to use method of providing information on wildfires and burn notifications to the general public, cooperators (fire departments, 9-1-1 centers, US Forest Service, etc.), and the media.

A new automated burn notification system hosted by SPIRIT Telecom was implemented November 1, 2010 to replace an in-house, approximately 15 year old, “end-of-life” system. This new system generates an e-mail with the individual's notification information attached as a .wav audio file. The e-mail subject line contains the caller's phone number and caller ID information allowing for easier search capability. A copy of each notification can be sent to an e-mail address for local access by fire departments or 9-1-1 centers. Other key improvement is the ability to quickly add or modify messages used in the system and system management through a secure web portal. Utilizing a hosted system was more cost effective as it provides greater call volume capacity and eliminates in-house system administration, maintenance, and significant equipment purchase costs.

In 2012, a Request for Proposals was developed with input from dispatchers, dispatch managers and communications managers for a new dispatch communications console system. The new system was to leverage existing infrastructure, integrate radio and telephone communications (including the State's VoIP telephone system) to best meet the functional requirements of the agency. Proposals were reviewed and scored by a committee consisting of a veteran dispatcher, communications experts, and the State's interoperability coordinator. The agency reserved the right to purchase equipment and software listed in the vendor's proposal from existing State term contracts and complete basic installation functions to control costs. Agency personnel also played a key role in project management and coordinating between five (5) key vendors/contractors to see that the new system was installed; functional; employees trained; met all contractual requirements; and decommission of all old equipment five (5) months after the contract was awarded.

In recent years, the SCFC has gone through numerous changes. Some of these changes have caused a reduction in our ability to provide services, primarily due to a decrease in staffing levels. During these years of change, the agency's leadership has continued to seek ways of becoming more efficient and effective. One of the ways we have increased our efficiency and effectiveness in regard to processing time and personnel is through utilizing the State Procurement Card to process numerous transactions. In addition, The SCFC surveys customers regarding our performance (Graphs 7.2-1, 7.2-2, 7.2-3, & 7.2-4). In FY 13, all customer surveys were conducted online. Our web site has been improved and updated so that citizens can obtain information and more easily contact us. We have continued to develop and conduct an extensive training program for our employees. Our aim is to seamlessly weave new technologies and improved employee performance into a tightly integrated system to deliver the best possible service to the people of SC.

Microsoft is scheduled to stop support of the Windows XP operating system and Office 2003 in April, 2014. With a majority of the Firefighter Supervisors having some of the oldest Windows XP computers in the agency (many purchased in 1999), this group was earmarked to receive new computers this fiscal year. Meetings were held in each region with these individuals to identify how and what applications they use or needed to determine if a desktop, laptop, tablet or some other device would best meet their needs.

Based on this input a semi-rugged laptop designed for dust, vibration, and moisture conditions with a display for outdoor viewing was selected. The system included a "docking station", monitor, and keyboard to function like a desktop while in the office. A one day training session was offered covering the features and basic operation of the laptop; an introduction to Windows 7, Office 2013 and Internet Explorer 10; making network connections; security software; basic maintenance; setting up e-mail; the docking station and all-in-one printer.

A major need of the Supervisors is the ability to view current aerial photos and other mapping data to help make wildfire suppression decisions or in providing services to the landowners of SC. A mobile GIS application developed for the agency is being modified to provide this capability. This application does not require any expensive GIS software; a network or an Internet connection to function. It will include a tool to draw polygons and calculate acreage. Land ownership data; location of schools, pipelines, fire departments; and a wealth of other map layers will be available to the Firefighter Supervisors on their laptops for viewing.

6.4 *How does your day-to-day operation of these processes ensure meeting key performance requirements?*

Forest Protection

CADS automates the process of determining compliance with Smoke Management Guidelines when dispatchers take burn notifications. This has reduced the process time (Graph 7.5-1) and increased accuracy in complying with state regulations. Several key processes for dispatching resources to wildfires are now automated and/or improved to help reduce overall response times (see table 7.1-3) to a certain point with reduced firefighting resources. Closest available units are determined by CADS based on the road system. This system (when funding becomes available) also allows for the incorporation of technology for automatic vehicle location to improve response time and assure safety of agency employees.

The automated yard debris burning notification system was modified so that all non-smoke management type vegetative debris burning notifications could be directed to that system as of July 1, 2001. This change redirects approximately 30,000 calls per year from our dispatch centers to the automated system. The reduction in call volume allows dispatchers to more efficiently handle smoke management notifications, radio communications, and wildfire calls. The automated system could handle 24 calls simultaneously, eliminating a caller's time on hold. Another benefit of this change was an overall reduction in the average cost per ten thousand calls (Graph 7.3-6).

The in-house, approximately 15 year old, "end-of-life" system used to take yard debris burning notifications was replaced with a system hosted by Spirit Telecom. This change greatly increased operation reliability, call capacity from 24 to almost an unlimited number, with no additional equipment costs.

A new communications console system was installed in the dispatch centers in FY 13. This system added a telephone contact manager/dialer and speed dial capabilities. These functions greatly reduced the time to look up and dial phone numbers of agency employees and cooperators (fire departments, 9-1-1 centers, etc.). The new console system also allows the agency to implement the State's VoIP telephone system in the dispatch centers and cut its 1-800 call charges in half from 4¢ per minute to 2¢ per minute. Although only implemented during the second half of the fiscal year, this resulted in an overall reduction in the average cost per ten thousand calls (Graph 7.3-6).

Forest Management

In general, statewide programs, such as Environmental Management and FIA are directly supervised by a

Columbia staff forester with specific training in that program area.

Digital county mosaics produced from the National Agricultural Imagery Program taken in 2011 have been distributed to field personnel. This free, true color, leaf-on imagery is utilized in desktop mapping and GISs to develop recommendations and maps in the delivery of forest management services to forest landowners. It is the most current, statewide coverage of aerial imagery available for SC.

State Forests

Since state forests are required to operate on receipts and receive no state appropriated funds, a key performance requirement of our state forests is accurate budget planning. The implementation of a harvest scheduling model has resulted in more accurate prediction of annual revenues.

Seedling Production

Key success criteria are included in N&TI facility manager’s EPMS rating criteria. Success criteria include measures of seed & seedling quality, as well as protection of the productive capability of the nursery soil. The SCFC is a member of the Auburn University Cooperative whose staff provides technical oversight. Internally, agency staff reviews seedling production periodically.

Forestry Education

Individual evaluation by participants is a key component of all SCFC educational programs, including professional development programs such as PLT and the SC Teachers’ Tour as well as material and lesson evaluation for the Wood Magic Forest Fair program. Program changes are constantly being considered and made based on participant evaluations. Student evaluations are achieved through pre- and post-tests which are given to students in the Wood Magic Forest Fair to evaluate program effectiveness. The program has consistently shown significant increases in scores between the two tests (Graphs 7.1-9b). Fourth grade teachers are sent pre-visit materials as well as post-visit materials and lessons to enhance the content of the Wood Magic Forest Fair program. In general, there is an overwhelming demand for SCFC forestry education programs that exceeds the capacity to deliver these programs (Graphs 7.1-9a & 7.1-10b).

6.5 *How do you systematically evaluate and improve your key product and service related work processes?*

Forest Management

Previously in FY 11, SCFC began sending customer surveys electronically following services work or delivery of management and stewardship plans to those customers who provided an e-mail address. Such process continues to be used today (Graphs 7.2-2, 7.2-3 & 7.2-4). In FY 13, the process was expanded to include surveying customers receiving cost-share assistance. These customers are surveyed when assistance is initially sought and following the completion of the project. Where applicable, copies of individual surveys are forwarded to Unit Foresters, Regional Foresters and the Forest Management Chief for follow-up with the landowners. Particular attention is given to any negative responses. Contacts are then made with landowners to review responses and correct any problems with service delivery.

6.6 *What are your key support processes, and how do you evaluate, improve and update these processes to achieve better performance?*

Information Technology

Most aspects of our business involve technology and information management. We have established a presence on the Internet as a means to disseminate information. In FY 08 we began offering sales of state forest recreational permits through the SC.gov Internet portal. We are still exploring options for the sale of N&TI seedlings on-line. In FY 11 we began providing information on current wildfires and smoke management burn notifications on the agency’s website.

The Information Technology group is responsible directly and indirectly for the maintenance and support of the agency’s local and wide area network, 2 Windows 2003 Servers, 6 Windows 2008 R2 Servers, and over 150 computer users and their software applications. Efforts continue on the implementation of the Information Security Policy established by the SC Enterprise Architecture Oversight Committee to ensure the agency’s computer data is maintained in a secure, reliable, and sustainable environment. In cooperation

with the SC Information Sharing Analysis Center and through a grant from the Department of Homeland Security, a network packet sniffer is installed on the agency's network. This device helps to quickly identify when agency computers and servers may be infected with viruses, Trojans, and other malware.

The agency's wide area network was moved to Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) circuits to conform to the State DSIT's statewide network. All circuits were upgraded to a Layer 3 connection in 2012 offering the most reliable service possible. Although a more costly connection for the agency, MPLS provides redundancy at the core level needed for the agency's mission critical communications, dispatch and data systems. This allowed the agency to implement VoIP telephony at the regional dispatch centers and offices under state contract providing considerable savings and additional functionality.

A new Radio over IP communications console system that incorporated the State's VoIP telephone system was implemented in the dispatch centers in FY 13. This replaced a 16 year old system that was beyond end-of-life and parts no longer available. The new system is heavily software based and runs on standard, off-the-shelf, computers eliminating a large amount of proprietary equipment. In the future, to add new functionality, better performance, and improvements will now involve only updating software.

GIS technology and spatial data is being used to improve and implement new processes in decision making. Using a National Fire Plan grant, a Fire Risk Assessment model was created to help identify high fire risk areas of the state. Historical fire occurrence data is being spatially analyzed to aid managers in making resource allocation decisions and reducing response times to wildfires. GIS was used to conduct a statewide assessment of forest resources to develop long-term strategies for investing state, federal, and other resources to manage priority landscapes.

