



South Carolina
House of Representatives
Legislative Oversight Committee

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION,
AND NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE

Chairman Travis A. Moore

The Honorable Gary S. Brewer, Jr.
The Honorable William M. "Bill" Hixon
The Honorable Russell L. Ott
The Honorable Marvin R. Pendarvis

AGENDA

Thursday, February 1, 2024

Immediately Upon Adjournment of the House
Room 110 - Blatt Building

- I. Approval of minutes
- II. Discussion of the study of the South Carolina Forestry Commission
- III. Adjournment

Pursuant to Committee Rule 6.8, S.C. ETV shall be allowed access for internet streaming whenever technologically feasible.



South Carolina House of Representatives Legislative Oversight Committee

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 26, 2023
10:30 a.m. Blatt Room 110

Archived Video Available

- I. Pursuant to House Legislative Oversight Committee Rule 6.7, South Carolina ETV was allowed access for streaming the meeting. You may access an archived video of this meeting by visiting the South Carolina General Assembly’s website (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov>) and clicking on Committee Postings and Reports, then under House Standing Committees click on Legislative Oversight. Then, click on Video Archives for a listing of archived videos for the Committee.

Attendance

- I. The Economic Development, Transportation, and Natural Resources Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Chairman Travis A. Moore on Thursday, October 26, 2023, in Room 110 of the Blatt Building. Chairman Travis Moore, Representative Gary S. Brewer, Jr., and Representative Russell L. Ott were present for all or a portion of the meeting.

Minutes

- I. House Rule 4.5 requires standing committees to prepare and make available to the public the minutes of committee meetings, but the minutes do not have to be verbatim accounts of meetings.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes

- I. Representative Brewer makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the Tuesday, August 29, 2023 meeting. A roll call vote is held and the motion passes.

Rep. Brewer's motion to approve meeting minutes.	Yea	Nay	Not Voting
Rep. Brewer	✓		
Rep. Hixon	✓		
Rep. Pendarvis			✓
Rep. Ott	✓		
Rep. Moore	✓		

Discussion of the Jobs Economic Development Authority ("JEDA")

- I. Chair Moore begins the meeting by acknowledging that on October 1, 2023, Jesse Smith became JEDA's new executive director, replacing Harry Huntley who retired on September 30, 2023. Chair Moore notes that the subcommittee has come to the end of JEDA's formal presentations and will consider findings and recommendations for inclusion in the subcommittee's Study Report. Chair Moore requests that Director Smith provide any comments that Smith would like to share with the subcommittee regarding JEDA's duties, services, programs and general outlook. After Smith's comments, Chair Moore invites former director Huntley to share any additional comments he may have with the subcommittee. The subcommittee then goes into recess to review and discuss the fourteen findings and eight recommendations.

After reconvening, Representative Ott moves that the Study Report include all of the proposed findings and recommendations. In a unanimous vote, the subcommittee votes to adopt all of the proposed findings and recommendations. Representative Ott then moves that the Study Report be amended to include an additional recommendation. In a unanimous vote, the subcommittee votes to adopt Representative Ott's proposed recommendation.

Chair Moore then directs staff to provide a copy of the Study Report to all subcommittee members by the end of business on Friday, November 24, 2023, and requests that any member that would like to provide a written statement for inclusion in the report prepare and deliver the statement to staff by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 17m 2023.

Adjournment

- I. There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned.

DRAFT

FORESTRY COMMISSION OVERVIEW

Agency Mission

“

Protect, promote, and enhance South Carolina's forests for the benefit of all.

”

History and Resources

History

1927: SC Forestry Commission established by General Assembly
1933: SCFC given authority over state parks with the power to control, supervise, maintain and improve all state parks
1945: Forest Fire Protection Act enacted, directing that all forest fire protection work shall be under the direction and supervision of the State Commission of Forestry
1967: State parks transferred to the newly created Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SC 51-1-10)
2009: General Assembly passes SC Right to Practice Forestry Act (SC 48-23-205)
2012: General Assembly passes Act 271 -Firefighter Protection Bill
2020: General Assembly passes Act 168, the SC Firefighter Cancer Benefit Plan
2023: General Assembly passes Act 218, the Law Enforcement Betterment Bill

Divisions

- Forestry
 - Protection Section
 - Management Section
- Resource Development
- Communications & Public Information
- Administration
- Human Resources
- Information Technology

Employees



376.8
authorized FTEs



Funding

\$49.1 million
Total Funding

Successes and Challenges

Identified by the agency

Successes

- The agency has hybrid work schedules and other incentives for staff to promote staff retention.
- The agency performs our work with a statewide higher education perspective.
- Experienced workforce
- Employee engagement is high
- Strong relationship with partners
- High levels of customer satisfaction across a wide array of agency services
- Network of experienced foresters

Challenges

- Agency has difficulty recruiting employees in several job categories due to non-competitive wage.
- Limited opportunities to engage in new projects/partnerships due to vacancies and difficulty recruiting.
- Lack of capacity to perform services due to high employee turnover and/or vacancies in key program areas.
- Management restrictions due to endangered species, recreational users or deed restrictions limit revenue potential.
- Reduced firefighting capacity has lessened the agency's ability to protect homes, firefighters, and the forest resource. Increased costs for equipment, fuel, supplies and maintenance has strained the agency's operating funds.

HOUSE LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE PRESENTATION



South Carolina
Forestry Commission

OVERVIEW



The SC Forestry Commission's general duties are defined in SC 48-23-90. In summary, the code requires the agency to:

1. Make an annual report to the General Assembly on forest conditions ... including recommendations to the public as to reforestation.
2. Prevent, control and extinguish fires, including the enforcement of ... laws pertaining to the protection of the forests and woodlands...
3. Give such advice, assistance and cooperation to private owners of land and promote ... appreciation by the public of the advantages of forestry and the benefits to be derived from forest culture and preservation.
4. Cooperate with the federal government in the distribution of funds allotted to the State for forestry purposes...

MISSION. VISION & VALUES



- **Mission**
Protect, promote and enhance South Carolina's forests for the benefit of all
- **Vision**
Healthy forests, resilient communities, impeccable service
- **Values**
 - Safety
 - Integrity
 - Community
 - Service
 - Commitment



South Carolina
Forestry
Commission

OVERVIEW



SCFC fulfills its multifaceted mission in the following ways:

- Wildland firefighters based in every county provide quick response to wildfires; 3 regional dispatch centers coordinate statewide forest protection
- Project foresters service every county assisting landowners across the state
- Dedicated staff works to promote and induce forest-based economic development
- Nursery & Tree Improvement program provides seedlings for SC landowners at discounted prices.
- SCFC operates 5 state forests for multiple uses
- SCFC specialty foresters provide:
 - Water quality protection
 - Urban & community forestry
 - Stewardship Forest management
- SCFC provides forestry-focused environmental education programs

PARTNERS



SC Department of Natural Resources

SC Rural Water Administration

SC Christmas Tree Growers Association

SC Interagency Drain Users Consortium

SC National Guard

Rural Watershed Coalition

SC Parks, Recreation & Tourism

SC Timber Producers Association

SC Department of Commerce

SC Land Trust Network

SC Interagency Drain Users Consortium

SC National Guard

Trees SC

SC Palmetto Agribusiness Council

SC National Guard

SC Timber Producers Association

SC Department of Commerce

SC Law Enforcement Division

Rural Watershed Coalition

USDA Forest Service

SC Conservation Bank

Trees SC

SC Emergency Management Division

SC Chamber of Commerce

SC Land Trust Network

US Fish & Wildlife Service

South Carolina State Firefighters' Association

The Forestry Association of South Carolina

SC Parks, Recreation & Tourism

Clemson University

Sustainable Forestry Initiative

South Carolina Office of Resilience

Sustainable Forestry Initiative

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

SC Department of Health and Environmental Control

SC Wildlife Federation

US Fish & Wildlife Service

Green Infrastructure Center

Southern Group of State Foresters

USDA Farm Service Agency

Clemson Extension

Arbor Day Foundation

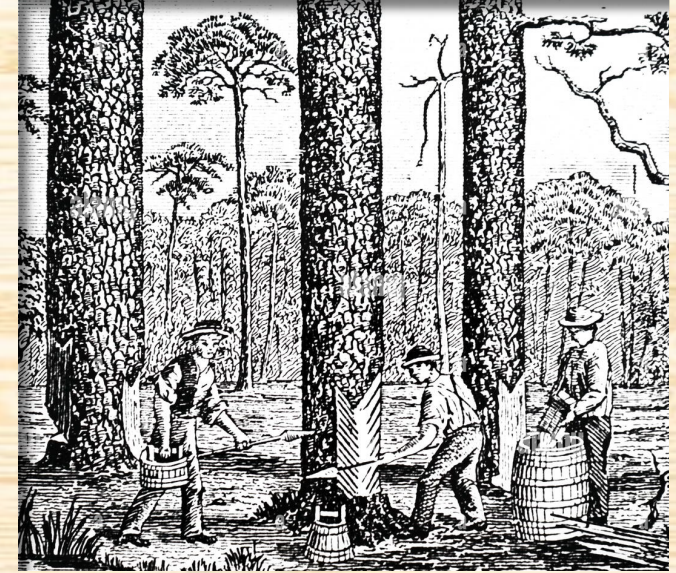
USDA Forest Service

HISTORY: BACKGROUND



Early 18th century

For centuries the resinous products of pine trees – tar, pitch, rosin and turpentine – were used to preserve and maintain wooden sailing vessels and cordage. SC and other southern states profited greatly from this early forest products industry – naval stores – because of their abundant supply of raw materials with which they furnished the British Empire.



*Forestry footnote

By 1720, SC exports of naval stores had risen to more than 40,000 barrels per year.

HISTORY: BACKGROUND



Late 18th century

In 1787, SC's provisional government passed the state's first law providing for the punishment of anyone who willfully, maliciously or negligently caused fire to do damage to others' property.

*Forestry footnote

Between 1787 and 1912, 11 bills were passed concerned with forestry, largely dealing with the protection of the forest from fire.



HISTORY: BACKGROUND



The birth of modern forestry

Fredrick Law Olmsted effectively wrote one of the first known private forest management plans for 125,000 acres of forestland on the Vanderbilts' Biltmore Estate.

In 1892 Olmsted hired Gifford Pinchot, who would go on to become the first Chief of the U.S. Forest Service. Pinchot implemented a management plan that improved the forest while returning a profit to the landowner, the first of its kind in America and served as a national model.



HISTORY: BACKGROUND



Development of modern forestry

After Pinchot left the estate for Washington D.C., German forester Dr. Carl A. Schenck took charge of Biltmore Forest in 1895.

Schenck established the Biltmore Forest School in 1896 — the first of its kind in North America — which educated more than 300 students who would go on to become the first generation of American foresters.



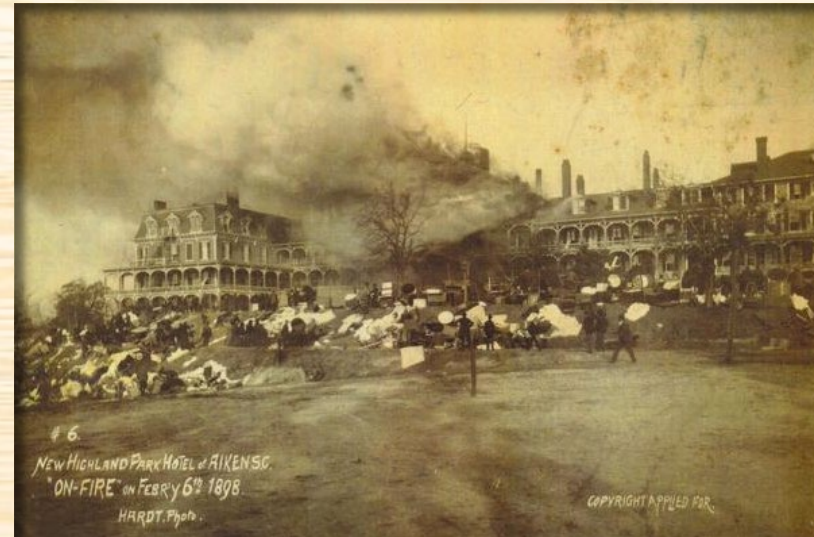
HISTORY: BACKGROUND



The growing threat from wildfire

In February 1898 a series of large wildfires swept through South Carolina, burning northward from Aiken County to beyond Charlotte.

- 14 deaths
- 3 million acres of forest destroyed
- Untold destruction to homes, businesses, sawmills



Aiken's Highland Park Hotel was heavily damaged in the 1898 wildfires.

HISTORY: MILESTONES



SC Forestry
Commission
established

1927

State
nursery
established

1929



SCFC given
authority over
state parks

1933



SCFC purchases first mechanized
fire suppression equipment

1943



1928

Lewis Staley
appointed first
State Forester



1930

SCFC begins giving direct forest
management assistance to landowners

1939

State Forest System
established



1945

Forest Fire
Protection Act
enacted



HISTORY: MILESTONES



1927

The specter of wildfire had always loomed large in the pine belt, threatening lives and property. The future of SC's forest resources were headed toward crisis when the General Assembly created the State Commission of Forestry on April 26, 1927.



Lewis Staley was appointed as the first State Forester in 1928.

HISTORY: MILESTONES



1928

The first organized forest fire control efforts initiated when groups of landowners, in cooperation with SCFC, formed 5 forest fire protection organizations for the control of woods fires on some 195,000 acres of woodlands.



These Forest Protective Associations grew in number and size until 1944 when 24 counties had organized fire protection organizations.

HISTORY: MILESTONES



1929

The General Assembly authorized the establishment of a state nursery to grow and sell forest tree seedlings and transplants to landowners for reforestation, wildlife and Christmas tree purposes.

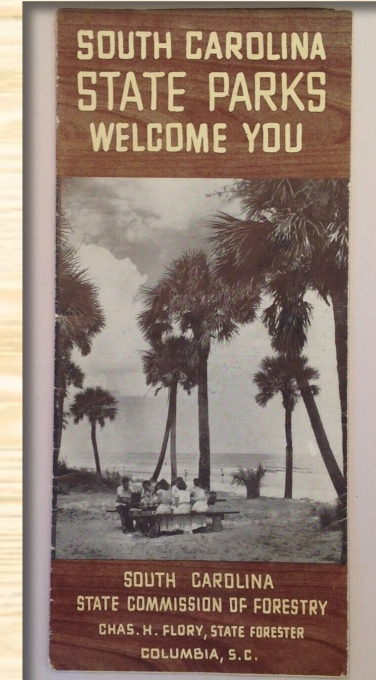


HISTORY: MILESTONES



1933

SCFC given authority over state parks with the power to control, supervise, maintain and improve all properties.



The first state parks open for public use in 1936

HISTORY: MILESTONES



1939

State Forest System established:

- 121,000 acres in Chesterfield and Sumter Counties were leased to the State Commission of Forestry by the federal government
- These properties were the beginning of Sand Hills and Manchester State Forests



HISTORY: MILESTONES



1945

The General Assembly passes the Forest Fire Protection Act, directing that all forest fire protection work shall be under the direction and supervision of the State Commission of Forestry.



South Carolina's first firefighting unit, which consisted of a tractor and a plow.

***Forestry footnote**

SC was the first southern state to offer statewide wildfire protection.



mid-1940s



late 1950s



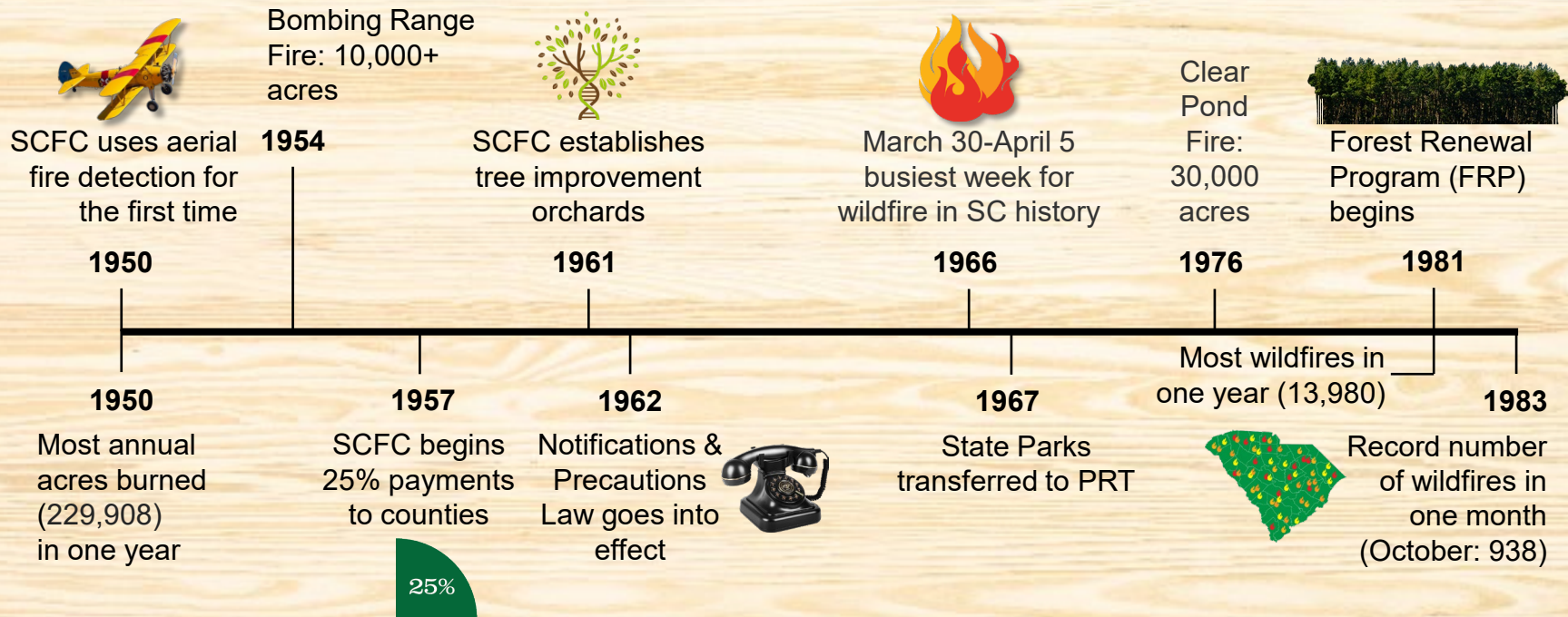
1970s

The General Assembly



Today

HISTORY: MILESTONES



HISTORY: MILESTONES



1957

The General Assembly passes law (SC 48-23-260) stating that 25% of the gross proceeds received from the sale of timber, pulpwood, poles, gravel, land rentals and other privileges must be paid to the county containing state forest lands and used for general school purposes.