Training Programs

Wildland fire suppression and incident management are the core of SCFC training programs. All agency personnel are provided basic incident management training in the National Incident Management System IS-700 class. All firefighter and emergency response personnel are trained in fire behavior, fire suppression tactics, and receive additional incident management training. Foresters, technicians, and other technical staff are trained in emerging issues and technology for forest and natural resource management. Foresters and technicians in the Forest Health, BMP, and FIA programs receive specialized training in their respective areas. Supervisors and human resource/administrative staff participate in Supervisory Practices and Hiring Practices training.

In FY 13, 41 training sessions were held with a total of 466 participants in the various sessions. Additionally, the SCFC held 5 Fire Management training sessions for 175 non-SCFC personnel, mostly from local fire departments. Four Certified Prescribed Fire Manager courses were taught for 141 non-SCFC land managers. Registered Foresters and Society of American Foresters Certified Foresters take training to meet annual and three year continuing education requirements, respectively.

Division of Administration

The Administrative Division provides essential support functions for the agency and its employees. SCEIS is utilized to provide these important support functions. The division pays agency expenses and tracks expenditures by type as well as source of funds. It also provides accounts receivable services to include billings to forest landowners and the collection of revenue from landowners, timber and pine straw buyers and seedling purchasers. Another function of the Administrative Division includes applying for and monitoring federal grants.

The division provides procurement services in accordance with the State Procurement Code to ensure agency supplies and assets are procured timely and in accordance with state laws and regulations. It accounts for and monitors on an annual basis the fixed assets of the agency to ensure the agency's property inventory is accurate.

Also provided are classification, compensation, and employee benefit services to agency employees. The division ensures employees receive the benefits to which they are entitled and that affirmative action guidelines are adhered to.

The division also provides budget policy and direction for the agency and to internal budget directors to ensure agency stays within allocated budgets. Other support functions include agency internal and external reporting, strategic planning, records management and monitoring legislative activity and making needed legislative changes. In an effort to achieve better performance, staff continually monitor existing processes and procedures and update and improve them where applicable.

6.7 *How does your organization determine the resources needed to meet current and projected budget and financial obligations?*

The agency monitors activities and costs in order to ensure resources are available to meet current demands. Based on these activities and costs, the agency is able to see the needs that are not being met due to lack of financial resources and addresses these issues through the annual state appropriation budget request and in applications for federal grant funds. Due to the inability to receive full funding of requests, the agency has to make concessions and prioritize activities each fiscal year to direct limited resources to protect the lives and property of landowners of SC. Over the past three years the agency has reduced personnel from 379 positions to 299 with 80% of these being directly related to fire control.

In 2001 the state had approximately 240 wildland firefighting units protecting the state, today it has only 133. Funding increases for fiscal years 2013 and 2014 have enabled the agency to increase its firefighting capacity by adding additional frontline personnel. However, the agency recognizes its firefighting capacity is still at levels that create high risk to the citizens, firefighters, property, and forests of SC during normal or bad fire seasons. Equipment funding the past two years has allowed the agency to acquire 21 new enclosed cab firefighting units for the protection and safety of firefighters. However, currently 89% of the truck/tractor plow units are still open cab and 40% of the fleet is 15 years old or older. Funds received beginning this year from the Property and Firefighter Protection Act will greatly help with equipment replacement. However, even at this additional level of funding it will take approximately 20 years to replace the current fleet and the agency will never actually achieve its goal of a 15 year replacement cycle. The agency continues to make this known through its budget requests and conversations with legislators.

CATEGORY 7 – RESULTS

7.1 *What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of mission accomplishment/product and service performance that are important to your customers? How do your results compare to those of comparable organizations?*

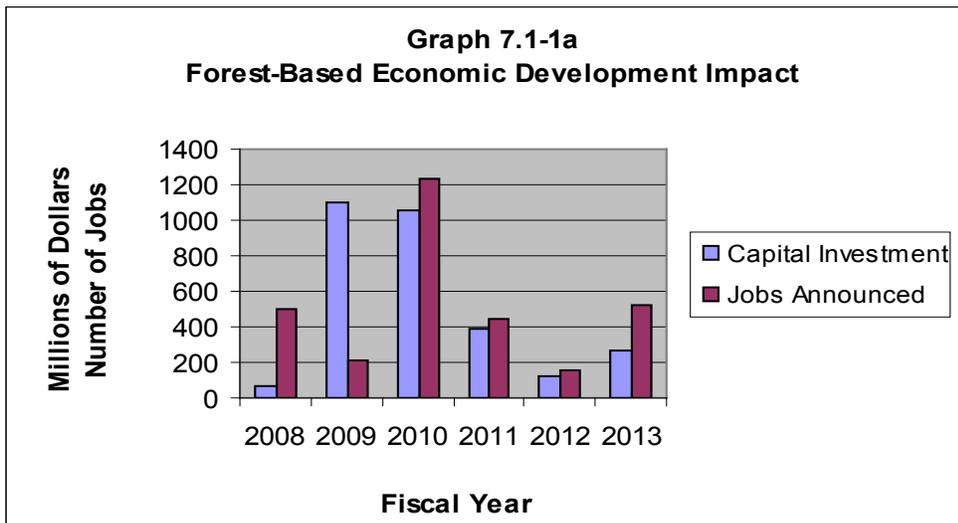
Enhance the Resource

Interest in forestry-related economic development was steady throughout the year and the announced capital investment and the number of jobs recovered from a four-year low. A total of 23 different forestry-related projects were active during fiscal year 2013. Fourteen of the 23 projects were biomass energy related, either involving the production and export of wood pellets or the domestic production of steam or electricity from biomass. Other projects involved the manufacture of traditional products such as veneer, lumber and log exports. 74% of the active projects were dependent on export markets.

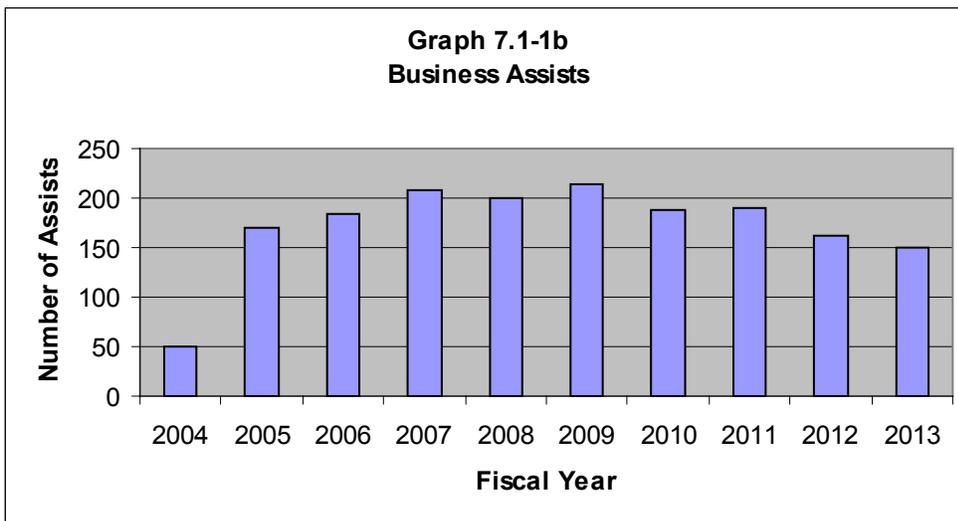
Ten forestry projects were announced during FY 13. Enova Energy Group made the largest forestry investment in SC this year by announcing plans for the construction of a \$120 million wood pellet plant in Edgefield County. Other new biomass fuel announcements include Integro Earth Fuels in the Upstate and LDH-ECI Biomass in Hampton County. Existing companies, Canfor Southern Pines, Kapstone, and Chester Wood Products, each announced plans for expansion and equipment upgrades. Traditional forestry-related projects also announced new projects manufacturing interior doors, hardwood lumber, sanitary tissues and laminates.

During FY 13, the SCFC Resource Development Division represented the agency and the forestry community through our partnerships with 42 statewide and regional economic development organizations. The agency participated in regional efforts to grow new markets by participating in foreign trade shows. Forestry Commission staff attended the KH Trade Show in Seoul, South Korea. The SCFC and the SC Department of Commerce signed a Memorandum of Understanding to bring focus to forestry economic development in SC and the SCFC provided partial funding for an agribusiness project manager. The Utilization Forester position within the Resource Development Division was filled in summer, 2012. By January 1, 2013, the primary forest products mill directory was updated and work had begun on updating the secondary forest products mill directory. Finally, during FY 13, 151 individual business assists were made to address single-issue requests.

Forestry's 20/15 Initiative continued making progress toward meeting program goals during FY 13. Major accomplishments included: (1) working on industry recruitment with the agribusiness project manager with the SC Department of Commerce, (2) drafting an article on the completed wood availability study for a peer-reviewed journal, (3) establishing 3 biomass demonstration stands for landowner technology transfer, (4) providing leadership for a national forest markets committee, (5) completing a wood supply study for SC, and (6) completing an IMPLAN study to compare North Carolina and South Carolina's forestry-related industries.



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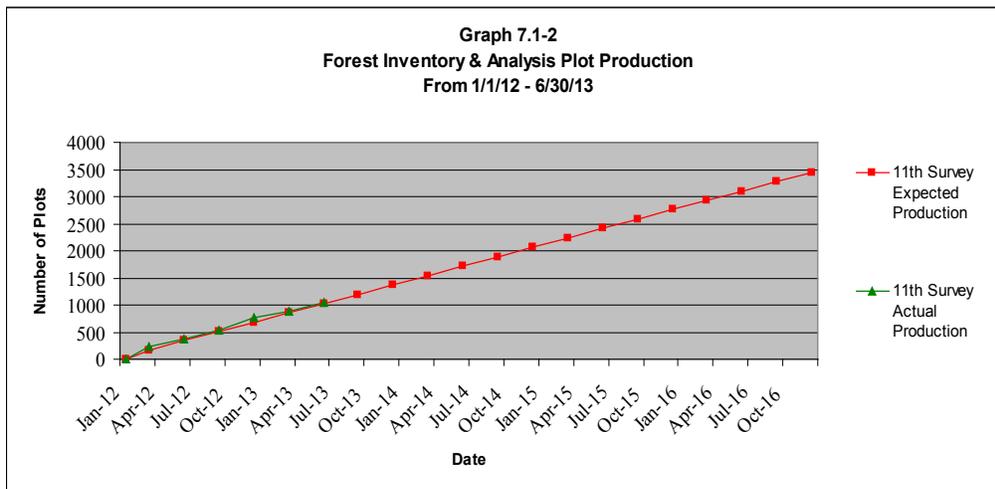
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In fiscal year 2013, the SCFC's FIA Program completed 578 FIA plots. The USDA Forest Service - Southern Research Station completed 101 plots, consisting of 66 non-forest plots identified in the office and

not sent to SCFC field crews, 35 plots that were classified as census water (bodies of water 4.5 acres in size or linear water features \geq 200 feet in width). The FIA Program completed data collection on the first Panel (20% of the entire sample plot locations) of the Cycle 11 inventory and has completed 52% of the second Panel of data collection for the Cycle 11 inventory. The FIA Program completed 3 product utilization studies on active logging operations across the state to develop factors for logging residues, logging damage, and utilization of the unmerchantable portion of harvested trees to determine rates of over and under utilization. In addition to the standard FIA plot grid, 42 national forest intensification plots were installed on the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission FIA Program is 30% complete with the 11th inventory of the state through FY 13 under the National FIA plot design. Of the 13 southern states, SC was the first state to complete the 8th inventory (2001), the 9th inventory (2006), and the 10th inventory (2011). Subsequently, SC was the first state in the nation to initiate the 11th inventory (2012).

The FIA Program is currently fully staffed with three two-person crews in strategic locations across SC. If funding and staffing remain constant, expected completion of the second Panel of the 11th inventory is December 2013. Annual updates to FIA data are available online through 2012 and the published report for the 10th inventory, by the USDA Forest Service - Southern Research Station, is expected to be released in 2014.



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Better

Protect the Resource

**Table 7.1-3
SUMMARY AND COMPARISON OF DISPATCH TIMES
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005-2013
Average Minutes**

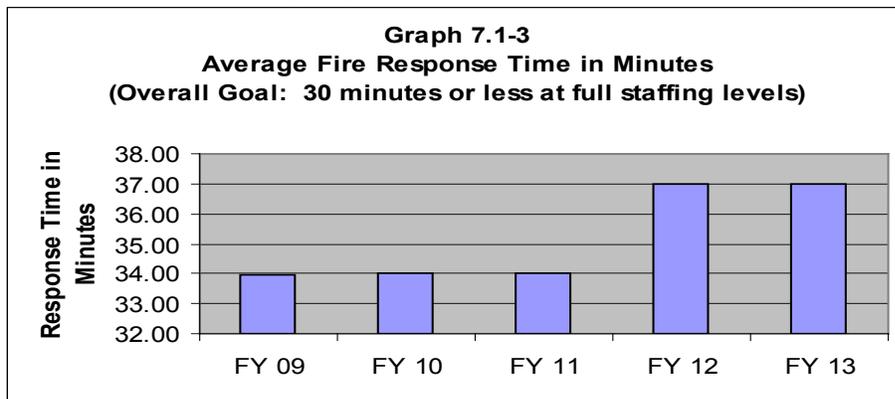
	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13
Dispatching ¹	6.33	4.18	3.56	3.53	3.22	3.13	3.39	3.28	3.57
Contact Establish ²	3.83	4.47	4.21	3.95	6.93	3.56	3.49	3.68	3.09
Rolling ³	4.22	4.11	4.97	5.40	5.58	6.93	5.41	6.76	6.02
Enroute ⁴	7.10	8.44	9.11	9.04	12.63	10.23	11.89	10.06	8.81
Travel ⁵	22.11	20.09	22.88	22.62	21.66	20.65	22.61	24.33	24.73
Response ⁶	35.19	32.45	35.54	35.23	33.96	34.02	34.35	37.44	36.85

¹ Time between initial report of wildfire and first attempt to contact initial attack warden.
² Time between first attempt to contact warden and when contact was established.
³ Time between contact established with warden and his enroute time.
⁴ Time between first attempt to contact warden and his enroute time.
⁵ Time between going enroute and arriving at wildfire.
⁶ Time between initial report of wildfire and arrival of initial attack warden.

The chart above shows various benchmarks in the process of responding to a wildfire. With the implementation of the new CADS in FY06, the average time from receiving the wildfire call and assigning a firefighter to it (i.e. Dispatching) was reduced by 2.15 minutes. This was further reduced by another 37-63 seconds on average the following seven years.

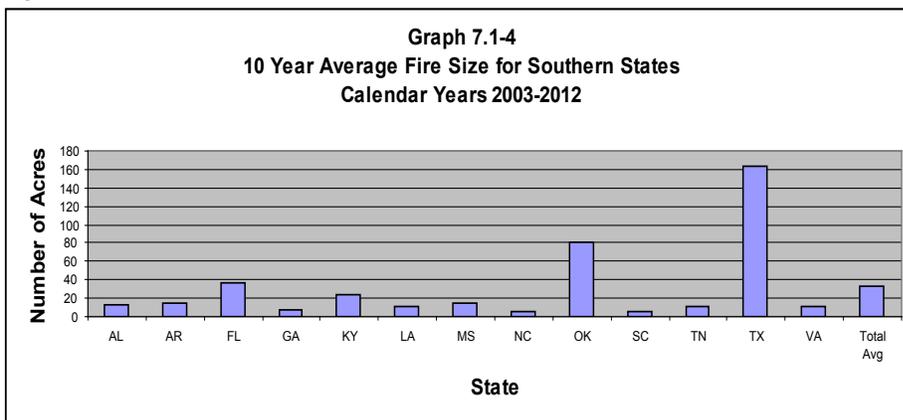
Response time to wildland fires is dependent upon many factors, some of which are beyond our control, such as traffic congestion and budget related staffing levels. We refer to fire response time as the time from when we receive the first report of a wildfire until the time our fire warden with a bulldozer suppression unit arrives on the scene.

Internally, we measure the different segments of response time and strive to improve each segment with a goal of reducing overall response time. Graph 7.1-3 illustrates that our average response time for FY 13 was 36.85 minutes. This was a .59 minute decrease in the statewide average response time in FY 13 compared to FY 12. Staffing increases have created shorter response times but in some locations they are lengthier than others creating concern for the communities in these locations. In surveying our southern states, we found SCFC is the benchmark in tracking response times as no other states track response times in the way that we do.



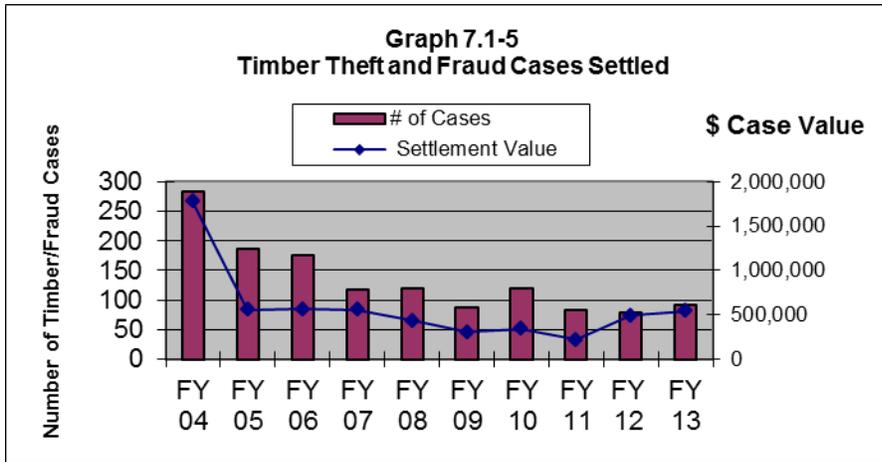
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The SCFC measures and compares the average fire size on state and private lands with twelve other southern states. The 10-year average fire size is 33.54 acres per fire for the thirteen southern states. SC has the second lowest 10-year average fire size with 5.52 acres per fire as shown in Graph 7.1-4 while Texas has the highest with 162.56 acres.