***Forestry factoid**

Since 2011, SCFC has paid more than \$10 million to school districts in multiple counties.



SCFC State Lands
Coordinator presenting check
to Sumter Co. School District

HISTORY: MILESTONES



1961

The Commission was an early leader in the improvement of forest genetics. South Carolina improved the quality of seedlings by establishing seed orchards of superior trees through a cooperative Tree Improvement Program involving both state and industrial interest.



***What's new**

SCFC's Nursery & Tree Improvement program has begun grafting to establish the first block of the agency's fourth-cycle Coastal loblolly pine seed orchard at Niederhof Forestry Center.

HISTORY: MILESTONES



1962

Notifications & Precautions Law (SC 48-35-10) passed, regulating fires on certain lands:

“Starting fire on unincorporated land is unlawful unless proper notification is given, area around burn is cleared and persons have sufficient equipment available to secure the fire and prevent its spread, and the fire will be supervised and have it under control prior to leaving the area.”

***Forestry factoid**

In 2023, SCFC took 332,179 outdoor debris burning notifications from the public.

HISTORY: MILESTONES



1976

The Clear Pond Fire, the largest in agency history, was ignited from an unattended campfire and **burned 30,000 acres** in four days.

More than 65 Forestry Commission bulldozers and 113 Forestry Commission personnel from 28 counties fought the fire.

About 200 other cooperators were involved in firefighting operations.



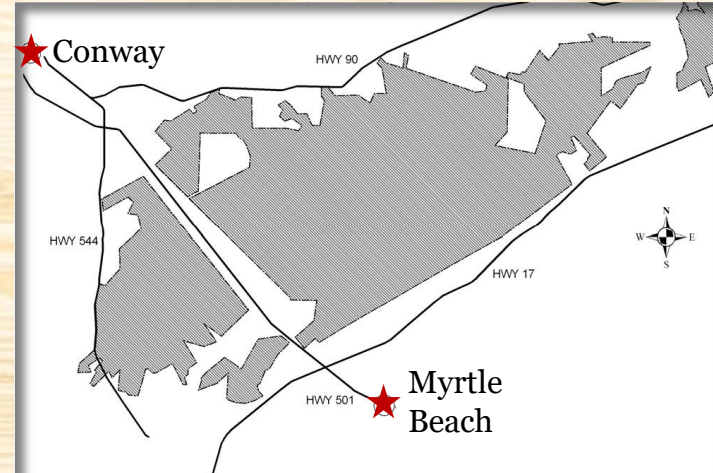
HISTORY: MILESTONES



1976

The area burned in the Clear Pond fire is one of the most volatile areas for wildfire in South Carolina.

Known as the Buist Tract, the 48,000 acres between Conway and Myrtle Beach, then owned by International Paper, has burned many times over before and after this fire.



HISTORY: MILESTONES



1981

Via SC 48-28-10, the Forest Renewal Program (FRP) begins with \$100,000 funding from the General Assembly, matched 4:1 by forest industry (\$500,000 total)

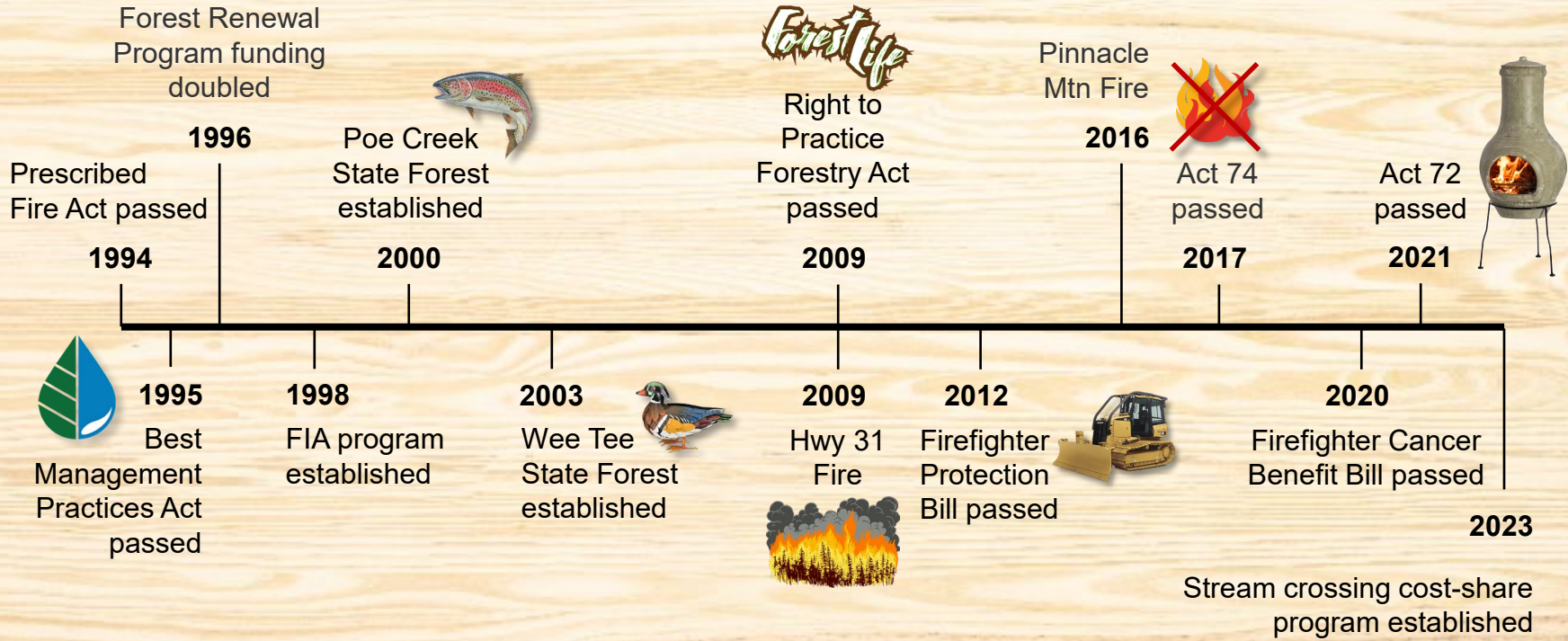
- Enables agency to provide financial assistance to forest landowners for practices such as site preparation and tree planting



***Forestry factoid**

The FRP cost-share program has helped reforest nearly 400,000 acres since its inception.

HISTORY: MILESTONES



HISTORY: MILESTONES



1994

General Assembly passes the SC Prescribed Fire Act (SC 48-34-10)

- authorizes prescribed fires to be conducted under certain conditions
- enables SCFC to promulgate regulations for the use of prescribed fire and for the certification of prescribed fire managers



HISTORY: MILESTONES



1995

General Assembly passes the SC Forest Best Management Practices Act (SC 48-36-10)

- designates SCFC to provide public oversight and guidance for BMPs, which are aimed at preventing adverse water quality impacts from timber harvesting, site preparation, prescribed burning and other forestry activities.



***Forestry factoid**

Overall BMP compliance for timber harvesting was an astounding 96.8% in FY2022-23.

HISTORY: MILESTONES



1998

SCFC establishes its Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) program

- Continuously running forest census whose data is used to assess forest health and the spread of non-native insects and diseases, make economic planning decisions, monitor wildlife habitat, gauge wildfire risk, and assess rates of land use change.



***Forestry factoid**

FIA is critical for economic development, as its data is used by companies looking to establish or expand their forest products-based operations in South Carolina.

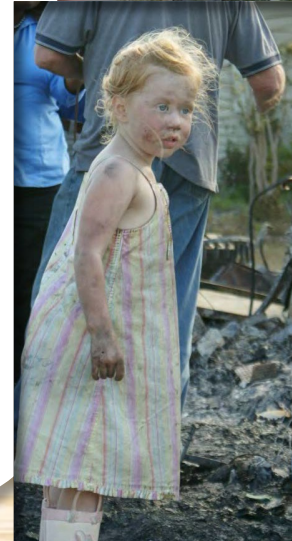
HISTORY: MILESTONES



2009

The Highway 31 Fire, which burned in the same area as the Clear Pond Fire, was the most destructive wildfire, in terms of loss, in state history:

- 76 homes destroyed / 97 damaged
- \$25 million in property destruction
- 19,000-plus acres of forest destroyed
- 4,000 evacuations
- No lives lost!



HISTORY: MILESTONES



2012

The General Assembly passes Act 271, aka the Firefighter Protection Bill

- provided 2.25 percent of the state's insurance premium tax revenue to SCFC for equipment upgrades (replacement of old open-cab dozers with new and much safer enclosed-cab models)



*Success story

This funding, along with continued support from the General Assembly, will enable SCFC to equip its entire dozer fleet with e-cab models within their 15-year safe service lives by 2025.

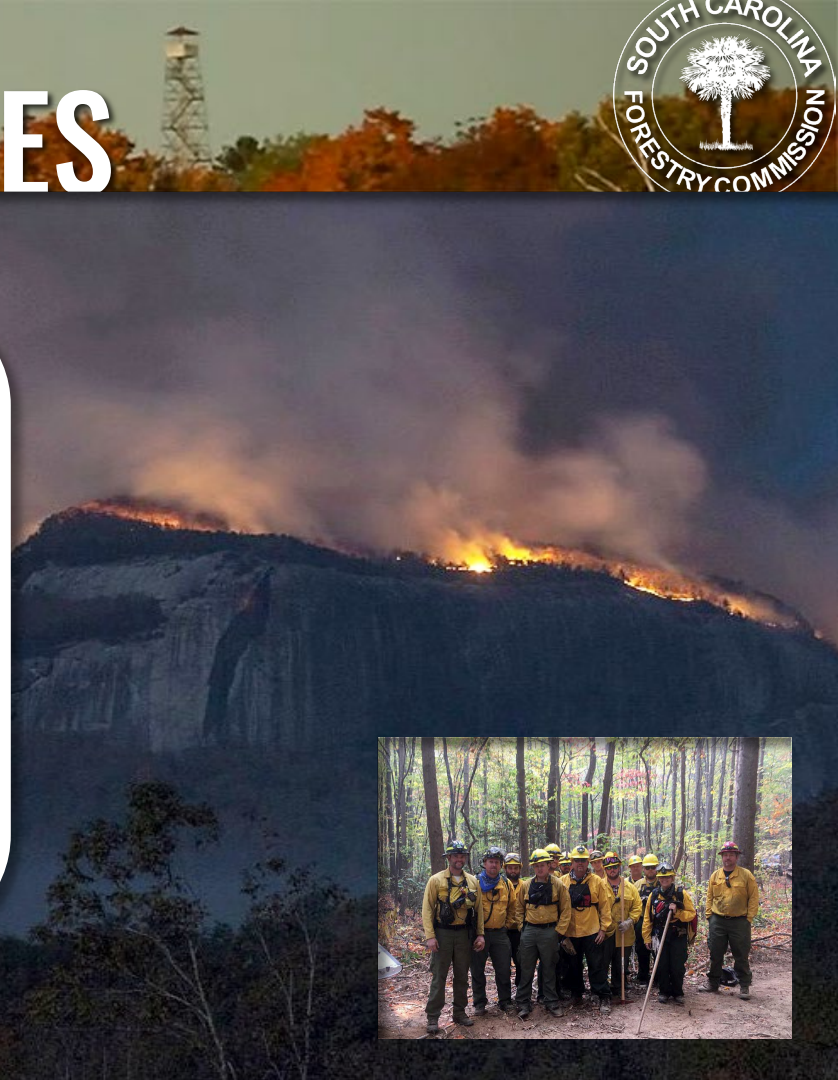
HISTORY: MILESTONES



2016

The Pinnacle Mountain Fire, ignited by an escaped campfire, was the largest, longest, costliest wildfire in Upstate history:

- 10,000-plus acres of forest burned
- lasted more than a month
- average of 200 personnel on scene each day, from all over SC, surrounding states and half a dozen western states



HISTORY: MILESTONES



2017

The General Assembly passes Act 74 (SC 48-35-50), clarifying the types of outdoor burns covered under the State Forester's Burning Ban.

- Established that campfires, bonfires and other fires for recreational purposes are included in any such prohibition.



***Forestry factoid**

Statute does not apply to fires used for nonrecreational purposes such as those for human warmth or for the preparation of food for immediate consumption.

HISTORY: MILESTONES



2021

General Assembly passed Act 72, amending SC 48-35-55 to include exemptions to State Forester's Burning Ban prohibitions on some otherwise recreational fires:

- fires in grills, portable outdoor fireplaces, permanent fire pits and chimineas are not prohibited under a State Forester's Burning Ban.

General Assembly also amended 48-23-96 to allow for the issuance of warning tickets by SCFC law enforcement.



HISTORY: MILESTONES



2023

SCFC establishes a stream crossing cost-share program with \$125,000 funding authorized by the General Assembly:

- aims to improve stream crossing BMP compliance in pursuit of the ultimate goal of protecting water quality during harvesting operations.



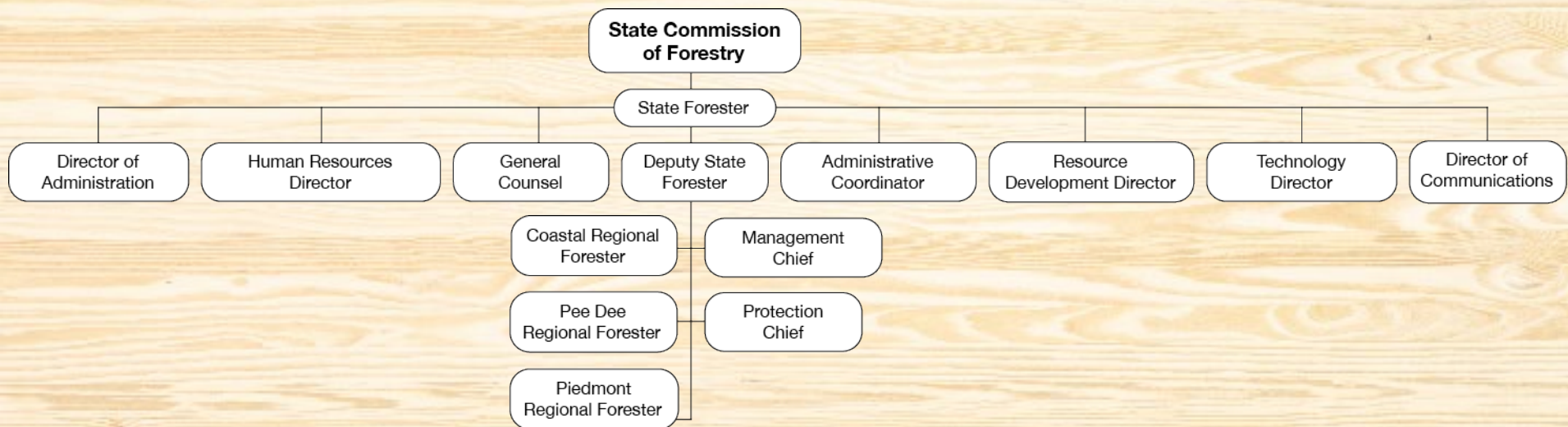
HISTORY: MILESTONES



Agency milestones: State Forester transitions

1928-31:	Lewis Staley	1989-92:	Robert Gould
1931-41:	Homer Smith	1992-2000:	James Ryan
1941-44:	William Hammerle	2001-07:	Bob Schowalter
1944-64:	Charles Flory	2008-18:	Henry Kodama
1964-78:	John Tiller	2018-:	Scott Phillips
1978-89:	Leonard Killian		

ORGANIZATION



LEADERSHIP



Agency goals

- To accomplish its mission the Commission has five primary strategic goals, which are identified in its Accountability Report. These goals are aligned with its Mission, Strategic Plan, Forest Action Plan and statutory requirements.
 - Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests
 - Protect Forest from Harm
 - Conserve Working Forests
 - Raise Awareness about Our Forests, and
 - Strengthen the Commission for the Future
- For each goal, the agency has identified strategies, actions and performance measures to ensure their accomplishments which are reported to the Commissioners three times during the year.