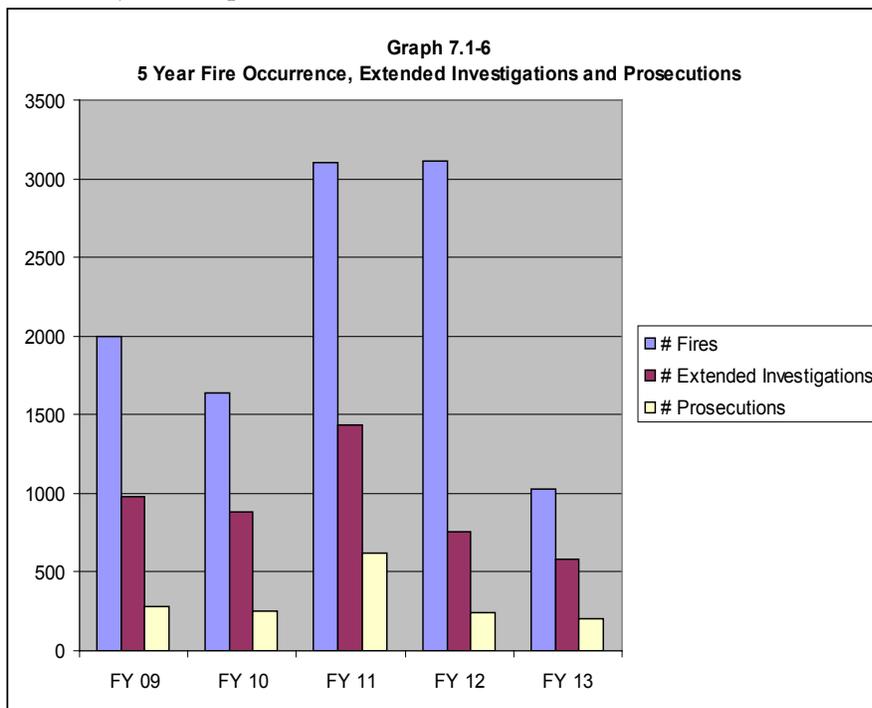
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The Law Enforcement Program strives to reduce woods arson and forest product theft and fraud. The Program reinforces fire prevention efforts through the enforcement of state fire laws. During FY 13, the agency had 35 commissioned officers, including 3 full-time investigators. The number of timber theft/fraud cases decreased this year and SCFC collected and returned 88% or \$353,900 of that money to the affected landowners (Graph 7.1-5). The SCFC's Law Enforcement Program serves as a benchmark for our neighboring states, which currently do not actively investigate timber theft cases.



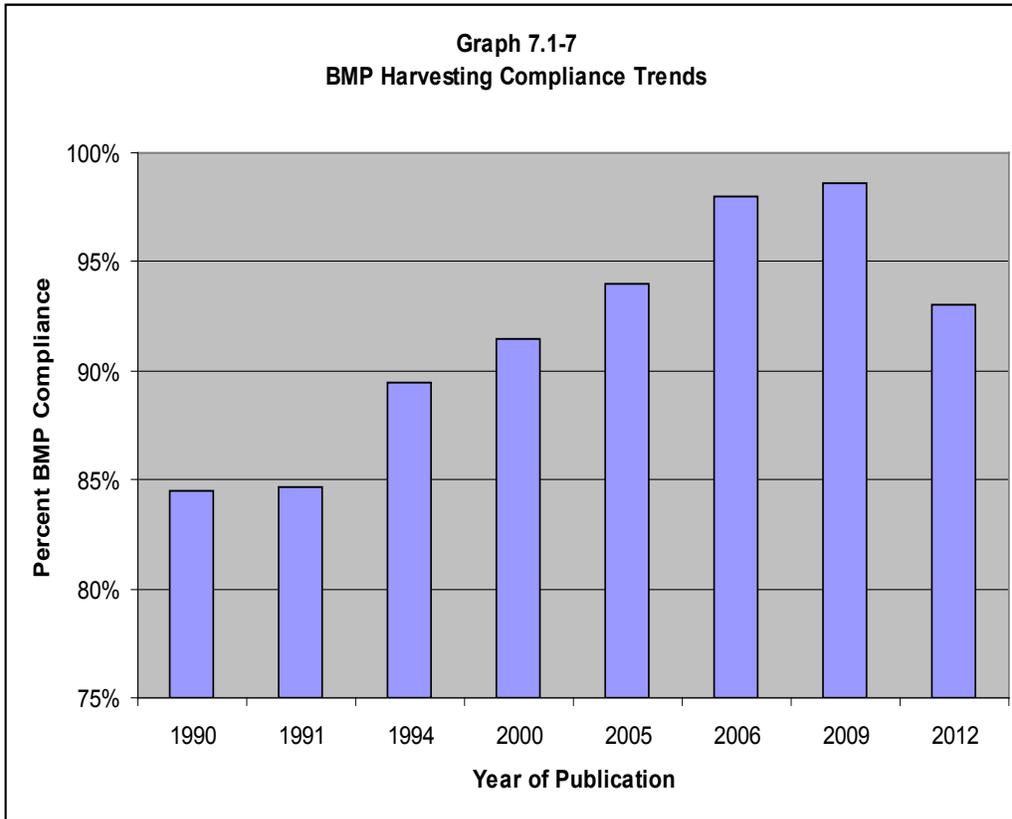
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The extended investigation of wildfires and prosecutions all decreased (Graph 7.1-6). Woods arson was the likely cause for 13 wildfires. One individual responsible for 1 wildfire was prosecuted for arson. Arson is historically hard to prove.



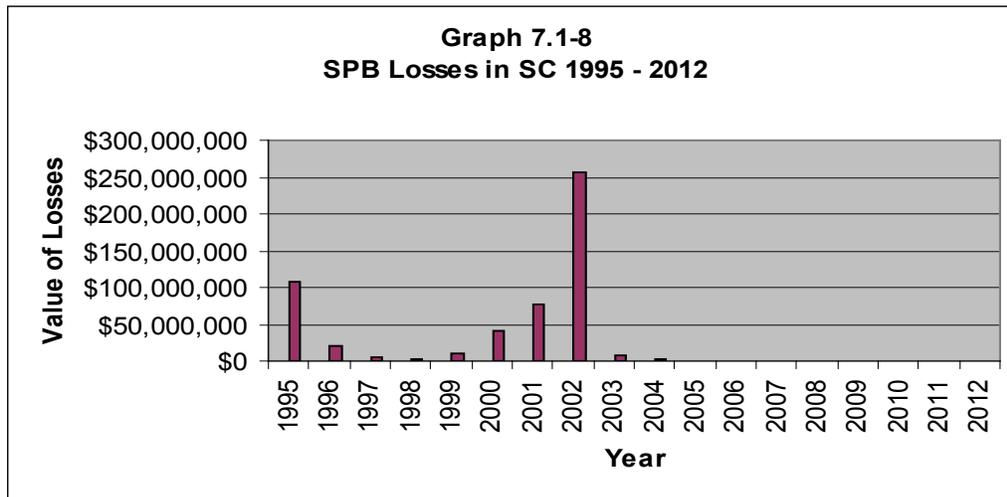
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Graph 7.1-7 shows compliance with harvesting BMP from previous surveys. Compliance for BMP related to timber harvesting was 93.4% for 2012, demonstrating successful protection of water quality during forest operations. BMP implementation in SC matches the regional average of thirteen southern states.



↑ Better

The SPB endemic to SC, builds to epidemic levels on a 5 to 10 year cycle. The preliminary indicators point to the possibility of an increase in SPB activity in the next 1-3 years. Since 1995, SC has suffered the two worst outbreaks on record, with losses exceeding a half-billion dollars (Graph 7.1-8). SCFC developed a SPB Prevention Program to reduce losses on privately owned woodlands. During the state fiscal year 2013, 32 landowners received assistance for SPB prevention or restoration practices on over 1,628 acres.



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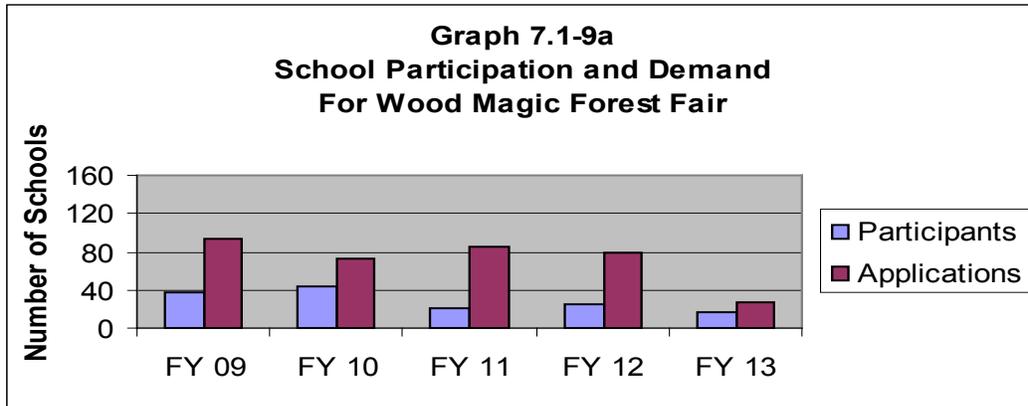
Raise Awareness about the Resource

The Wood Magic Forest Fair, designed for fourth graders, equips teachers to explore such topics as sustainable forestry and recycling. All SCFC education programs meet the state’s requirements for teacher certification and classroom instruction.

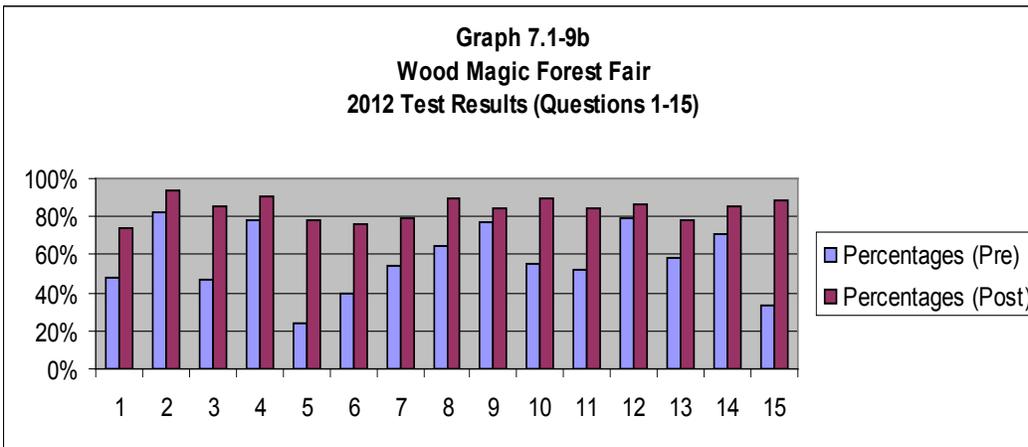
The SCFC strives to reach South Carolina’s school children through “train the trainer” programs for teachers such as PLT and the annual SC Teachers’ Tour. Each of these programs has a multiplier effect. By training

educators, we are continuously reaching thousands of students in return. In FY 13, the SCFC hosted 15 PLT workshops involving 342 participants and the annual SC Teachers' Tour had 36 participants.

In recent years, interest in and applications for both the Wood Magic Forest Fair and SC Teachers' Tour have exceeded the number of programs we were able to offer. The primary limiting factor is the growing scarcity of qualified instructors due to SCFC and cooperator staff reductions and budget restraints (Graphs 7.1-9a and 7.1-10b).

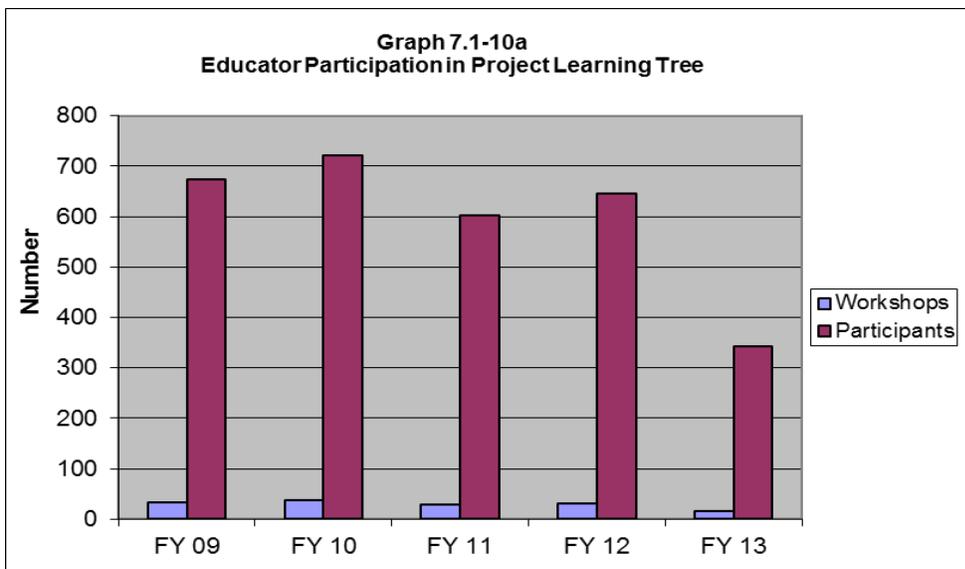


Applications
=
Participants

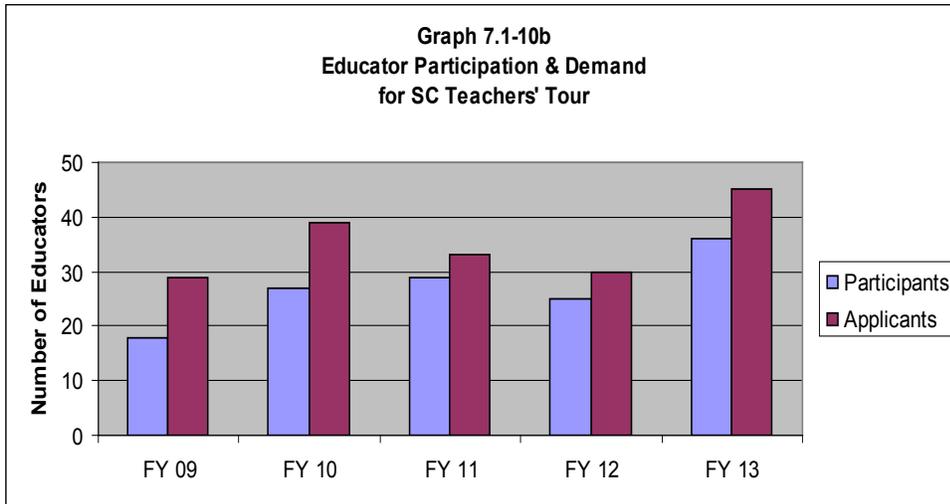


Post > Pre

On average, pre-course test results were 50% and post-course test results were 84%. Student understanding improved by 34%. Students showed improvement in knowledge about forestry in 100% of the categories.



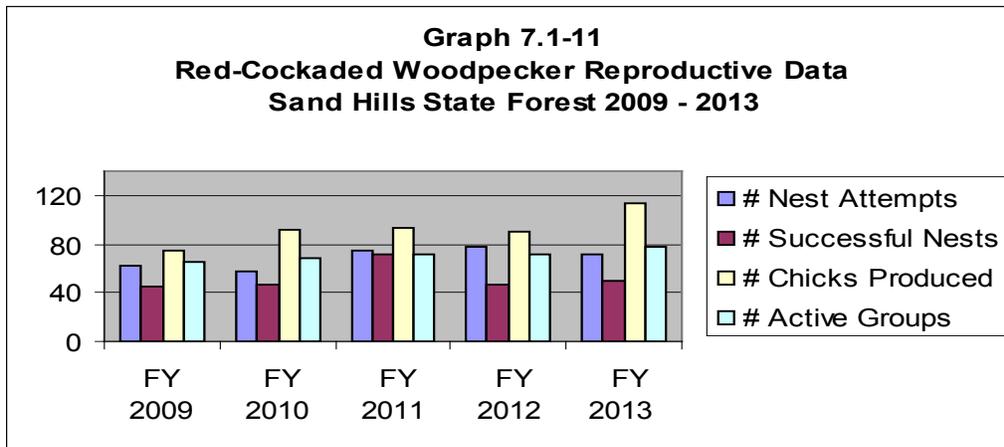
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Applicants
=
Participants

Sand Hills State Forest is one component of a recovery population in Chesterfield County for the federally endangered Red Cockaded Woodpecker. In cooperation with SC Department of Natural Resources biologists, habitat for this species on the state forest is managed to improve conditions for nesting and foraging. Management activities include installation of artificial cavities, control of mid-story vegetation and establishment of appropriate tree species and stand density to provide recruitment and foraging habitat. A long range recovery goal of 127 red-cockaded woodpecker clusters has been set for Sand Hills State Forest.

Graph 7.1-11 shows species reproductive trends from 2009-2013. The number of active woodpecker groups on Sand Hills State Forest has increased from 66 groups in 2009 to 78 groups in 2013. The number of offspring produced by these groups increased from 74 to 113 during the same period.

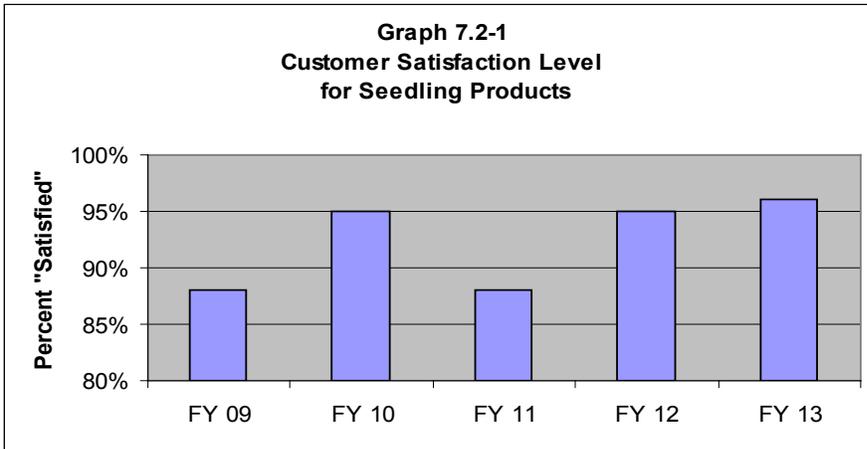


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* Note: For FY 13, some groups with chicks have not yet fledged or eggs have not hatched from late re-nesting.

7.2 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction? How do your results compare to those of comparable organizations?

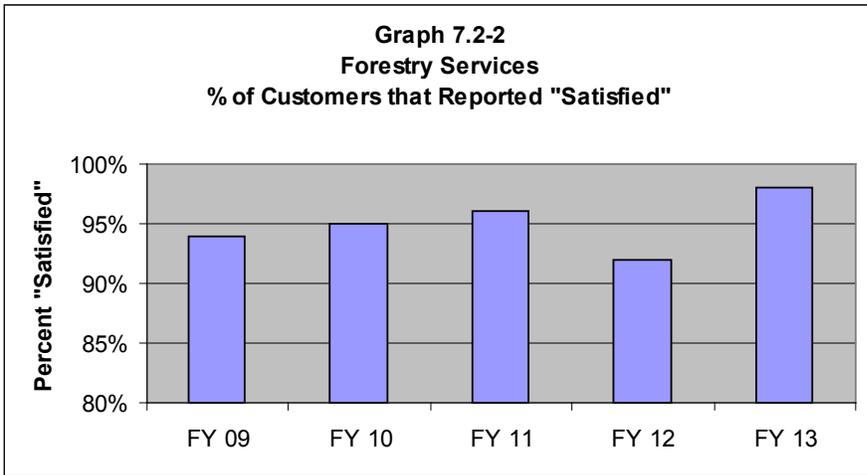
In past years the SCFC has surveyed at least a 10% sample of seedling customers to determine general satisfaction with our seedlings and to target areas for improvement. In FY 13, the survey was e-mailed to all customers who supplied us with an e-mail address. Of the 476 surveys e-mailed out, 204 (43%) customers responded. The 2013 survey indicated that 96% of our customers were satisfied with our seedling quality and service. Of the customers who had a problem with their seedling order, 81% of the customers were satisfied with our response. Of the customer comments on returned survey forms, 72% of the comments were very complimentary of the nursery program.