LEADERSHIP



Charting our path forward



In 2020 SCFC simultaneously revised its Strategic Plan and Forest Action Plan

- Updated with input from diverse group of stakeholders and partners
- Both are truly integrated, aligning our actions toward our agency's vision of "Healthy Forests, Resilient Communities and Impeccable Service"

LEADERSHIP



State Commission of Forestry, establishment

- Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 48-23-10 & 20, the State Commission of Forestry is composed of nine members who are appointed for staggered six-year terms; can serve multiple terms.
- All members must reside in South Carolina and be appointed by the Governor.
 - “The members of the commission shall be selected and appointed with reference to their knowledge of and interest in the forests of the State and the products derived there from...”
 - “In making his appointments, the Governor shall make all reasonable effort to provide representation from every geographical section of the State and a reasonable balance between the interests of corporations and individuals.”

LEADERSHIP



State Commission of Forestry, composition

- The members of the board shall be appointed as follows:
 - two must be practical lumbermen;
 - one must be a farmer who is a landowner;
 - three must be selected and appointed from the public at large;
 - Two must be appointed by the governor from the public at large upon the advice and consent of the SC Senate; and
 - One must shall be the President of Clemson University (or designee) and is the only permanent member.

LEADERSHIP



State Commission of Forestry, procedures

Chair: Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 48-23-30, the members of the Commission shall from their number select a chairman whose duty shall be as follows:

- to call the Commission together as often as the public interests and need demand. 5 meetings are regularly scheduled each year (January, April, June, August, November);
- The place of the meeting shall be designated by the chairman, who shall likewise designate a place for the headquarters of the State Forester.”

LEADERSHIP



State Commission of Forestry

Position	Position Title	Current Members	Appointed By	Appointed Date	Expiration Date
At Large, Public	Member -Chairman	McPhail, Walter A. Jr.	Governor Nikki R. Haley	7/1/2014	6/30/2026
At Large, Public	Member	Sandt, Joshua L. Jr.	Governor Henry McMaster	7/25/2018	6/30/2024
At Large, Public	Member	Carlisle, Holly P	Governor Henry McMaster	4/20/2023	6/30/2028
At Large, Public-confirmed by Senate	Member	Morrison, Harry S. III	Governor Marshall C. Sanford, Jr.	4/1/2004	6/30/2022
At Large, Public-confirmed by Senate	Member	McFadden, Amy L.	Governor Henry McMaster	4/10/2019	6/30/2024
Landowner Farmer	Member	Rhodes, William McLeod	Governor Henry McMaster	7/25/2018	6/30/2024
Practical Lumberman	Member	Segars, Charles A. Jr.	Governor Henry McMaster	7/20/2021	6/30/2027
Practical Lumberman	Member	Neville, Jesse C.	Governor Nikki R. Haley	3/5/2015	6/30/2026
President of Clemson University	Ex Officio Member				

LEADERSHIP



State Forester – Appointment, qualifications and duties

- The Commission shall appoint and employ a State Forester, who shall be a technically trained forester with at least two years' experience in technical, practical and administrative work (SC 48-23-50)
- Performs all such duties as shall be directed by the Commission and shall be charged with the direction of all matters relative to forestry as authorized by the legislation establishing the agency's purview (SC 48-23-60→90)
- Serves as secretary to the commission and shall be custodian of the books, records and papers of the Commission which he shall keep at the headquarters designated by the Commission (SC 48-23-60)

LEADERSHIP



General powers of commission

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 48-23-80:

- SCFC may acquire, own, sell, lease, exchange, transfer, rent, pledge and mortgage real and personal property
- SCFC may cooperate with other state and federal government entities in all matters pertaining to reforestation and providing employment for the benefit of the public
- SCFC vested with any and all powers deemed necessary to:
 - accomplish duties prescribed in its enabling legislation in SC code
 - conform to any act of Congress or rule(s)/regulation(s) of federal agencies

LEADERSHIP



General powers of commission

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 48-23-85:
Power of commission to negotiate
agreements with Federal Agencies for
certain services on Federal lands.

- SCFC may negotiate agreements for providing fire detection, pre-suppression, and suppression



LEADERSHIP



General duties of commission

- Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 48-23-90:
- Provide an annual report to the General Assembly
- Take action to prevent, control and extinguish fires, including the enforcement of any and all laws pertaining to the protection of the forests
- Give advice, assistance and cooperation to private forestland owners
- Promote a proper appreciation by the public of the advantages of forestry and the benefits to be derived from forest culture and preservation
- Cooperate with the federal government in the distribution of funds allotted to the state for forestry purposes

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, statutory duties and powers

- Responsible for addressing forest disasters, (continued)
 - Develop a Forest Disaster Plan to:
 - provide for systematic salvage and utilization of all forest products damaged
 - coordinate conservation of damaged forest resources
 - protect the environment and reestablish forests on damaged areas
 - After the disaster area has resumed normal status and salvage is completed, the State Forester shall declare the forest disaster over, compile a report of the disaster, and inform the Governor.

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, statutory duties and powers

- Responsible for addressing forest disasters (SC 48-23-86):
 - Determine extent of damage by conducting ground and aerial surveys
 - Declare a forest disaster (if necessary)
 - Direct SCFC resources to assist citizens and local governments on public and private land where life or health is in danger
 - Direct SCFC personnel to assist other state agencies and utilities clear transportation routes and power/communication lines
 - Develop a Forest Disaster Plan to:
 - provide for systematic salvage and utilization of all forest products damaged
 - coordinate conservation of damaged forest resources
 - protect the environment and reestablish forests on damaged areas

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, statutory duties and powers

- Execution of deeds, mortgages, or contracts (SC 48-23-170)
 - Whenever it shall become necessary to execute deeds, mortgages or contracts to carry out any of the provisions of this chapter the Commission may, by resolution duly adopted, delegate the execution and delivery of any such documents to the chairman of the Commission and the State Forester. Such instruments shall be executed in the name of the State Commission of Forestry, shall be signed by the chairman and by the State Forester and, in case of deeds or mortgages, shall be witnessed and probated as required by law. Such instruments, when so authorized by resolution of the Commission, executed as above set out and delivered, shall be in all respects the acts of the State Commission of Forestry and shall be binding upon it as fully as if executed by the members of the Commission themselves.

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, statutory duties and powers

- Forestry services to landowners; fees; disposition; forestry services to local governments and state agencies; reimbursement (SC 48-23-295)
 - (B) When the State Forester considers it in the public interest ... services may be provided without charge to encourage the use of approved scientific forestry practices on private or other forestlands within the State or for the purposes of providing practical demonstrations of the practices.
 - (C) The administration of this section pertaining to revenue generated by forestry services and forest tree seed is under the State Forester.

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, statutory duties and powers

- Takes, by way of designee, notifications for fires started in any woodlands, brushlands, grasslands, ditchbanks, or hedgerows or in any debris, leaves or other flammable material adjacent thereto (SC 48-35-10)
- May ban all outdoor/open burning in specific counties or statewide, regardless of whether a permit or notification is required, including campfires, bonfires and other fires for recreational purposes (48-35-50)
 - State Forester's Burn Ban does not apply to fires used for non-recreational purposes such as those for human warmth or the preparation of food for immediate consumption
 - ❖ Governor's Burn Ban is less restrictive than a State Forester's Burn Ban because it does not apply to fires for wildlife, agriculture and forestry purposes

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, statutory duties and powers

- Upon the governor's execution of the Southeastern Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact, the State Forester shall act as compact administrator for that state and shall consult with like officials of the other member states and shall implement cooperation between such states in forest fire prevention and control (SC 48-37-20, Article III)
- As compact administrator he shall be an ex officio member of the Southeastern Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact advisory committee, and chairman ex officio of the South Carolina members of such advisory committee (SC 48-37-40)

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, statutory duties and powers

- The State Forester ... may delegate, from time to time, to any deputy or other subordinate in his department or office, the power to be present and participate, including voting as his representative or substitute at any meeting of or hearing by or other proceeding of the compact administrators or of the advisory committee (SC 48-37-40)
- State Forester ... is granted ... all the powers provided for in the compact and all the powers necessary or incidental to the carrying out of such compact in every particular (SC 48-37-50)

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, general duties

- Provides leadership and management to ensure the agency's mission and strategic goals are put into action.
- Develops strategic objectives in consultation with commissioners, executive staff and other critical area program managers, further refining them as action items.
- Identifies agency customers through strategies developed to move the agency forward toward mission accomplishment.

LEADERSHIP



State Forester, general duties

- Evaluates the agency's workforce responsibilities and staffing levels to ensure proper alignment of resources to carry out the agency's mission.
- Ensure the agency's work process is effective, and workforce properly informed and trained to accomplish the agency's mission, vision and goals.
- Manages the budget and determines priorities for expenditure of funds to achieve short – and long-term goals.

LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester Charges

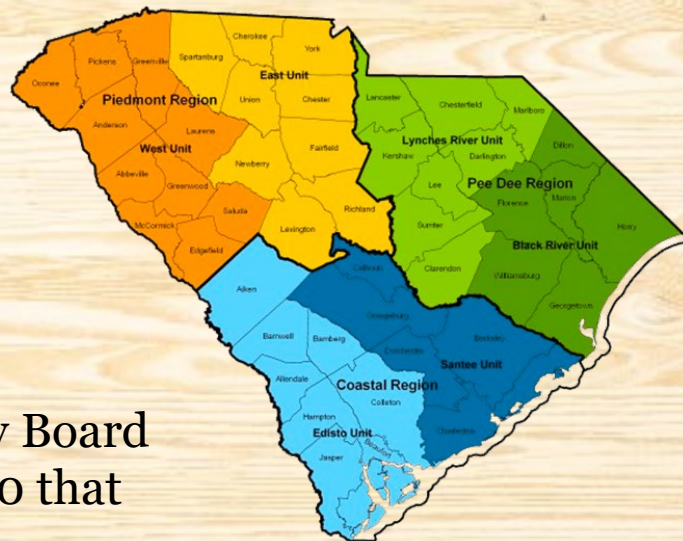
- Charges - Responsible for management of SCFC Forestry Division, which is responsible for wildfire response and forest management operations and programs. This involves approximately 88% of agency's workforce consisting of 333 FTEs and temporary employees.
 1. Regional Operations (232 employees)
 2. Forest Management Section (44 employees)
 3. Forest Protection Section (55 employees)
 4. Facilities Management Department (2 employees)

LEADERSHIP

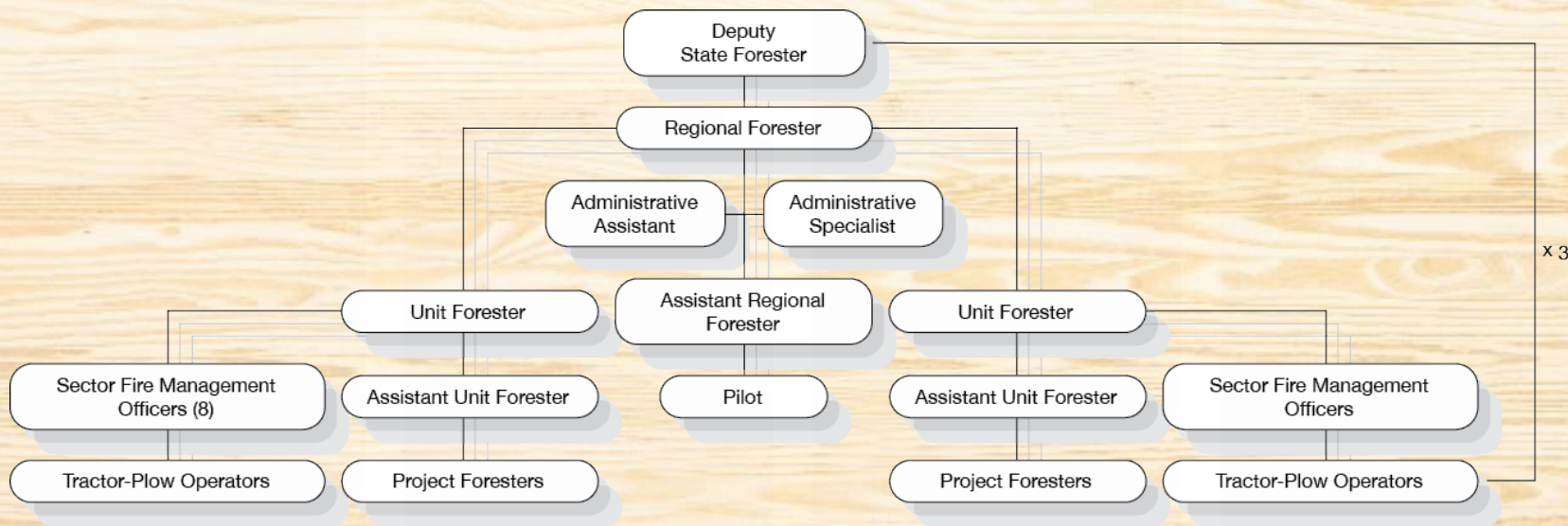


Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- SCFC divides the state into 3 geographically based administrative regions (each managed by a Regional Forester):
 - Coastal Region – 13 counties
 - Pee Dee Region – 14 counties
 - Piedmont Region – 19 counties
- Each county has a five-member Forestry Advisory Board pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 48-33-50, 60, 70 & 80 that serve in an advisory capacity to the agency
 - Three regional and one statewide meeting are held each year to provide updates on forest protection and management activities and plans



Organizational chart – Regional operations



The varying counts of project foresters and tractor-plow operators in each region are listed at right.

Project Foresters

Coastal: 5 / Pee Dee: 6 / Piedmont: 6

Tractor-Plow Operators

Coastal: 55 / Pee Dee: 59 / Piedmont: 46

LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

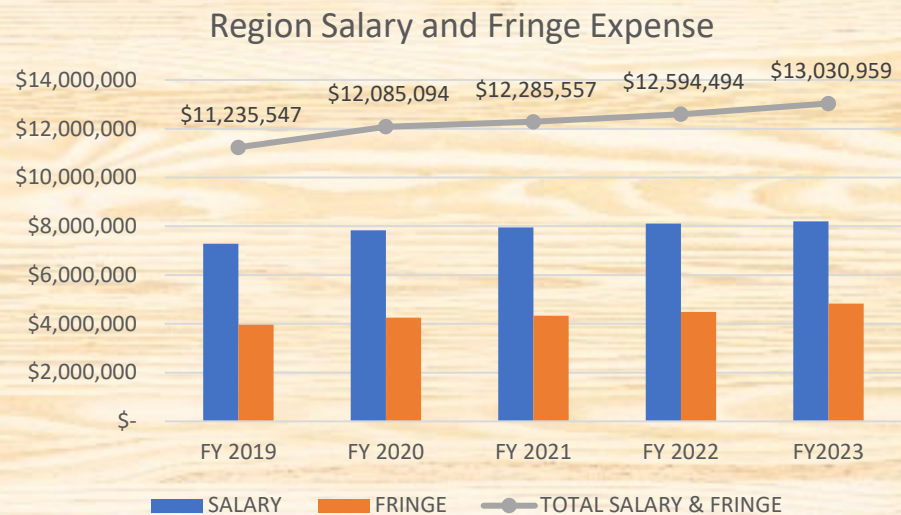
- Regional Foresters manage operations to ensure
 - Wildland fire and other disaster respond.
 - Forest management technical assistance – develop forest management plans and conduct reforestation cost-share evaluations – is provided
 - Forestry services – prescribed burning, standby assistance, firebreaks and equipment extraction – are performed



LEADERSHIP



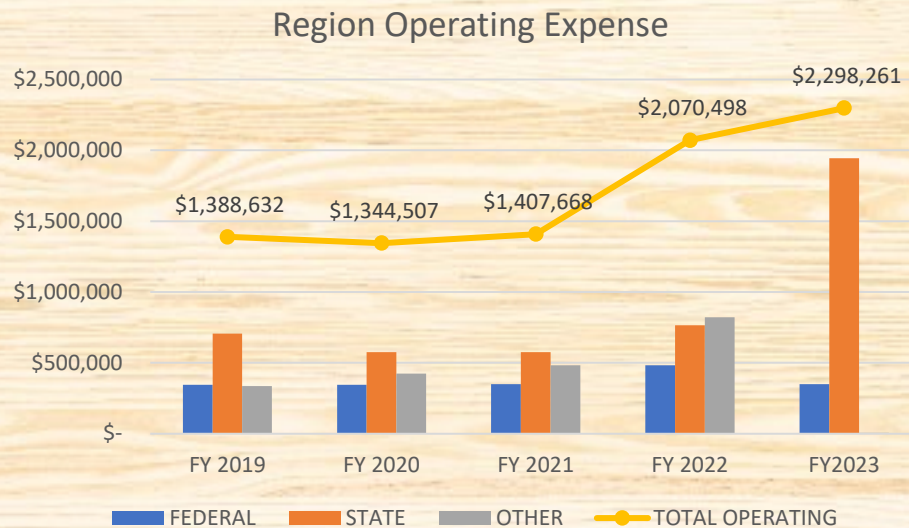
Deputy state Forester – Charge 1: Regional salary and fringe expenses



LEADERSHIP



Deputy state Forester – Charge 1: Regional operating expenses



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- Assistant Regional Foresters
 - Assist Regional Forester with fire management program
 - Safety & training
 - Air operations
 - Liaison with dispatch center and maintenance shops

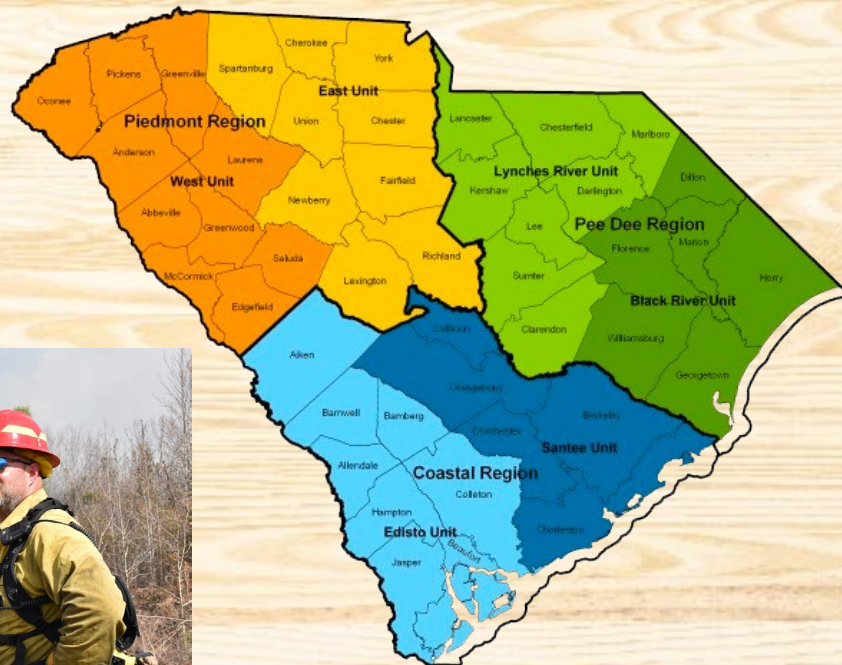


LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- Unit Foresters
 - Direct and manage all forest management, services and wildland fire control in the unit (5-10 counties)
 - Directly supervise 1 Assistant Unit Forester and 4 Sector FMOs



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- Sector Fire Management Officers (FMOs):
 - Serve as Class I Law Enforcement Officers
 - Enforce forest laws and investigate wildfires and crimes
 - Assist other LE and emergency response agencies
 - Hurricane evacuations
 - Search & rescue, and
 - Security after natural disasters, etc.