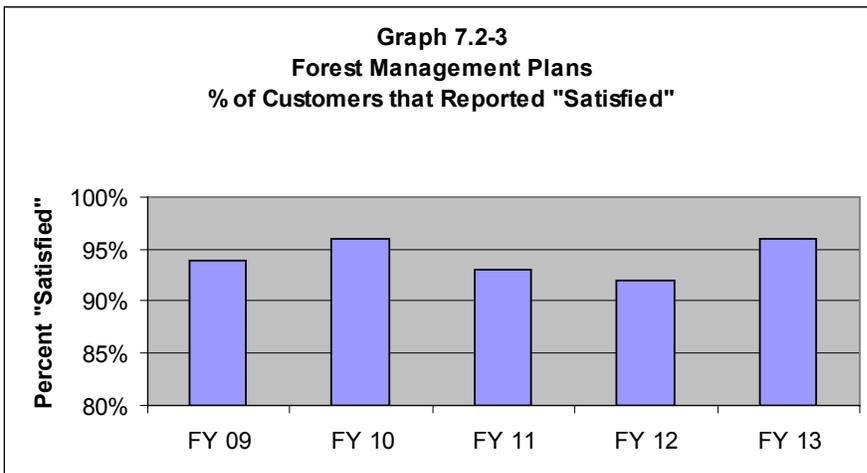
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In 1999 we began measuring customer satisfaction levels with our forestry services and our forest management technical assistance. Graphs 7.2-2 through 7.2-4 illustrate overall satisfaction levels for the last 5 fiscal years. Satisfaction levels have remained high throughout the period with a general upward trend and slight variations from year to year.

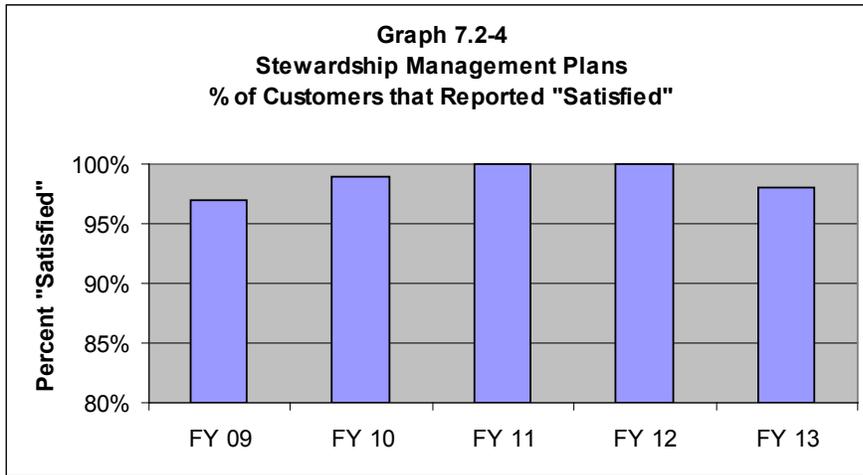
At the onset of FY 13 we began measuring customer satisfaction levels regarding our cost-share program, specifically the Forest Renewal Program. Levels are measured initially when customers first request assistance and again at the conclusion of their cost-share assistance. Results for FY 13 indicate a 92% satisfaction level at the time assistance was requested and a 94% satisfaction level following the assistance provided. Customer feedback from these surveys has been reviewed and utilized to improve program delivery and implementation.



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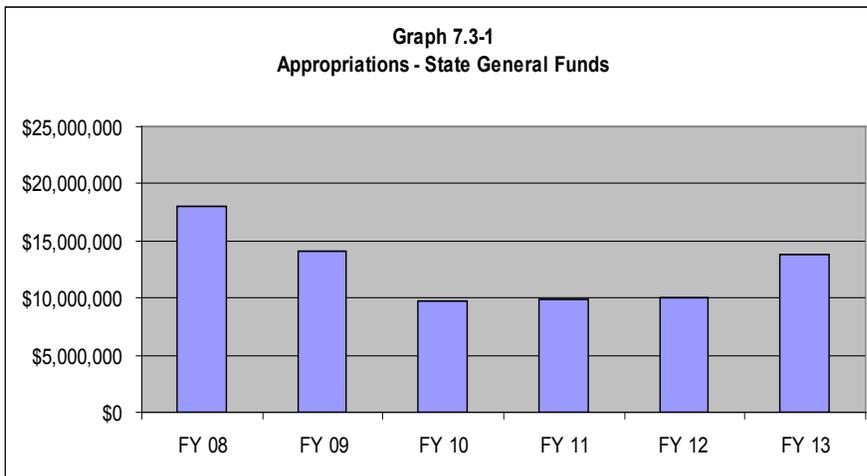
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7.3 What are your performance levels for your key measures on financial performance, including measures of cost containment, as appropriate?

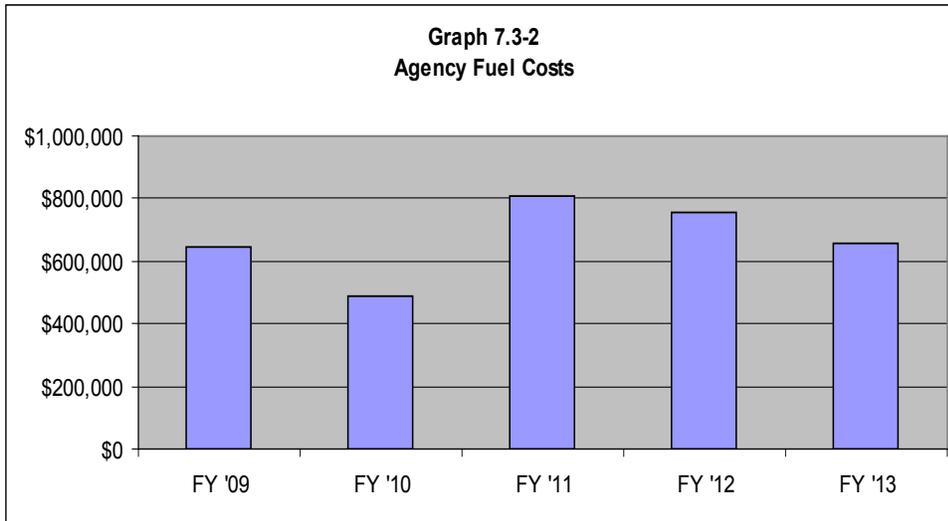
The SCFC’s recurring state appropriated funds increased in FY 13 and FY 14 (Graph 7.3-1). With the majority of state appropriated funds being used for salaries and benefits, this has allowed the agency to begin to increase its firefighting workforce toward a safe capacity after several years of reductions.



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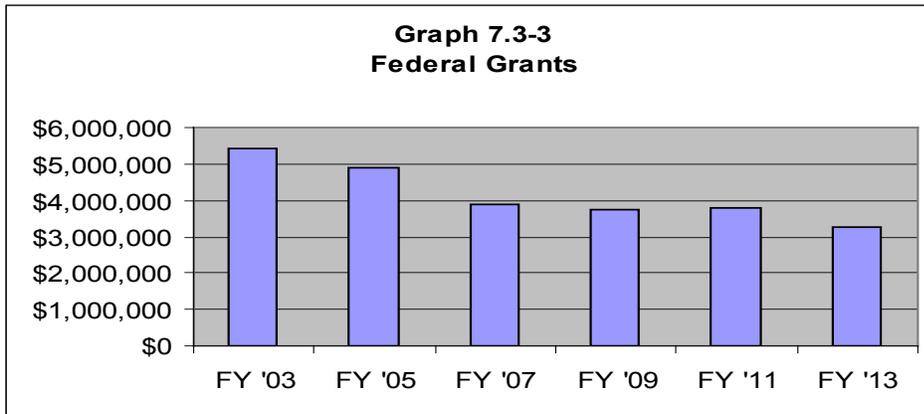
Approximately 40% of regional operating budgets represent fuel costs. Graph 7.3-2 depicts agency fuel costs for the last 5 years. Since FY 2008, SCFC Senior Consultant reviews and analyzes transactions in an effort to identify opportunities for cost-savings. Opportunities have been identified and action steps taken. In FY 13, the Commission received a savings of \$789 by expeditiously processing payments to the fuel vendor as well as refunds and credits by reviewing, identifying, and disputing erroneous charges.

Comparable data for fuel costs for FY 13 was requested from several southern states yet only Alabama and Kentucky responded. Of those responding, there was only one state whose cost was lower than SC and that was Alabama with expenditures of \$607,502 as of July 13th; however, their fiscal period is October 2012 – September 2013; therefore, they still have a few more months of expenditures to include, thus SC should be the lowest with expenditures of \$654,503.



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Operating budgets for protection services are now funded primarily with short-term federal grants and revenue earned from forestry services. However, over the past ten years federal grant funds have been reduced by approximately 40% (Graph 7.3-3).

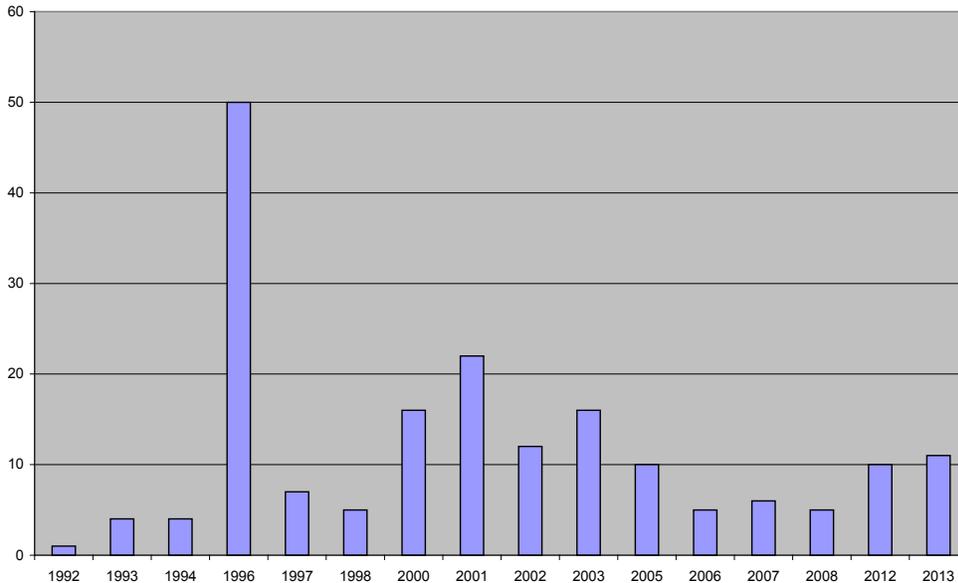


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In 1996 the Legislature appropriated funding for a 15 year replacement cycle for firefighting equipment. While the cost of a firefighting unit has increased, the agency’s purchasing power for a unit declined significantly over the past decade. Graph 7.3-4 is a visualization of the age of our dozers and the quantity further illustrating how we have fallen behind in replacing our equipment due to the increasing costs and budgetary limitations. Year models 1998 and older indicate the 71 dozers that are beyond our targeted 15 year replacement cycle.