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- Sector Fire Management Officers (FMOs):
 - Manage fire suppression operations
 - Supervise a sector fire suppression team of 4 to 8 frontline firefighters in a sector (area) containing 1 to 4 counties
 - Coordinate suppression operations with local fire departments



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- Sector Fire Management Officers (FMOs):
 - Manage forestry services – prescribed burning and standby, firebreak plowing, water bar construction and mired equipment extraction
 - Along with tractor plow operators assist project foresters with forest management technical assistance



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

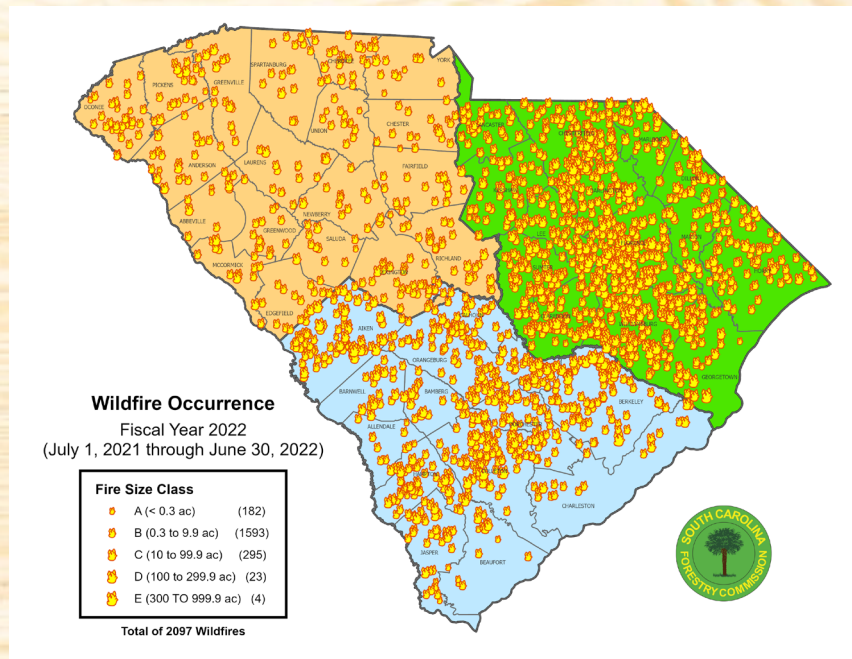
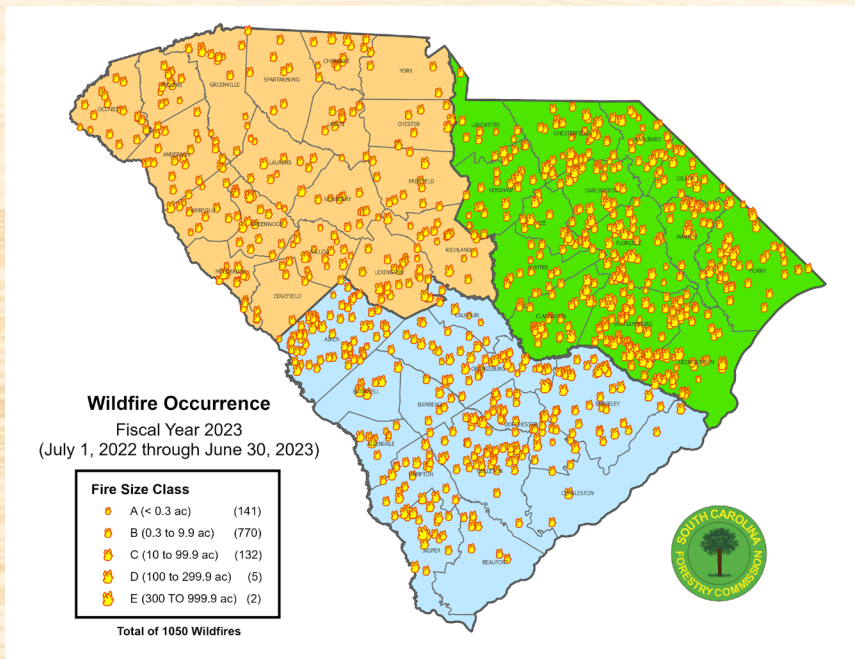
- Frontline firefighters / Tractor plow operators
 - Operate a dozer with a plow to suppress wildfires
 - Also trained to be on a handline crew and/or debris removal crew
 - Performs forest management services.



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

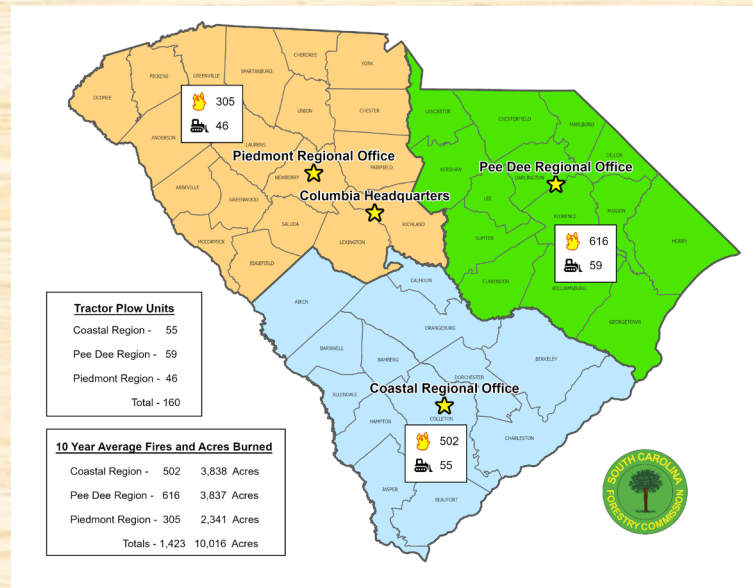
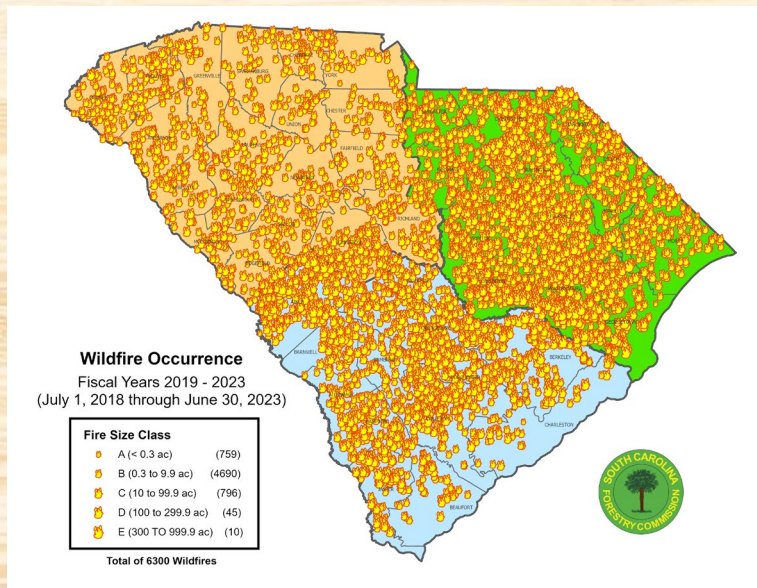


LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- 160 Tractor Plow Operator (TPO)
 - Region TPO numbers are analyzed and based on historical fire occurrence



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- Assistant Unit Foresters
 - Direct and manage forest management operations
 - Assist with conducting prescribed burns, wildfire suppression, and disaster response
 - Directly supervise 2 to 3 project foresters



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- Project Foresters:
 - Provide forest management assistance to private landowners in respective 1-3-county area, including preparation of forest management plans
 - Administer cost-share programs reforestation
 - Assist with conducting prescribed burns, wildfire suppression, and disaster response



LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 1: Regional operations

- **Challenges: Recruitment and Retention**
 - High turnover rates and vacancies
 - Entry level salaries for wildland firefighters, law enforcement officers, pilots and dispatchers are not competitive.
 - Potential retirements

LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 2: Forest Protection

- Directs and manages the Forest Protection Section, including:
 - Wildland fire control
 - Disaster response
 - Dispatch Operations
 - Law enforcement
 - Equipment procurement and maintenance
 - Federal property and assistance programs
 - Training & safety
 - Aviation
 - Agency's Incident Management Teams
- Provides direction and support for all program activities

LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 3: Forest Management

- Directs and manages the Forest Management Section, including:
 - State Lands
 - Forest Health
 - Urban & Community Forestry
 - Landowner Assistance
- Provides direction and support for all program activities

LEADERSHIP



Deputy State Forester – Charge 4: Facilities management

- Responsible for the repairs, maintenance and construction activities of the agency's central headquarters and statewide regional facilities
- Administers activities related to the agency's real estate and properties, including:
 - Land acquisitions
 - Land and facility leases
 - Easements
 - Disposals and other legal matters related to the agency's real estate



Offices and Tower Sites
 South Carolina Forestry Commission
 January 2024

Offices and Tower Sites
South Carolina Forestry Commission
January 2024

FOREST MANAGEMENT



SC forestland characteristics

- 87% of the 12.8 million acres of forestland in SC is privately owned
 - 60% of privately owned forests are family-owned
- 84,000+ forest landowners own 10 acres or more; the average family forest is 97 acres
- Public agencies manage 13% of SC forestland; forest industry owns 330,000 acres
- Before 2010, forestland acreage had been relatively stable, but increased development since then has been negatively impacting scope

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charges

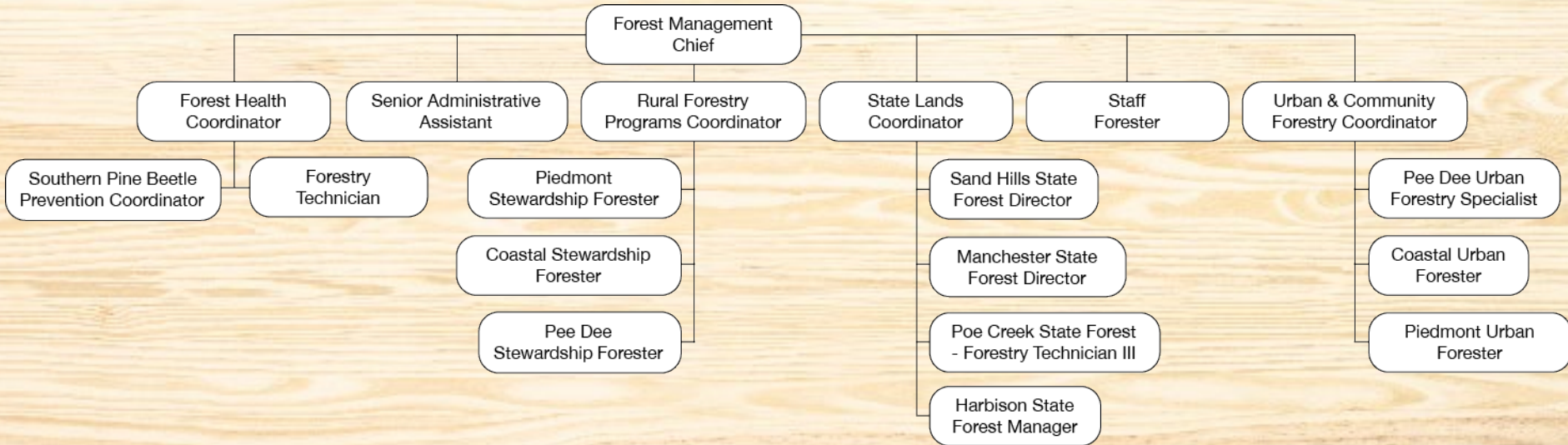
1. Provide forest management assistance to private landowners
2. Administer the Forest Stewardship Program
3. Administer cost-share programs
4. Provide forestry services and equipment rental
5. Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings
6. Provide forestry expertise to other agencies
7. Monitor and address forest health issues
8. Provide urban and community forestry assistance



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Organizational Chart



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Links to SCFC Strategic Plan

Goal 1 – Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests

Strategy 3 – Engage communities to grow and sustain healthy trees and forests.

Goal 2– Protect Forests from Harm

Strategy 4 – Deliver programs and services to prevent and reduce damage from insects, diseases, invasive species and other threats to our forests.

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Links to SCFC Strategic Plan

Goal 3 – Conserve Working Forests

Strategy 1 – Support landowners with programs and services that promote active forest management and help them meet their goals.

Strategy 2 – Promote and increase the responsible use of prescribed fire.

Strategy 3 – Demonstrate practices for the active, sustainable, multiple-use management of state forests and engage other public landowners to do the same.

Strategy 4 – Actively seek opportunities to acquire land to grow the state forest system.

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Program Funding

Forest Stewardship Program \$340,000

State funds – 83%



Forest Renewal Program \$1,000,000

Other funds – 80%



State Forests \$2,900,000

Other funds – 99%



Forest Health Program \$640,000

Federal funds – 100%



Urban Forestry Program \$440,000

Federal funds – 50%



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 1: Provide forest management assistance to landowners



SCFC foresters:

- assess the condition of a landowner's forested areas
- determine the landowner's objectives
- develop a forest management plan
- help landowners implement the plan

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 1: Provide forest management assistance to landowners

Outreach – work with partners

- Center for Heirs' Property Preservation
- Clemson Extension Service
- Longleaf Alliance



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 1: Provide forest management assistance to landowners

Refer to other professionals

- Consulting foresters
- Wildlife biologists
- Soil scientists



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 1: Provide forest management assistance to landowners

- SCFC foresters assist with storm recovery
 - Damage assessment
 - Timber salvage
 - Recovery assistance



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 2: Administer the Forest Stewardship Program

- Partnership - US Forest Service, SCFC, other organizations, forest industry and private forestry consultants
- Develop comprehensive forest management plans
- Incentives for consulting foresters to write plans in high-priority areas



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 2: Administer the Forest Stewardship Program

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- Develop comprehensive forest management plans
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FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 3: Administer cost-share programs

- Cost-share programs help defray cost of forestry practices
- Incentivize landowners to actively manage their lands, which results in:
 - economic and environmental productivity
 - continued, enhanced ecosystem services
 - sustained production of forest products
 - less conversion to other purposes, particularly development

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 3: Administer cost-share programs

Forest Renewal Program (FRP)

- State program – 40% of cost
- 4:1 match from forest industry
- 1-year backlog
- Over 9,400 applicants
- Nearly 400,000 acres



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 3: Administer cost-share programs

Southern Pine Beetle Program (SPB)

- Federal program – 50% of cost
- USFS funding
- 1-year backlog
- Over 1,400 applicants
- Nearly 60,000 acres



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 3: Administer cost-share programs



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- Federal program – NRCS – 75-90%
- SCFC writes plans
- Many practices

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 3: Administer cost-share programs



Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

- Federal program – FSA – 50-90%
- Rental payments
- SCFC writes plans
- Limited enrollment

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Program Metrics – FY23

Landowner Assistance

- 1,886 landowners assisted (target – 2,400)
- 895 forest management plans written, covering 59,348 acres
- Customer satisfaction level – 97%

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Challenges

Landowner Assistance

- Meeting forest management plan goals
 - Forester recruitment and retention - FY24 funding improved compensation, but still have vacancies
 - Working with partners on outreach

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 4: Provide forestry services and equipment rental



- Firebreak plowing

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 4: Provide forestry services and equipment rental



- Water bar construction

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 4: Provide forestry services and equipment rental



- Equipment extraction

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 4: Provide forestry services and equipment rental



- Prescribed burning

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 4: Provide forestry services and equipment rental



- Standby for prescribed burning

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 4: Provide forestry services and equipment rental

- Equipment Rental
- Timber Marking



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Program Metrics – FY23

Forestry Services

- 8,179 acres of prescribed burns (44% of requests)
- 1,307 acres of standby assistance
- plowed 811 miles of firebreaks
- installed 113 waterbars
- Customer satisfaction levels at or above 95% for the past 5 years



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Challenges

Forestry Services

Meeting targets for prescribed burning

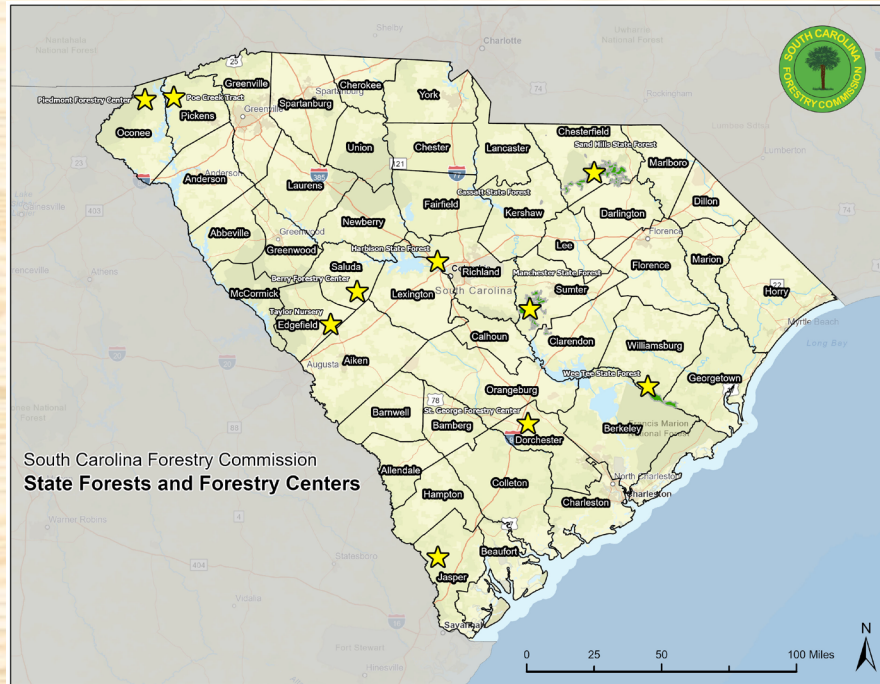
- FMO and forester vacancies – FY24 funding improved compensation, but still have vacancies
- Providing prescribed burning training for private landowners – CPFM, Learn to Burn, PBAs
- Hiring Prescribed Fire Coordinator



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

- Our state forests practice principles of high-quality multiple-use and sustained-yield forest management
 - Fish and wildlife habitat enhancement
 - Air, water, and soil quality
 - forest product sales (timber, pine straw, etc.)
 - recreation
 - aesthetic beauty
 - Scientific research
 - demonstration



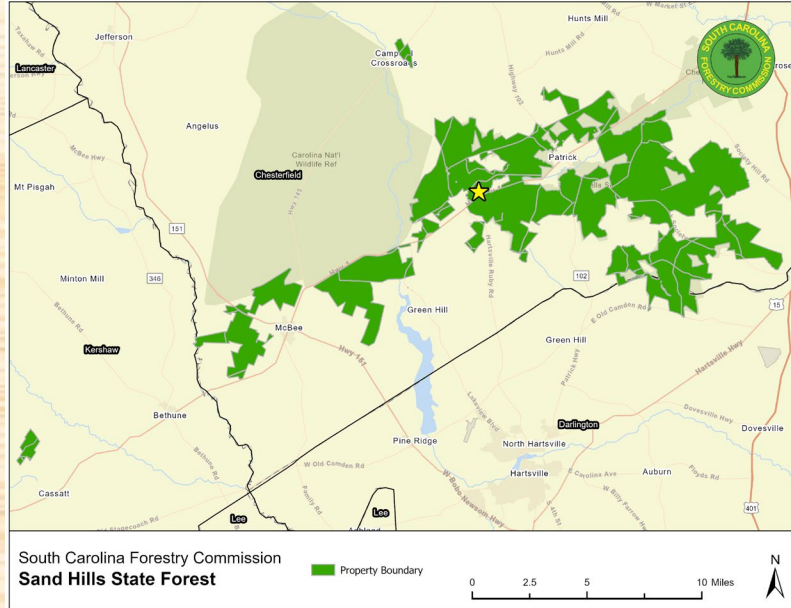
FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

Sand Hills State Forest – 46,572 acres

- Established in 1939, Title in 1991
- Chesterfield and Darlington Counties
- Endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers (RCW)
- Timber and pine straw sales
- Recreation – hunting, fishing, horseback riding, hiking, camping (30 miles of equestrian trails)



FOREST MANAGEMENT



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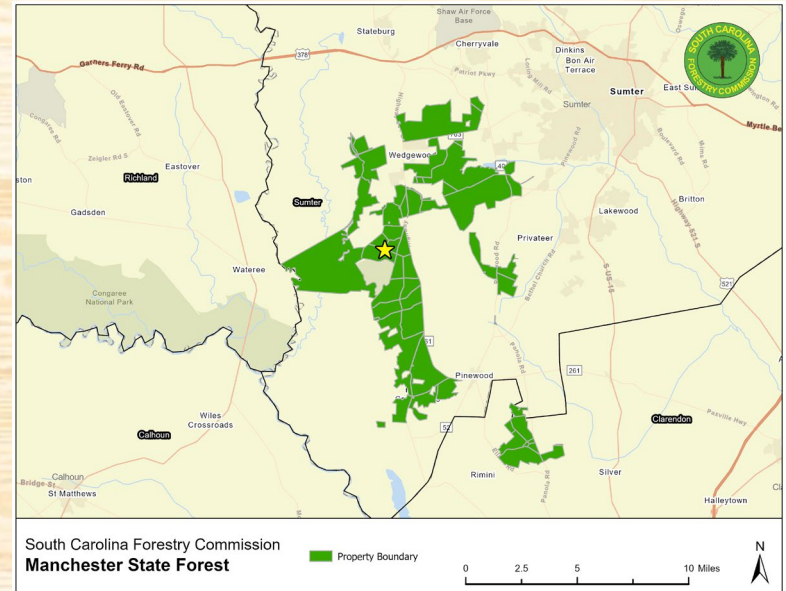
FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

Manchester State Forest – 29,830 acres

- Established in 1939, Title in 1955
- Sumter and Clarendon Counties
- Habitat for red-cockaded woodpeckers
- Timber and pine straw sales
- Recreation: hunting, fishing, horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, ATV/dirt bike use (67 miles of trails), three sections of the Palmetto Trail



FOREST MANAGEMENT



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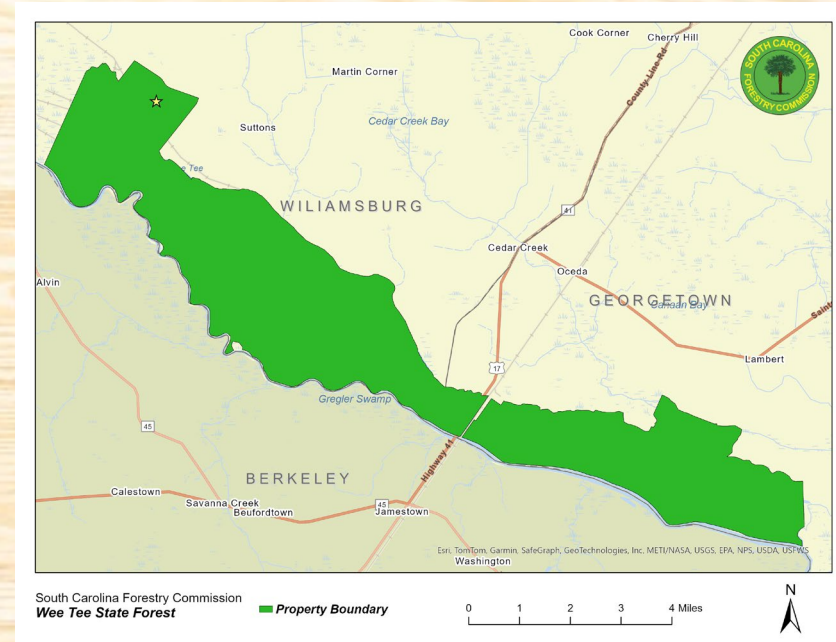
FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

Wee Tee State Forest – 18,500 acres

- Established in 2003 - 12,394 acres
- Williamsburg and Georgetown Counties
- Significant additions in 2022 and 2023
- Habitat for a variety of migratory bird species
- Infrequent timber sales
- Recreation: hunting, fishing



FOREST MANAGEMENT



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FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

Wee Tee State Forest – 18,500 acres

- Access challenges – bridges
- Agency received \$4.5 million (non-recurring) in FY23
- Replaced one bridge in 2023
- Two additional bridges scheduled for replacement in 2024



FOREST MANAGEMENT



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FOREST MANAGEMENT



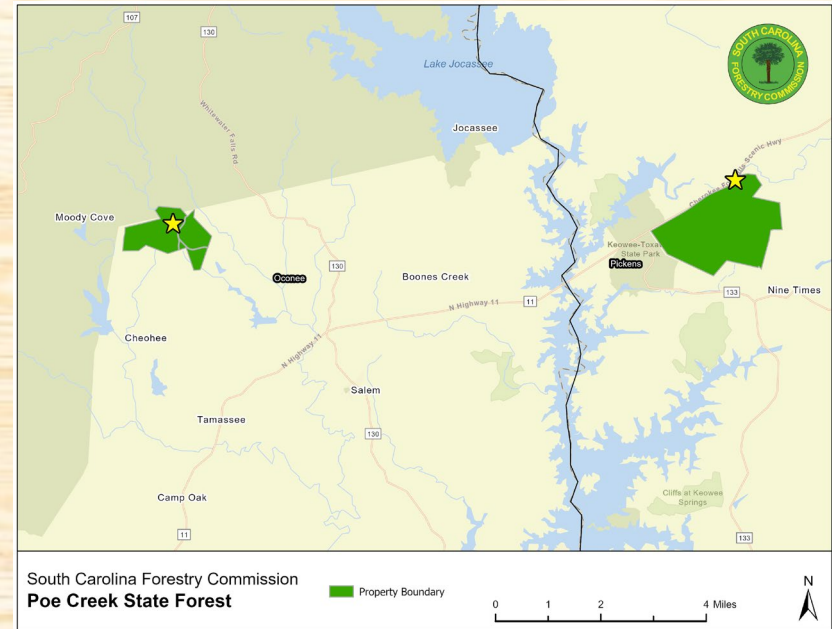
Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

Piedmont Forestry Center – 720 acres

- Purchased in 1969
- Oconee County
- Nursery

Poe Creek State Forest – 1,808 acres

- Purchased in 2000
- Pickens County
- Recreation: hunting, fishing, hiking



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

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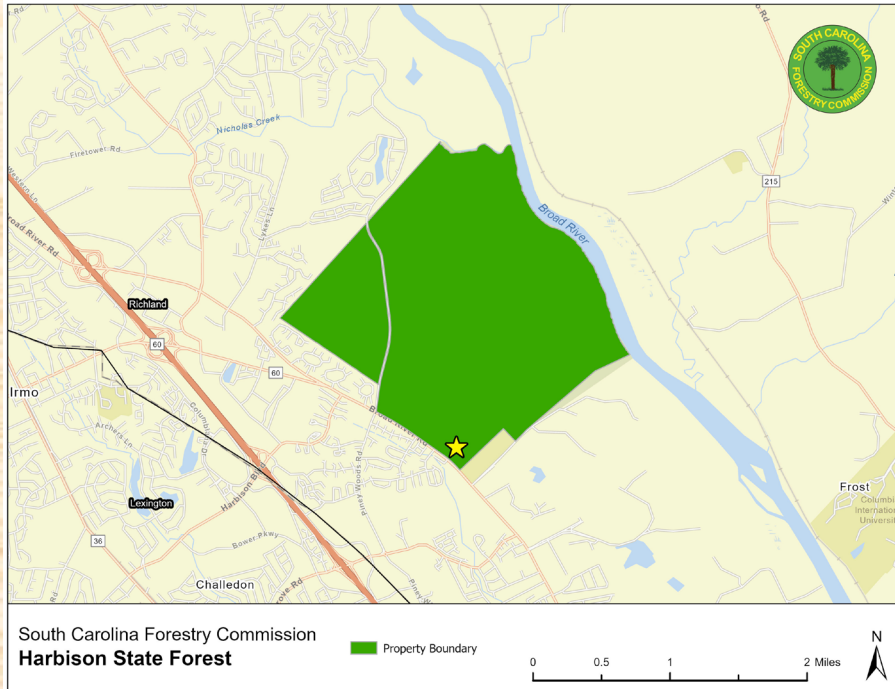
- Established in 2000
- Pickens County
- Recreation: hunting, fishing, hiking



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings



Harbison State Forest – 2,176 acres

- Purchased in 1945
- Columbia/Richland County
- One of largest greenspaces in city limits
- Environmental Education Center
- Recreation: mountain biking, hiking, running, scout camping (30 miles of trails)

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings



Harbison State Forest – 2,176 acres

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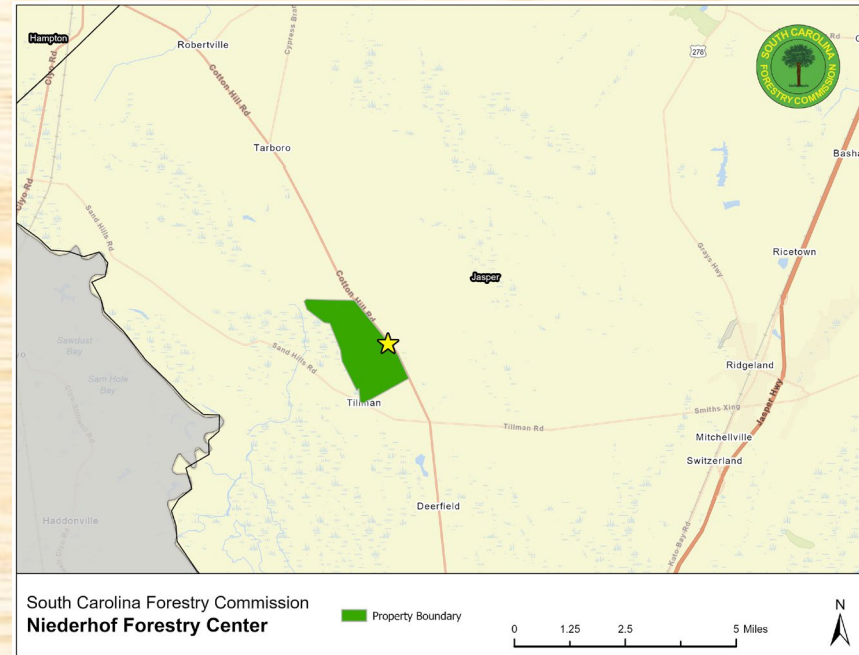
FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

Niederhof Forestry Center— 1,596 acres

- Established in 1983
- Jasper County
- Seed orchards and cone processing facility
- Recreation: specialty hunts



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

Niederhof Forestry Center— 1,596 acres

- Established in 1983
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FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

Niederhof Forestry Center— 1,596 acres

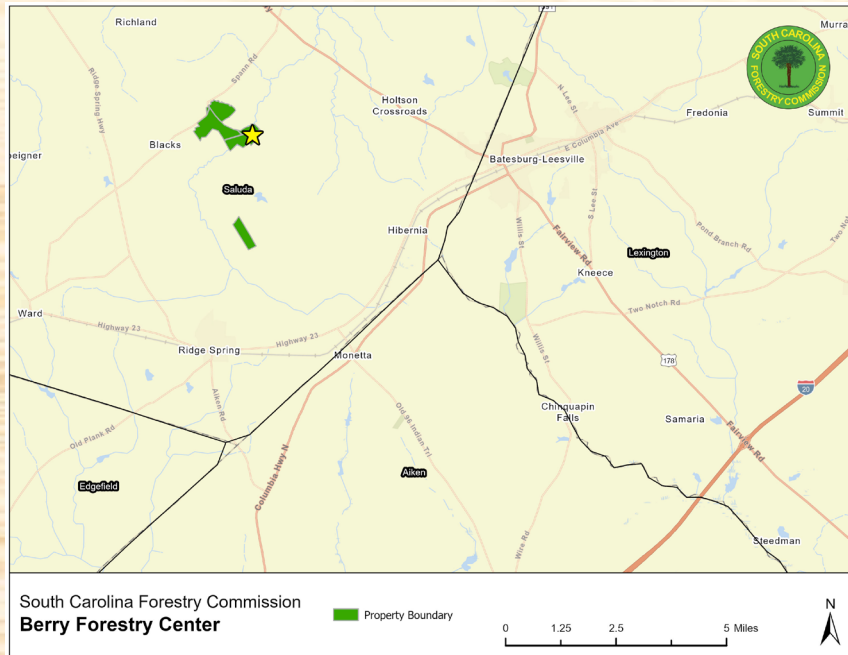
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- Seed orchards and cone processing facility
- Recreation: specialty hunts



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings



Berry Forestry Center – 567 acres

- Established in 2021
- Saluda County
- Donated by Eugene Berry

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings



Berry Forestry Center – 567 acres

- Established in 2021
- Saluda County
- Donated by Eugene Berry

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

State forests are third-party certified



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 5: Manage state forests and other SCFC landholdings

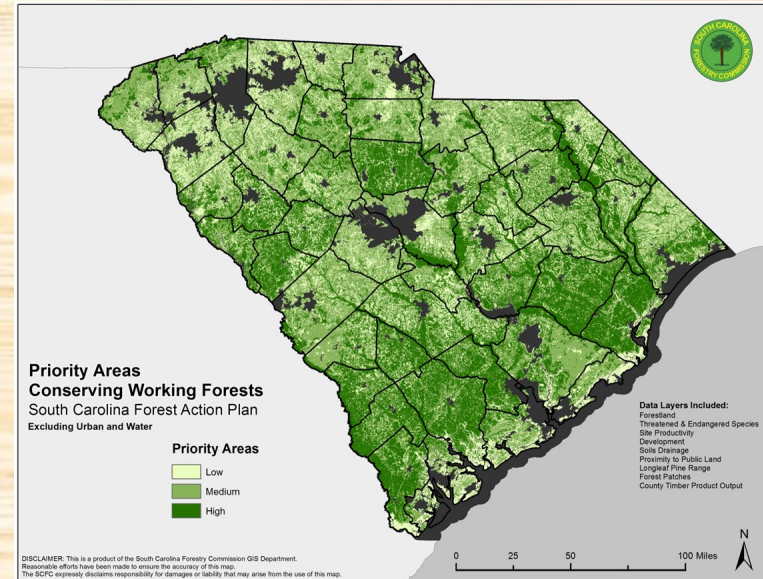
Land Acquisitions

What are we looking for?