Graph 7.3-4

SC Forestry Commission Dozers By Year

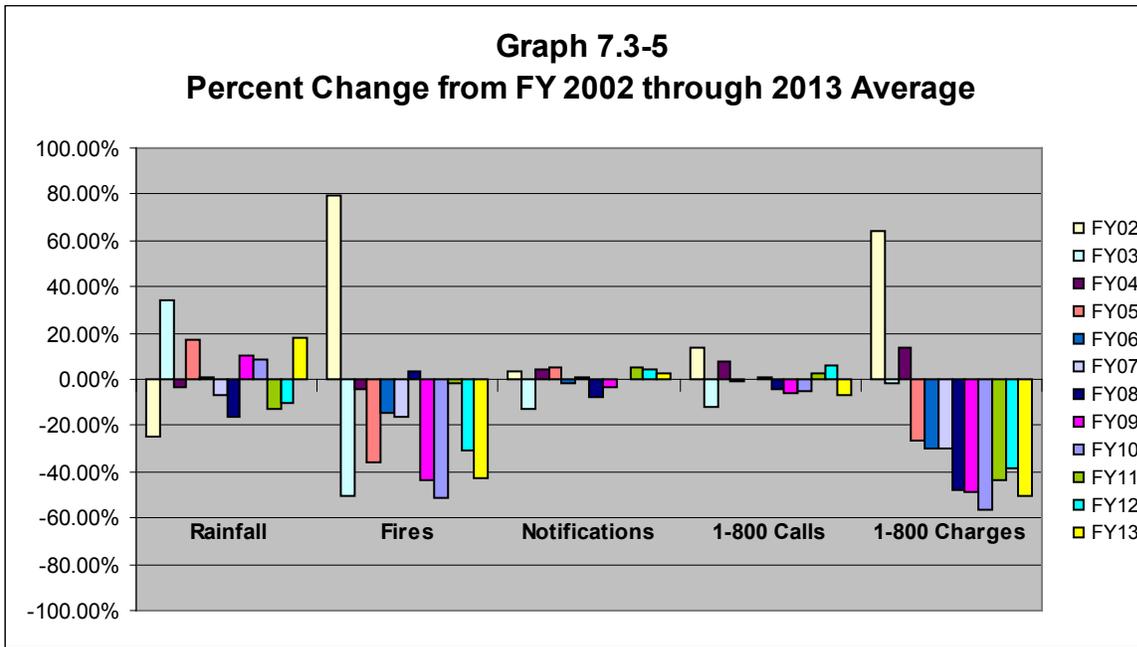


In FY 02, the SCFC began routing all burning notifications, except those for forestry, wildlife, and agricultural purposes, to an automated notification system. This greatly improved the efficiency of the SCFC in handling these calls, dispatchers handling other calls, and substantial savings in 1-800 charges. Dispatch managers receive a list each month of 1-800 calls that were 8 minutes or longer to identify opportunities for further cost reduction.

Graph 7.3-5 shows the percent change from the average in the amount of rainfall, number of fires, number of burning notifications, number of 1-800 calls, and charges for those 1-800 calls. A reduction in rainfall normally produces an increase in fires. An increase in notifications normally increases the number of 1-800 calls.

The SCFC was able to achieve a 75% reduction in annual 1-800 charges since implementing changes in FY 02. This reduction can be attributed to routing more outdoor burn notifications to an automated system, a new CADS for handling smoke management notifications, and new state contract rates for 1-800 calls.

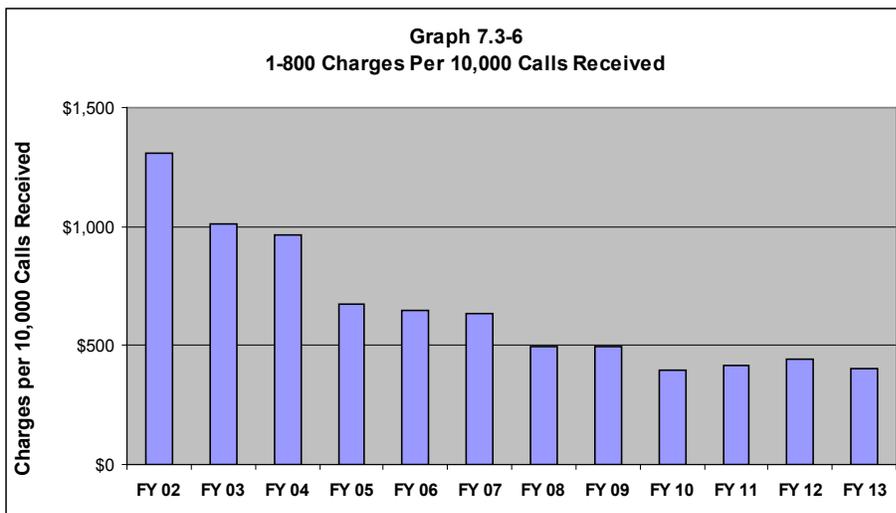
A new dispatch communications console system from Avtec, Inc. of Gilbert, SC was implemented in FY 13. This system replaced a 17 year old, end-of-life system with expansion limitations and critical parts no longer available. Replacing this system was put on hold for several years due to budgets and the "Great Recession". The new system utilizes Internet Protocol (IP) to transmit and receive data and voice communications. IP is a data communications standard used with the Internet and most computer networks around the world. This technology eliminates the need for dedicated phone lines and modems for voice communications. Almost an unlimited number of radio links can be carried over a single Ethernet cable. The system is mostly software based and runs on off-the-shelf PCs. This provided considerable cost savings over proprietary hardware based systems -- allowing the agency at about the same cost to expand from a legacy 14 dispatch console position system to a 19 dispatch console position system.



When the SCFC migrated from local fire towers to regional dispatch centers, toll free numbers were established to encourage the public to comply with state laws requiring them to notify the SCFC when burning outdoors. The SCFC handles over 400,000 burning notification calls per year. Graph 7.3-6 shows the trend of improved efficiency and effectiveness in handling large volumes of incoming 1-800 calls with the cost per 10,000 calls received.

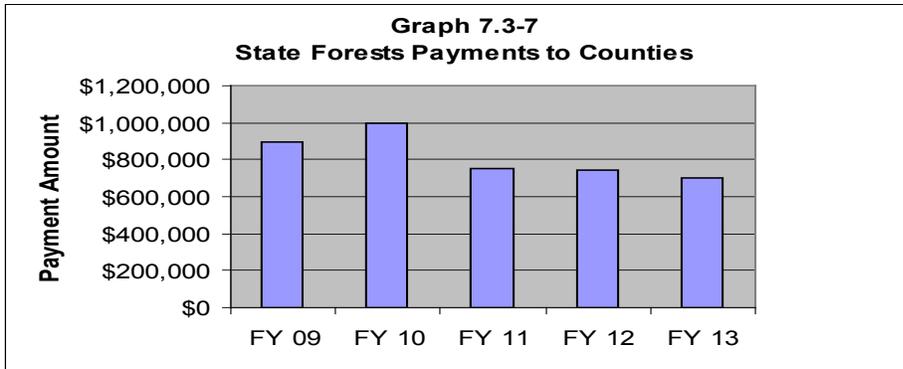
In FY 02, the SCFC began routing all burning notifications, except those for forestry, wildlife, and agriculture purposes, to an automated notification system. In November 2010 a new hosted automated notification system was implemented using more detailed messages. This slightly increased the average call time and charges; and increased system capacity to handle more calls. Monitoring call length and new computer aided dispatch software have improved a dispatcher’s efficiency and effectiveness in handling calls as well as decreasing costs for those calls each fiscal year.

In January 2013 the State's VoIP telephone system was incorporated into a new dispatch center communications console system. The VoIP system provides the ability to transfer calls from customers between dispatch centers and to the automated burn notification system. 1-800 calls to the dispatch centers are now carried on the agency's network which reduces the cost of these calls from 4¢ per minute to 2¢ per minute. In just a 5 month period, a reduction of just over 8% in costs per 10,000 calls can be seen in Graph 7.3-6 for FY 13.



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The SCFC is the only state agency that shares revenue produced from state owned lands with the counties where the properties are located. Southern states surveyed and those responding further reveal that the SCFC is a leader in the sharing of revenue, as no other state gives back a percentage as large as we do. Twenty-five percent of all revenue that the agency receives from use of the land or products sold, such as timber or pine straw, is returned to the county to support local education systems. Receipts from product sales declined in FY 13 due to lower volume of products offered for sale and depressed market prices for timber and pine straw. Based on receipts received during FY 13, just over \$704,024 was distributed to thirteen counties (Graph 7.3-7).



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7.4 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of workforce engagement, workforce satisfaction, the development of your workforce, including leaders, workforce retention, workforce climate including workplace health, safety, and security?