- Inholdings and adjacent Lands
- Priority Forest Lands
- New State Forest

Who are we working with?

- SC Conservation Bank
- State Conservation Agencies
- SC Land Trusts and Other Conservation Groups



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 6 : Provide forestry/expertise to other agencies

- SCFC provides forest management assistance to other state and federal agencies such as:
 - SC Department of Natural Resources
 - SC Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism
 - SC Department of Corrections
 - John de la Howe
 - USDA Forest Service
 - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - USDA Farm Service Agency
 - US Fish & Wildlife Service

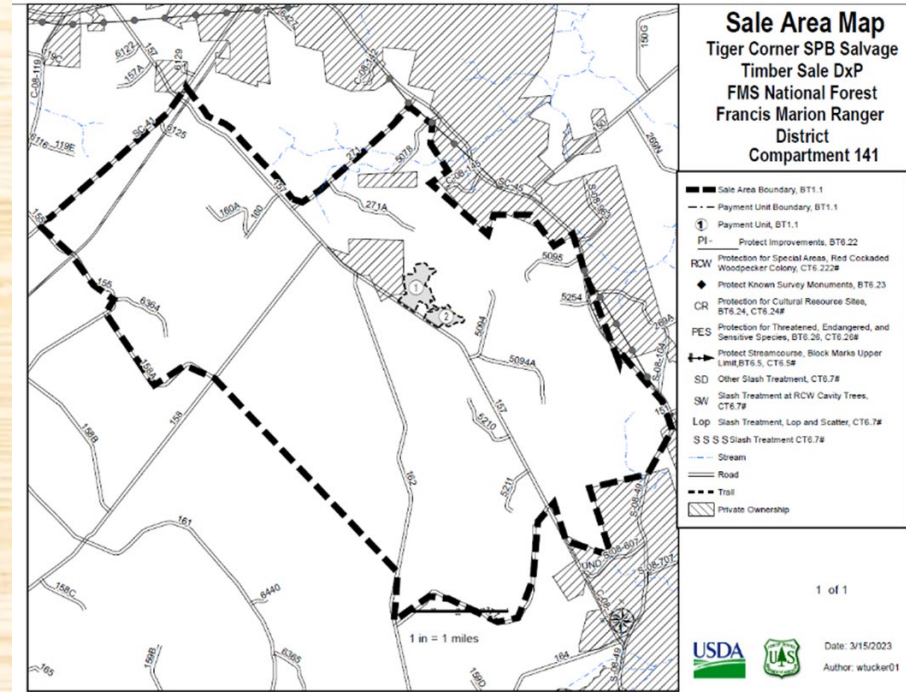
FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 6 : Provide forestry/expertise to other agencies

Good Neighbor Authority







- Master Agreement
- Supplemental Agreement – Francis Marion NF
 - Timber sales
 - Tree planting
 - SPB salvage
 - Road Work



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Program Metrics

5-Yr Avg	\$1,097,776.14	74%	12,726	8%	11	5
	Net Annual Carry Forward	% Timber Harvested	Acres Pine Straw Harvested	RCW Active Cluster Increase	Community Involvement Events	Other Agency Projects
19	\$895,127.64	63%	12,104	2%	10	3
20	\$1,118,502.77	53%	14,202	2%	11	2
21	\$944,825.14	53%	14,593	22%	13	1
22	\$1,688,835.43	80%	17,819	8%	10	4
23	\$841,589.70	120%	4,911	5%	10	17
						

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Challenges

State Forests/State Lands

- Attaining strategic plan goals for state forests
 - Forest technician vacancies – agency recently reclassified and adjusted salaries for these positions, which should improve recruitment and retention
 - Forest markets drive revenue – we make effort to sell products at the most opportune times

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 7: Monitor and address forest health issues

- Insect & Disease staff handle a variety of issues.
 - SCFC foresters and landowners report forest pests
 - I&D personnel examine tissue samples
 - Staff carry out aerial surveys



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 7: Monitor and address forest health issues

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 - SCFC foresters and landowners report forest pests
 - I&D personnel examine tissue samples
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FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 7: Monitor and address forest health issues

Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) – SC's most destructive insect pest - last outbreak (1999-2003) - over \$300 million loss of pine timber

SCFC's strategies:

- Monitor SPB population through pheromone trapping.
- Outreach/training for landowners and foresters
- SPB cost-share program



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 7: Monitor and address forest health issues

Forest Health staff help control invasive species

Cogongrass



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 7: Monitor and address forest health issues

Forest Health staff help control invasive species



Emerald Ash Borer



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 7: Monitor and address forest health issues

Forest Health staff help control invasive species



**Asian longhorned
beetle**



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 7: Monitor and address forest health issues



- Forest health staff also assist:
 - Christmas tree growers
 - forest tree seedling nurseries
 - seed orchards
 - municipalities

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Program Metrics – FY23

Forest Health

- Acres receiving southern pine beetle prevention treatments – 2,421
- Hours of forest health training – 111
- Number of people reached by forest health messaging - 849
- Percent of state surveyed for forest health concerns – 10%
- Number of site visits conducted/phone calls responded to - 173

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Challenges

Forest Health

- Funds to help communities remove hazard trees
- Funding for interns



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 8: Provide urban & community forestry services



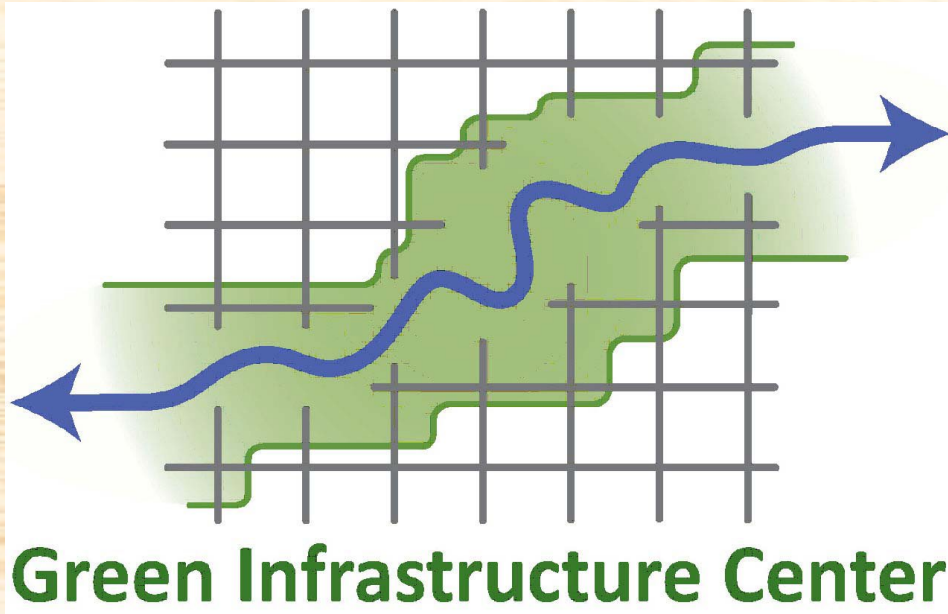
SCFC urban foresters help with:

- Urban forest inventories and management plans
- Tree ordinances
- Grant project implementation
- Tree City USA program
- Tree selection, installation and care

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 8: Provide urban & community forestry services



- SCFC partners with communities to incorporate “green infrastructure” in their planning for future growth
- Statewide Green Infrastructure Plan

FOREST MANAGEMENT



Charge 8: Provide urban & community forestry services

- Urban and forest management is critical for healthy and sustainable living
- Urban forests provide multiple benefits:
 - Carbon sequestration
 - Stormwater mitigation
 - Reduced cooling costs
 - Higher home values
 - Air and noise filtration



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Program Metrics – FY23

Urban Forestry

- 3,509,835 Citizens served
- 43 Tree City USAs
- 1,170 Urban forestry training hours
- 286 Training hours for planners



FOREST MANAGEMENT



Challenges

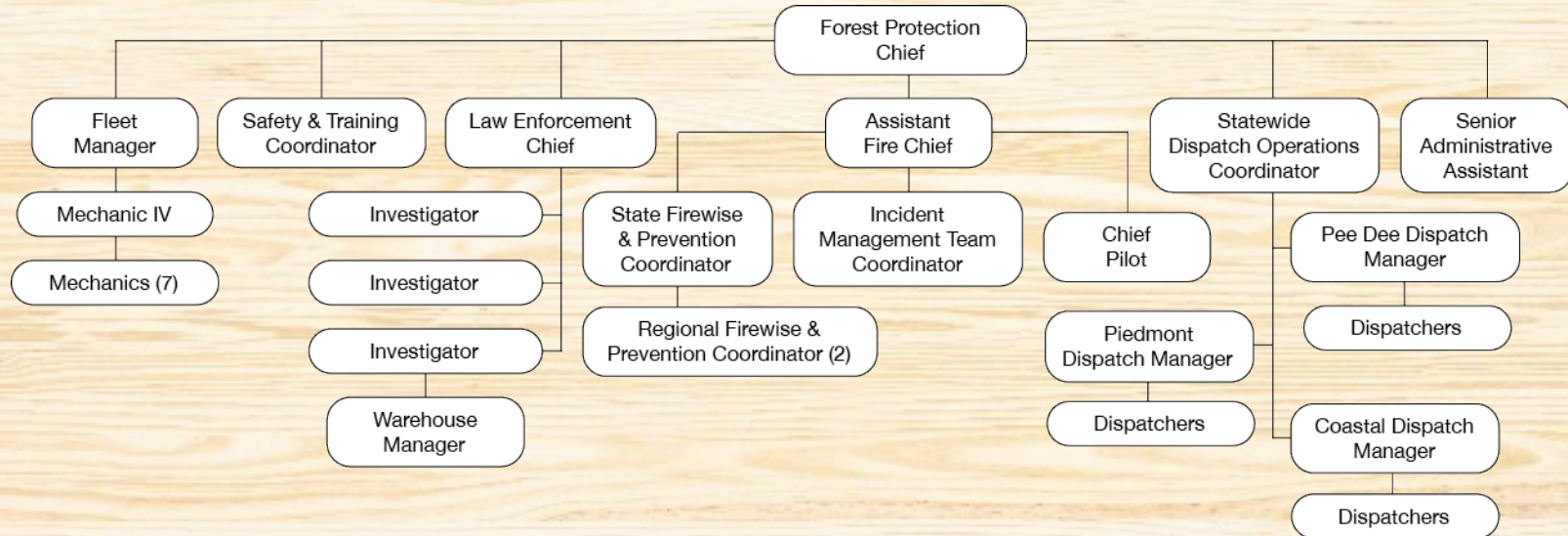
Urban Forestry

- Unable to recruit a registered forester for Pee Dee Urban Forester, so removed this requirement. FY24 funding improved compensation, which should help with future recruitment as well as retention of current staff.

FOREST PROTECTION



Organizational chart



FOREST PROTECTION



Charges

1. Respond to wildfires
2. Prevent wildfires / decrease wildfire risk
3. Document and authorize burning notifications
4. Enforce forest laws; investigate wildfires and forest-related crimes
5. Educate public about prescribed burning and smoke management guidelines
6. Respond to disasters
7. Administer federal property and assistance programs



FOREST PROTECTION



Links to SCFC Strategic Plan

Goal 2: Protect Forests From Harm

- Strategy 1
 - Ensure prompt and effective response to wildfires and other disasters in an increasingly complex environment
- Strategy 2
 - Develop and deliver innovative prevention programs that reduce wildfire risks to forests and communities
- Strategy 3
 - Deliver law enforcement services to reduce wildfire risks, illegal dumping, and forest product theft and fraud

FOREST PROTECTION



Links to SCFC Strategic Plan

- Average Wildfire Response Time
 - For FY 23, the average wildfire response time was 37.84 minutes
 - The desired wildfire response time is 38 minutes
- Wildfire Prevention Index
 - Target value for this index in FY 23 was 4.0
 - Actual value was 8.48, largely driven by the success of the Cancel Wildfires SC campaign

FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 1: Respond to wildfires

- SCFC is the lead agency for wildfire suppression on 13+ million acres of forested and agricultural land in South Carolina, using highly trained wildland firefighters and specialized equipment and techniques.
- In cooperation with local fire departments, the SCFC suppresses approximately 2,000 fires that burn roughly 16,000 acres in an average year.



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 1: Respond to wildfires

- Wildland Firefighters suppress fires utilizing a fleet of 160 bulldozers, wildland fire engines and 10 fixed-wing aircraft
 - On-ground personnel provide direct suppression and command & coordination of resources
 - Aircraft increase safety for firefighters on the ground



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 1: Respond to wildfires

- Wildfire response is initiated by dispatchers using a computer-aided dispatch system via a statewide radio network
- Regional dispatch centers operate daily to manage call volume
- Pee Dee Dispatch operates 24/7, taking over the whole state at night
- Dispatchers respond to more than 39,000 calls each year, including wildfire reports, arson, smoke complaints, LE requests, and burn notifications



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 1: Respond to wildfires

SCFC maintains 10 fixed-wing aircraft

- All are on loan from the USFS
- Aircraft help locate fires in remote areas
- Once a fire is located, aircraft enhance safety for firefighters on the ground
 - Watch for obstacles or locate ingress/egress routes
 - Monitor fire behavior
- Support other agency and state missions
- In FY 23, SCFC aircraft flew 231 missions for 534.5 hours



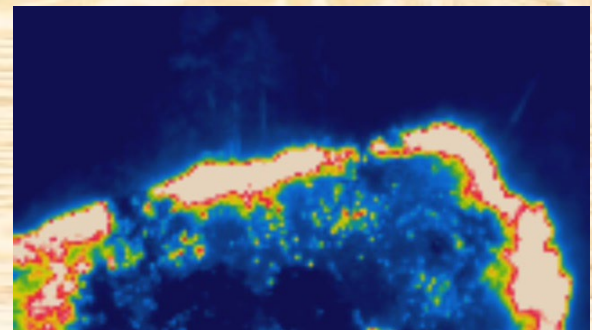
FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 1: Respond to wildfires

UAS Program

- SCFC is scaling up drone program
 - Currently there are 10 FAA certified drone pilots (10 additional in training)
 - 18 drones currently
 - Most drones have thermal cameras to identify heat sources and provide intelligence during fire suppression
 - SCFC has two drones with the capability to ignite burnouts and prescribed burns
 - Drones are also used for mapping, forest health assessments, and tower inspections



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 1: Respond to wildfires

How we fight wildfires

- The primary tool to create firebreaks is a tractor plow unit, consisting of a modified bulldozer equipped with a fire plow and blade. These units allow firefighters to rapidly create firebreaks near the fire, while protecting the firefighter from direct contact with the heat and flames.
- In mountainous areas where tractor plow units cannot operate, hand crews of firefighters use tools such as fire rakes, pulaskis and shovels to construct firebreaks.
- In wet areas, low ground pressure equipment, including firetracks, is used to deliver water. Drip torches are also used to widen firebreaks by burning out fuels between the break and the oncoming fire.



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 1: Respond to wildfires

Air operations

- Aircraft are used to help locate wildfires and are also used as an eye in the sky to improve safety when firefighters are working. When special situations arise, aerial tankers and helicopters are available from other sources to assist by dropping water on fires.

Dispatch operations

- The agency's three state-of-the-art, computer-aided dispatch centers not only notify closest available personnel for wildfire response, but also coordinate firefighters, equipment and other personnel during every incident.