Workforce Engagement

- The agency encourages employee participation and input for cost saving ideas. The agency director and deputy director spearheaded several employee meetings seeking input for cost saving ideas. The agency used the meetings as a key communication tool concerning the budget status and the implications for the agency.
- The agency director solicits input and recommendations from employees in Tree Country SC, the agency’s news bulletin.
- Exit interview responses favorably indicate employees relate problems and seek advice or request information from management. Most employees indicate management is responsive.
- Employees serve as agency representatives on state and regional committees and at local government meetings.

Workforce Satisfaction

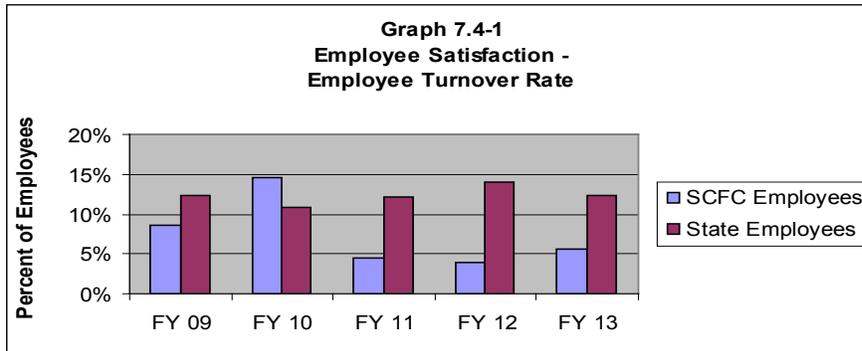
- Responses received during employee meetings, exit interview analysis, SWOT analysis indicate employee relationships and working with the public are strong factors of work satisfaction. Due to the limited budget, the agency continues to be challenged with employee compensation and compression concerns. The agency continues to work on improving on-going communication between headquarters, regional offices, and field employees. Because of physical locations and limited technology, this has been a challenge.

Workforce Development

- Established training guides for 64% of positions
- Knowledge transfer methods continue to develop from retirees and exiting employees to current staff ensuring critical business information is preserved
- 33 employees trained on adopted national standards and procedures for an IMT, which provides assistance in emergency situations
- Agency Director Organization
- Continuing Education Programs and Courses
- 41 training sessions for employees during FY13

Workforce Retention

- On average, the turnover rate for the agency is consistently lower than the aggregate turnover rate for state government. The agency's turnover rate for FY 13 is 5.68%, which is a little higher than last year's turnover rate of 4.12%. However, the agency's rate remains significantly lower than the statewide rate of 12.33%. (Graph 7.4-1).



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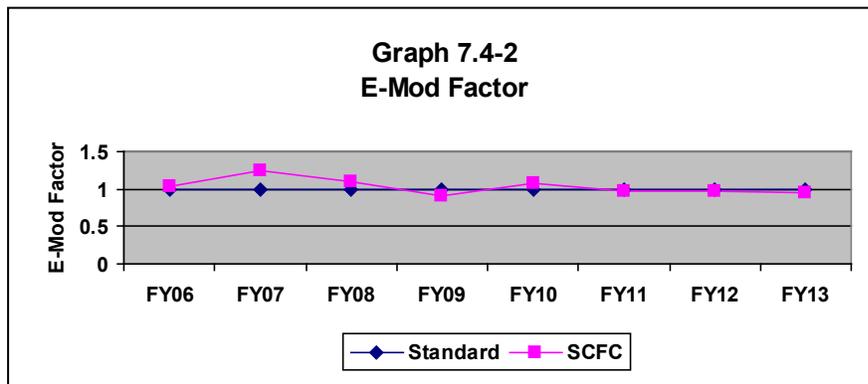
Workforce Climate

Workers Compensation --Experience Modification Factor (E-Mod)

- The Experience Modification Factor, a merit-rating plan approved by SC State Accident Fund, computes the experience rating based on classification, payroll and loss experience. A reduction in the frequency and severity of on-the-job accidents reflects a reduction in premium. The agency's E-Mod Factor for FY 12 - FY 13 again is 1.00. An E-Mod of 1.00 represents the average losses for any given industry.

Safety and Health

- The agency emphasizes safety awareness by placing safety as a regular discussion item on the agendas for all meetings. Employees participate in Prevention Partners Health Screenings and other Health Fairs.



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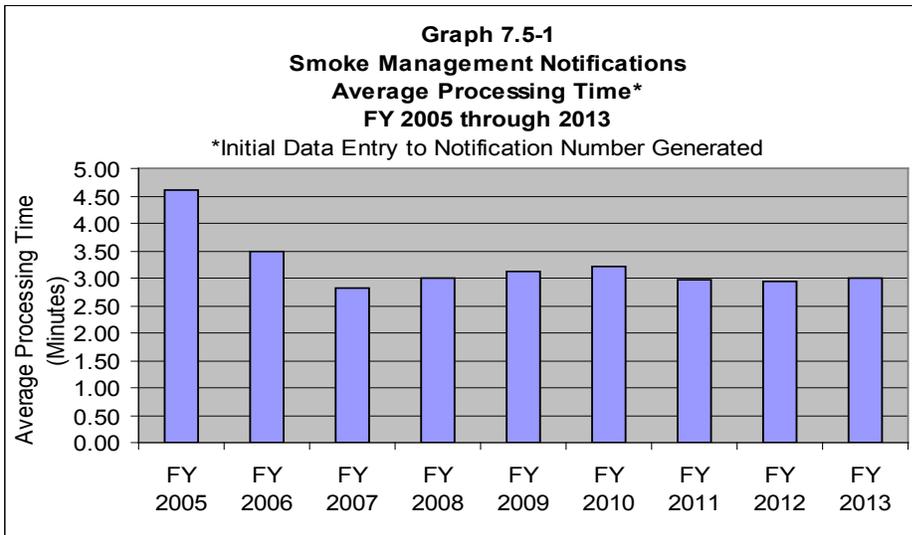
7.5 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of organizational effectiveness/operational efficiency, and work system performance?

On July 1, 2005, the SCFC implemented a new CADS based on commercial, “off-the-shelf” E911 software. This allowed the SCFC to utilize technology and functions developed for 911 systems and to control costs over custom developed software. A process unique to the SCFC is determining compliance with SC Department of Health and Environmental Control Smoke Management Guidelines when taking burn notifications for forestry, wildlife or agriculture purposes. A module was added to the E911 dispatching software to automate the process of determining compliance with these Smoke Management Guidelines with the intent to reduce processing time and increase the accuracy in applying these regulations with each notification.

Graph 7.5-1 displays the Average Processing Time (in minutes) for Smoke Management Notifications for FY 05 through FY 13. Processing Time is the length of time between the first inputs to the notification data entry form to when a burn notification number is generated.

The FY 06 data shows a decrease in processing time with the implementation of the new system. By the end of the first year with the new software, processing times decreased by 60 seconds on average compared to FY 05. Continued improvement in processing time was seen in FY07 and leveled out in FY 08 through FY 13 to an average of 3 minutes or a total reduction in processing time of 1.5 minutes on average.

The majority of Smoke Management Notifications are received during a 3-4 hour period in the mornings from December through April and in June. Due to limited staffing, callers have to wait for the next available dispatcher. SCFC is looking into new call processing options now available under State’s VoIP contract to help reduce or eliminate caller hold time. This should generate additional savings in 1-800 call costs to the agency and improve customer service.



An in-house, approximately 15 year old, “end-of-life” system used to take vegetative debris burning notifications was replaced in November 2010 with a system hosted by SPIRIT Telecom. This change greatly increased operation reliability and increased call capacity (from 24 lines to almost unlimited) with no additional equipment costs. Utilizing a hosted system was more cost effective as it eliminates in-house system administration, maintenance, and significant equipment purchase costs.

A new dispatch communications console system was implemented in FY 13. The Scout System from Avtec, Inc. of Gilbert, SC was selected from 7 vendors that submitted proposals. It utilizes IP to transmit and receive data and voice communications. Dispatch consoles combine the agency's statewide VHF two-way radio, Palmetto 800MHz, and the State's VoIP telephone systems. Dispatchers were involved in screen designs and testing to improve workflow and operational performance. The IP based system provides for almost an unlimited number of radio and communication links that can be carried over a single Ethernet cable.

7.6 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of regulatory/legal compliance and community support?

The SCFC is subject to financial and compliance audits, cooperative Forest Management Reviews by USDA Forest Service, Federal Aviation Administration inspections and regulations, State Fleet Management inspections, Occupational Safety Health Administration regulations, and SC Department of Health and Environmental Control Smoke Management Guidelines and Outdoor Burning Regulations. Federal funds require compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Any opportunities identified for improvement are addressed and acted upon accordingly and as feasible.

ACRONYMS

ACF	Association of Consulting Foresters
AFF	American Forest Foundation
ATFS	American Tree Farm System
BMP	Best Management Practices
CADS	Computer Aided Dispatch System
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan
CPM	Certified Public Manager
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plans
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPMS	Employee Performance Management System
FEPP	Federal Excess Personal Property
FFP	Firefighter Program
FIA	Forest Inventory and Analysis
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICS	Incident Command System
IP	Internet Protocol
IMT	Incident Management Team
MSF	Manchester State Forest
MPLS	Multiprotocol Label Switching
NASF	National Association of State Foresters
N&TI	Nursery and Tree Improvement
NRCS	National Resource Conservation Service
NWTF	National Wild Turkey Federation
QDMA	Quality Deer Management Association
PLT	Project Learning Tree
SCEIS	SC Enterprise Information System
SCFA	SC Forestry Association
SCFC	SC Forestry Commission
SFI	Sustainable Forestry Initiative
SGSF	Southern Group of State Foresters
SPB	Southern Pine Beetle
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TBYB	“Think Before You Burn”
TERI	Teacher and Employee Retention Incentive
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
VFA	Volunteer Fire Assistance
VoIP	Voice over Internet Protocol
WUI	Wildland Urban Interface