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 1: Respond to wildfires

Repair Shops

- SCFC maintains a network of 5 repair shops, staffed with 8 mechanics
- Mechanics are highly mobile and perform field repairs when breakdowns happen during wildfire suppression
- Complex repairs and routine maintenance are completed in shops



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 2: Prevent wildfires and Reduce Risk

- Fire prevention staff identify communities with significant wildfire risk (via SouthWRAP) and work with community leaders and fire departments to create Community Wildfire Protection Plans designed to reduce wildfire risk
- Agency firefighters conduct statewide and local fire prevention efforts to promote safe outdoor burning and raise awareness of wildfire risk

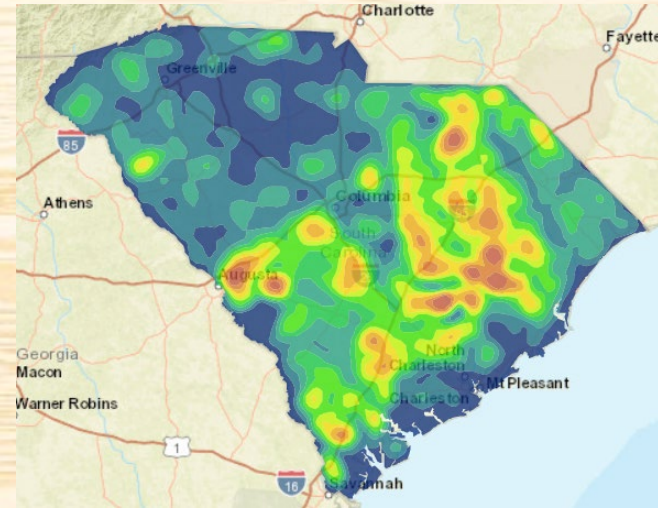


FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 2: Prevent wildfires

- Enforcement of outdoor burning laws is a primary tool used to reduce careless debris burns, the #1 cause of wildfires in the state
- In addition to Fire Management Officers enforcing these laws as they investigate wildfires, fire prevention is targeted using GIS and fire occurrence data
- USFS study determined that for every \$1 spent on wildfire prevention, \$35 in suppression cost is saved



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 3: Document and authorize burning notifications

State law requires that citizens who live outside of city/town limits notify the Forestry Commission before burning outdoors.

There are three types of outdoor burns for which the Forestry Commission takes notifications:

- Residential yard debris burns
- Forestry, wildlife and agricultural burns (also known as prescribed, or controlled, burns)
- Construction-related/land-clearing burns



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 3: Document and authorize burning notifications

(cont'd)

- Automated phone system captures notifications for residential debris burns and construction-related/land clearing burns
 - Toll-free numbers provided for each county
 - Online notification system was added to website recently
- Dispatchers take notifications for prescribed burns via phone to assess appropriate weather conditions, fuel loads, smoke-sensitive areas, and risk and authorize burns that comply with Smoke Management Guidelines



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 3: Document burning notifications (exceptions)

- In 2021, the South Carolina Forestry Commission sought a change in the state law governing the kinds of fires for which citizens in unincorporated areas must make notification.
- The change to the “notification & precautions law,” as it is commonly called, specifies that fires in grills, portable outdoor fireplaces, permanent fire pits and chimineas are exempt from the notification rules (SC 48-35-55).



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 5: Public education: Rx burning/smoke management

- SCFC actively promotes prescribed burning as one of the best forest management tools and fuel management techniques
- SC Prescribed Fire Act (SC 48-34-10) established Certified Prescribed Fire Management (CPFM) program to provide certified burners liability protection
- SCFC provides CPFM training to at least 4 times each year
- SCFC personnel work with partner agencies to provide "Learn To Burn" events for forest landowners



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 4: Enforce forest laws, investigate wildfires, crimes

- SCFC's enabling legislation provided for burning and timber-related law enforcement functions to safeguard the state's valuable natural resources and the health and property of citizens:
 - Arson; careless, negligent outdoor burning; notifications & precautions violations
 - Timber theft/fraud; mill ticket/contract disputes, other forest product theft
 - Enforcement of game & fish laws on State Forests



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 4: Enforce forest laws & investigate wildfires, crimes

- Other LE duties:
 - Provide Officers to assist with coastal evacuations for hurricanes and security missions after natural disasters to support SLED and DPS
 - Assist other LE agencies
 - marijuana eradication efforts
 - complex arson cases
 - litter enforcement
 - search and rescue missions



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 4: Enforce forest laws & investigate wildfires, crimes

- In FY 23, SCFC Officers:
 - Prosecuted:
 - 35 Fire Cases
 - 54 State Forest Regulation cases
 - 7 Miscellaneous case
 - 104 Game & Fish cases
 - Investigated 124 Timber Theft/Fraud cases with losses of \$676,722
 - Conducted 319 Fire Investigations
 - Issued 141 Warning Tickets



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 5: Public education: Rx burning/smoke management

(cont'd)

- SCFC fire staff work with the SCDHEC to administer South Carolina's Smoke Management Guidelines for Vegetative Debris Burning Operations
- These regulations allow land managers to use prescribed burning as a tool to:
 - manage the accumulation of fuel that contributes to wildfires
 - maintain wildlife habitat
 - prepare sites for reforestation
 - facilitate agricultural plantings



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 5: Public education: Rx burning/smoke management (cont'd)

- As the agency with authority to regulate air quality, DHEC sets limits on smoke production daily, based on atmospheric conditions. SCFC uses these limits and the Smoke Management Guidelines to authorize prescribed fires through our Dispatch Centers
- In FY 23, the SCFC Dispatch received 9,675 notifications for forestry, wildlife, and agriculture burns



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 6: Respond to natural disasters

- SCFC manages the only Type II Incident Management Team (IMT) in the state, with dozens of agency personnel filling the full spectrum of Incident Command System (ICS) positions
- Type II IMTs are all-hazard or wildland teams whose personnel meet the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and experience requirements for their specific positions
 - ❖ ICS was developed in the 1970s following catastrophic wildfires in California.



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 6: Respond to natural disasters (cont'd)

- SCFC IMT has deployed to large wildfires and other disasters/exercises:
 - Hurricane evacuations (I-26 lane reversals)
 - Flooding & housing missions post-hurricane
 - Landfill search (Seeking Neveah)
 - Planned events
- SCFC holds regular training exercises for and continued recruitment efforts among agency employees



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 6: Respond to natural disasters (cont'd)

- SCFC, with SC State Fire, serves as lead agency for Emergency Support Function 4- Firefighting under the SC Emergency Operations Plan
- Under this plan, SCFC coordinates and mobilizes fire, rescue, and emergency services personnel to respond to wildfire and other disasters
 - SCFC provides debris removal teams, law enforcement assistance, aircraft to support state missions, and the Type II Incident Management Team
 - SCFC Fire Chief is a member of the SC Firefighter Mobilization Committee, the state plan to provide resources to assist any fire department in the state with resources

FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 7: Administer federal property, assistance programs

- In cooperation with USFS, SCFC administers two programs to help fire departments acquire firefighting equipment and vehicles to enhance rural firefighting capacity and response:
 - Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) Program
 - Excess property made available on long-term loan
 - Firefighter Property (FFP) Program
 - Excess property issued to fire departments; equipment becomes their property after program requirements met
- **FY 23: 287 Fire Departments had 560 items in service under these programs, with a total value of over \$18.6M**



FOREST PROTECTION



Charge 7: Administer federal property, assistance programs

- In cooperation with USFS, SCFC administers the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) program, which offers 50/50 matching-fund grants to local fire departments that want to increase their firefighting capacity, especially in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI).
 - Competitive, priority-driven application process
 - Fire departments serving rural communities with a population of 10,000 or fewer residents are eligible
- In FY 23, grants for over \$274,875 were awarded to 80 fire departments

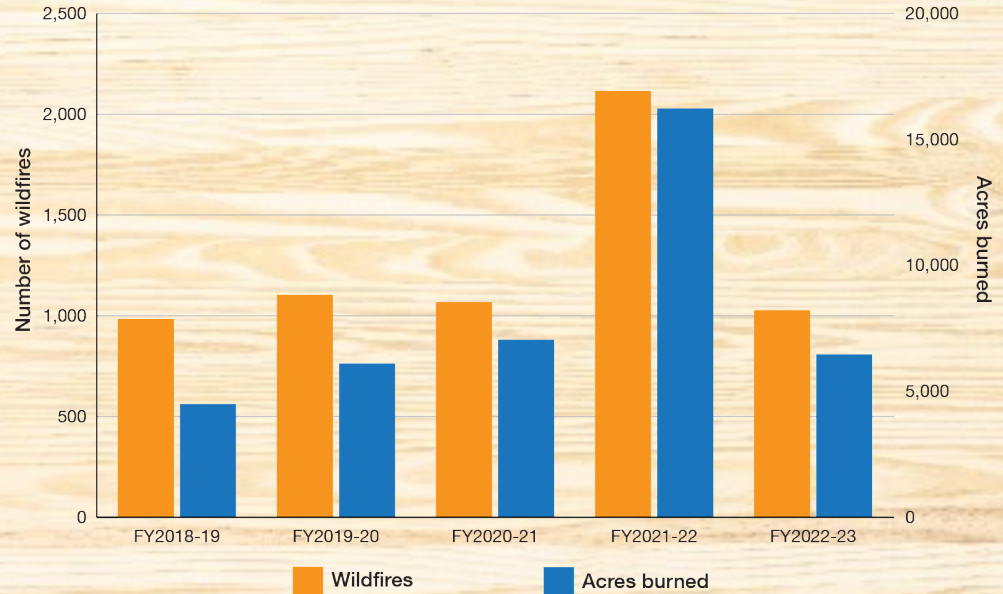


FOREST PROTECTION



Facts, figures and charts – Wildfires (FY23)

- SCFC recorded 1,050 wildfires that burned 6,920 acres
- Wildfires destroyed 13 homes and damaged 8 others. Agency firefighters saved 446 structures directly threatened by wildfires
- 332,179 notifications taken for outdoor debris burns
- 9,675 notifications taken for prescribed burning, covering 433,165 acres

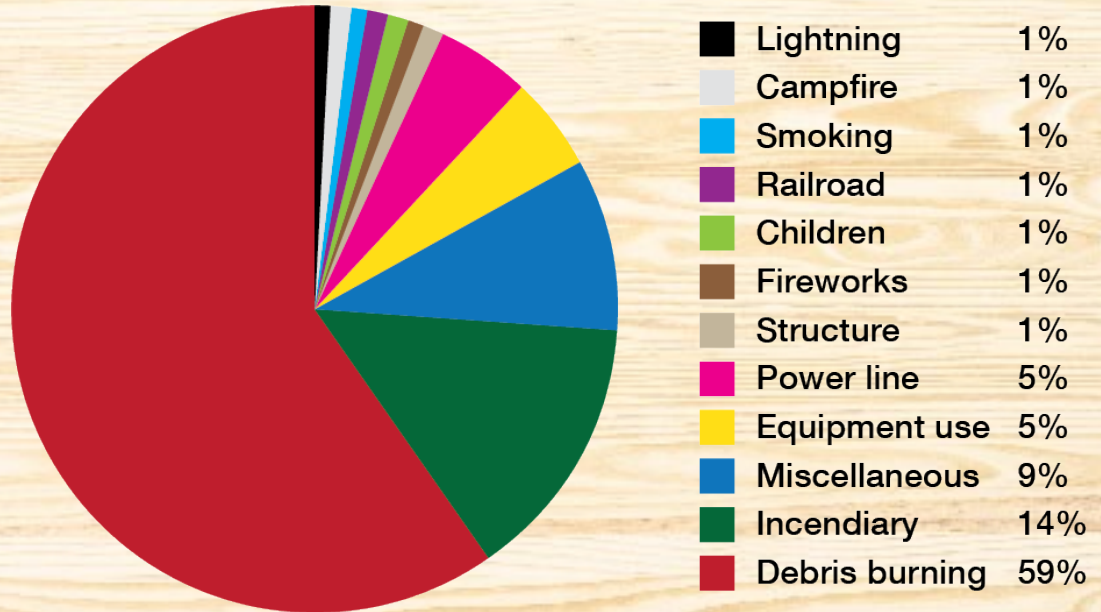


FOREST PROTECTION



Facts, figures and charts – Wildfires (FY23)

- 1,050 wildfires / 6,920 acres burned
- No. 1 cause of wildfires: escaped debris burns (56%)



FOREST PROTECTION



Increased Protection For SCFC Firefighters- Environmental Cab Dozers

- With outstanding support from the Legislature, the SCFC begin acquiring environmental cab dozers in 2012
- At the time, the SCFC had no environmental cab dozers, leaving agency firefighters more exposed to smoke, heat, and hazardous conditions

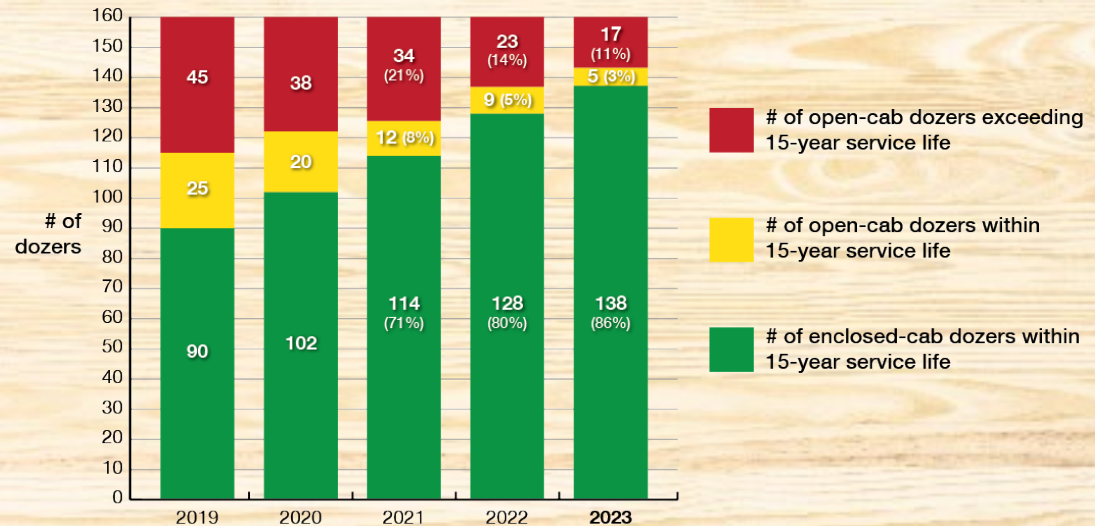


FOREST PROTECTION



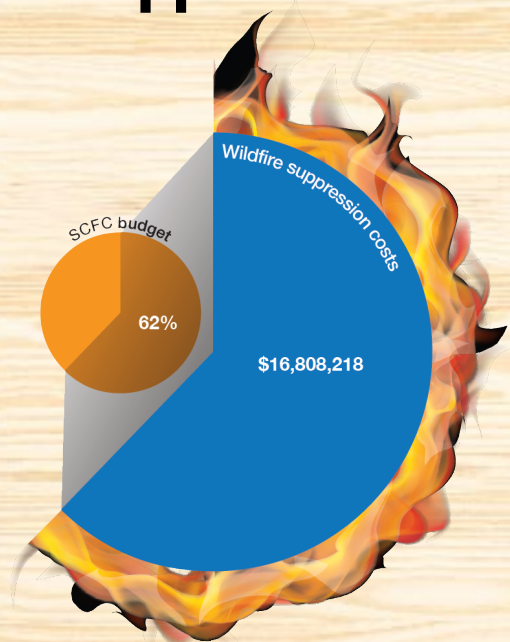
Increased Protection For SCFC Firefighters- Environmental Cab Dozers

- With continued support, the SCFC is on track to complete the conversion to all e-cab dozers by the end of FY 25
- Funding will also allow the SCFC to maintain the desired 15-year service life for front line units



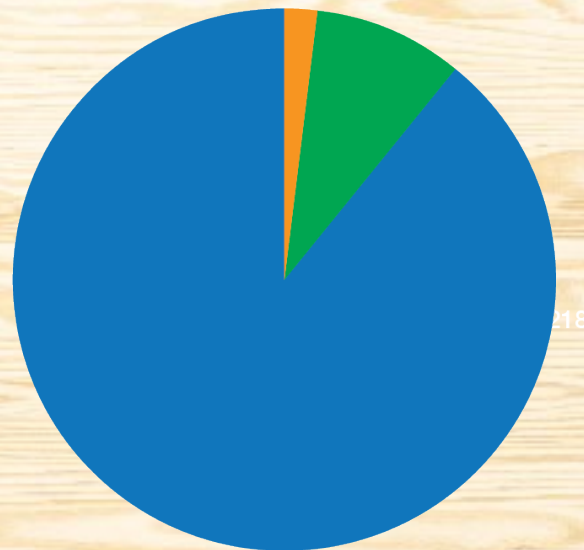
FOREST PROTECTION

Wildfire Suppression Funding (FY23)



Wildfire suppression costs
(\$16,808,219)

SCFC FY2022-23 budget
(\$26,980,219)



State

Federal

Other

FOREST PROTECTION



Public service and outreach

Real-time GIS maps on SCFC website

- Active wildfires map:
 - Location
 - Size
 - Containment status
 - Running annual wildfire stats
- Prescribed burn notifications map:
 - All prescribed burns in the state
 - Acreage
 - Management objective



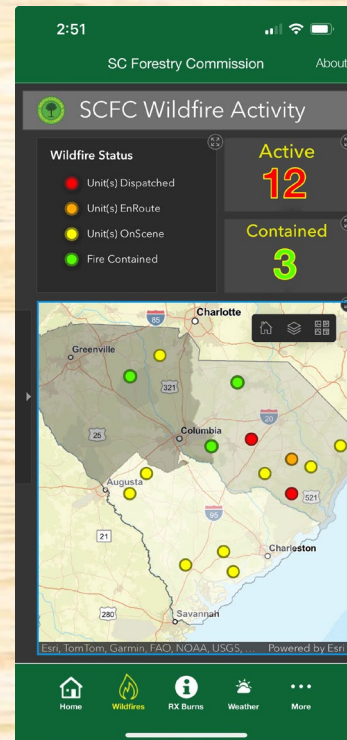
FOREST PROTECTION



Public service and outreach

Mobile wildfire app for smartphones

- Push notifications alert users about burning bans, Red Flag fire alerts and other warnings
- Easy-to-use interface lets users:
 - See all the wildfires and prescribed burns in the state
 - See the day's fire weather
 - Watch our videos on how to conduct legal debris burns, including making notification to the Forestry Commission and taking the proper precautions
 - Report a wildfire or arson



FOREST PROTECTION



Public service and outreach

Cancel Wildfires SC



- Very successful fire prevention effort was launched in October 2021
- Stickers, pins, and other items were produced
- USFS grant funds were used to develop and run public service announcements on both radio and TV for 3 months in 2022 and again in 2023
 - Clemson Coach Dabo Swinney and USC Coach Shane Beamer participated
- During 2022, the ads ran 12,377 times on radio and 7,130 times on TV
- Daily posts were created during Fire Prevention Month in October

FOREST PROTECTION



Notable Successes

- Funding provided to purchase environmental cab firefighting dozers that provide greater protection, and on target to have all frontline units upgraded by the end of FY 25
- Funding secured to have SEATs (single engine amphibious tankers) on contract for 5 years
- Ability to issue warning tickets has been a great tool



FOREST PROTECTION



Notable Successes

- Funding to support employee retention and recruitment for firefighters and law enforcement officers
- SCFC app provides all types of customers with wildfire and prescribed fire information- heavy use by fire departments, media outlets, burners, the general public, and public health officials
- Strong partnerships

SLED

SC National Guard

SC EMD

National Weather Service

Local Fire Departments

USDA Forest Service

US Fish & Wildlife Service

National Park Service

Nature Conservancy

Highway Patrol

SC DOT

County Emergency Management

FOREST PROTECTION



Challenges

- Supply chain issues- long lead times for firefighting dozers and transports to arrive
- Turnover
 - frontline firefighters (competition for CDL drivers)
 - dispatchers
- Salary- Pilots, Mechanics, Dispatchers, Law Enforcement Officers
- Safety- need a dedicated staff position focused on safety for firefighters
- UAS Manager- need dedicated position to expand use
- Aviation funding- almost entirely reliant on US Forest Service grants for operations and maintenance

FOREST PROTECTION



Challenges

- Dispatch software challenges- costs and developing new technology
- EPA Changes to air quality rules that will require changes to Smoke Management Guidelines and may limit the use of prescribed fire
- No statewide outdoor burning law related to backyard debris burning in developed areas
 - Notification and Precautions law applies
 - Does not include minimum setbacks from homes, property lines, or roads
 - Multiple counties have passed ordinances related to this, but they are not enforceable by the SCFC
- Increasing Wildland Urban Interface, making fire suppression more complex



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Purpose: To support the sustainable development of SC's forest resource

- The Resource Development Division was formed in July, 2003
- Four program areas are included within Resource Development
- 16 FTE's are included within the four program areas.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Charges

1. Economic Development (2003)
2. Forest Inventory & Analysis (1998)
3. Environmental Management (1993)
4. Nursery & Tree Improvement

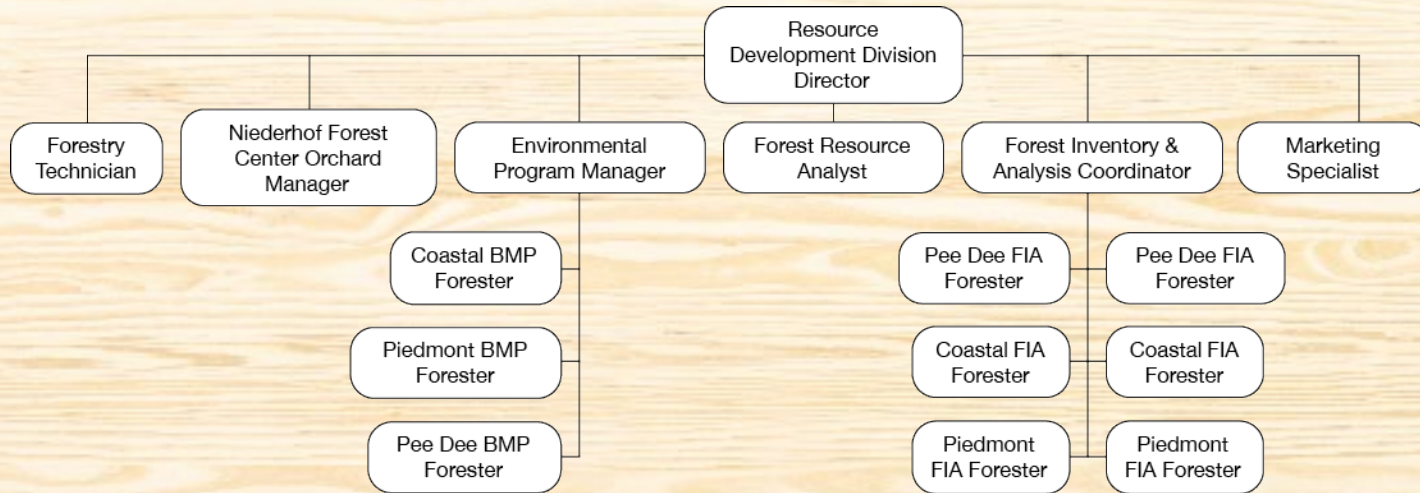
Supply Chain Support

Wood utilization (4th)
Stand growth (2nd)
Stand harvest (3rd)
Stand establishment (1st)

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Organizational Chart



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Program Funding : FY 2024

Economic Development	\$626,480	State funds – 93%
Forest Inventory & Analysis	\$515,205	Federal funds – 73%
Environmental Management	\$405,911	Federal funds – 59%
Nursery & Tree Improvement	\$329,534	Other funds – 79%





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Program Metrics

Goal 1: Enhance Public Benefits from Trees & Forests

- Announced capital investment in forestry
- Announced new job creation in forestry
- Timber products output
- Forest markets development index
- Forest ecosystem benefits index
- Nursery & tree improvement index

Goal 4: Raise Awareness About Our Forests

- FIA progress
- FIA accuracy scores



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA)

To provide forest resource statistics for the state of South Carolina.

- A system of permanently located plots across the entire state that are measured in 20% increments with full inventories every 5 years.
- Data collected is used to report on the status and trends of South Carolina's forests.
- Program is a joint partnership between the U.S. Forest Service – Southern Research Station – FIA Unit and SCFC.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



History and Overview

National Forest Inventory and Analysis

1930 – U.S. Forest Service begins forest survey in Pacific Northwest's Douglas-fir region.

1932 – Forest survey begins in Southern in several Southern states.

1936 – South Carolina's first periodic inventory is completed.

1980's – Program renamed Forest Inventory and Analysis.

1997 – Annualized inventories begin in the South.



1928 – McSweeney-McNary Forest Research Act establishes Forest Survey program in USDA.

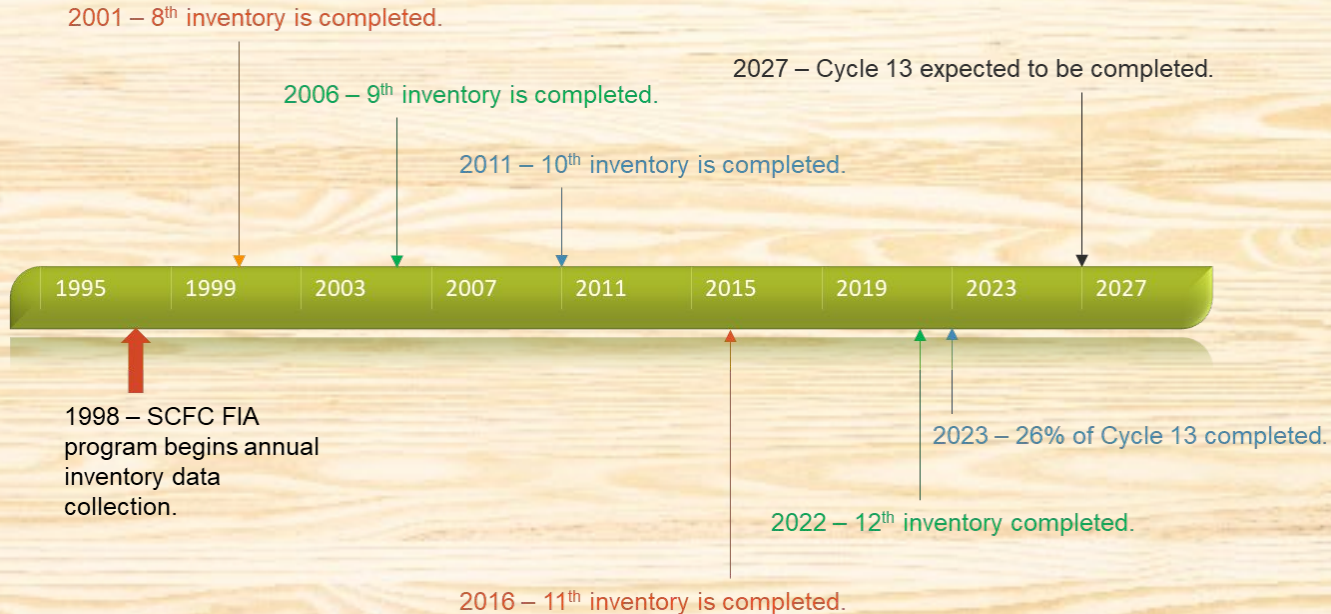
1947 - 1993 – South Carolina periodic inventories 2-7 are completed.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



History and Overview

SCFC Forest Inventory and Analysis

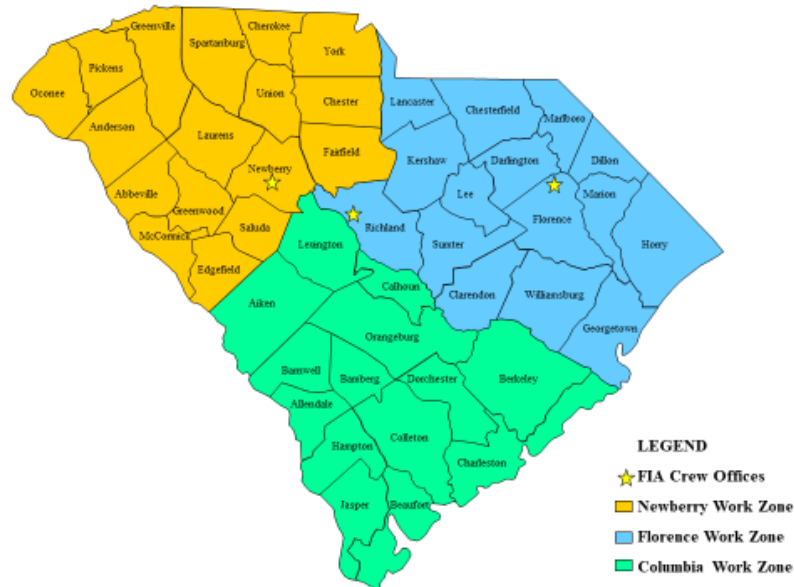


RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA Crew Locations and Work Zones

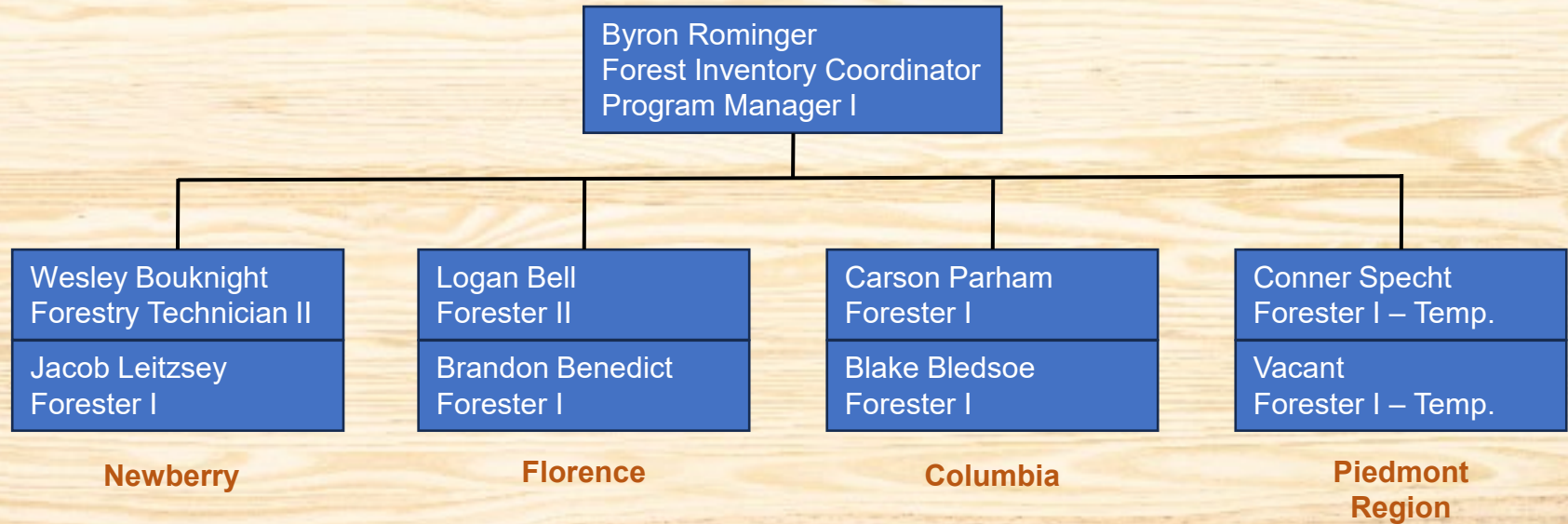
FIA Crew Locations and County Assignments



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA - Staffing





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA Staffing

- Currently fully staffed, 6 FTE's, since June 19, 2023.
- Two temporary grant positions to be filled.
 - 1 temporary grant position filled.
 - Advertising for the remaining 1 temporary grant position.
- Requesting to convert temporary grant positions to FTE's July 1, 2024.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Program Elements

- Core program consists of 3,452 plots that sample all land uses, ownerships, and all forested conditions.
- Data collected is used to report on the following:
 - Area of forestland.
 - Movement of forestland to nonforest and vice versa.
 - Standing tree volume.
 - Tree growth, removals, and mortality.
 - Abundance and movement of invasive non-native species.
 - Additional forest and ecological attributes.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Program Elements

- Forest health plots.
- A subset of plots at 1/16th of the regular FIA plot grid that are measured during the summer growing season to collect attributes pertaining to forest health.
 - Tree crown ratios
 - Crown dieback
 - Down Woody Material



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Program Elements

- An additional 224 plots are located on the Sumter and Francis Marion National Forests and are 2 times the intensity of the regular FIA plots located on the national forests.
 - SCFC FIA data collection for national forest intensification plots have been suspended and returned to the U.S. Forest Service due to program being understaffed.
 - SCFC FIA program plans to resume data collection once production deficits are recovered, and staffing levels are adequate to maintain production rates.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Program Elements

- Harvest Utilization Studies
 - Field data collected on between 15-18 active logging sites each year by product class and location, in relation to South Carolina's primary wood-producing mills.
 - Data is used to estimate the amount of:
 - Over and under-utilization of harvested wood.
 - Merchantability of harvested wood.
 - Logging residue estimates of unutilized wood.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

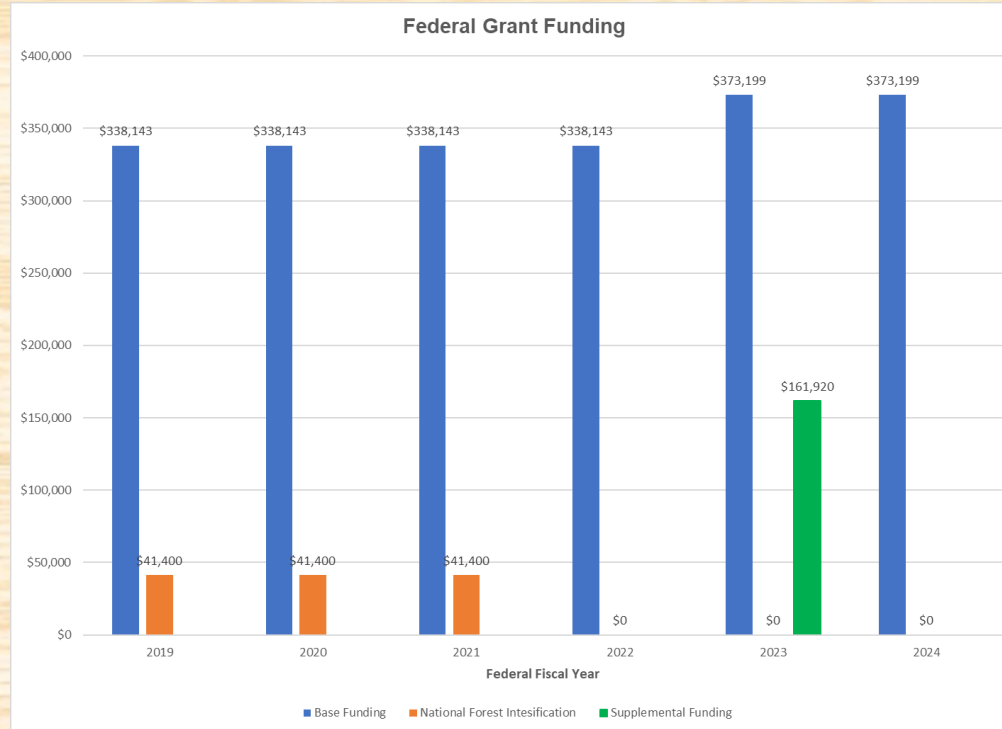


FIA – Funding

- Funding is based on 75% percent federal funding grant from the U.S. Forest Service – Southern Research Station – FIA Unit.
- Grant is matched 25% with state appropriated funds.

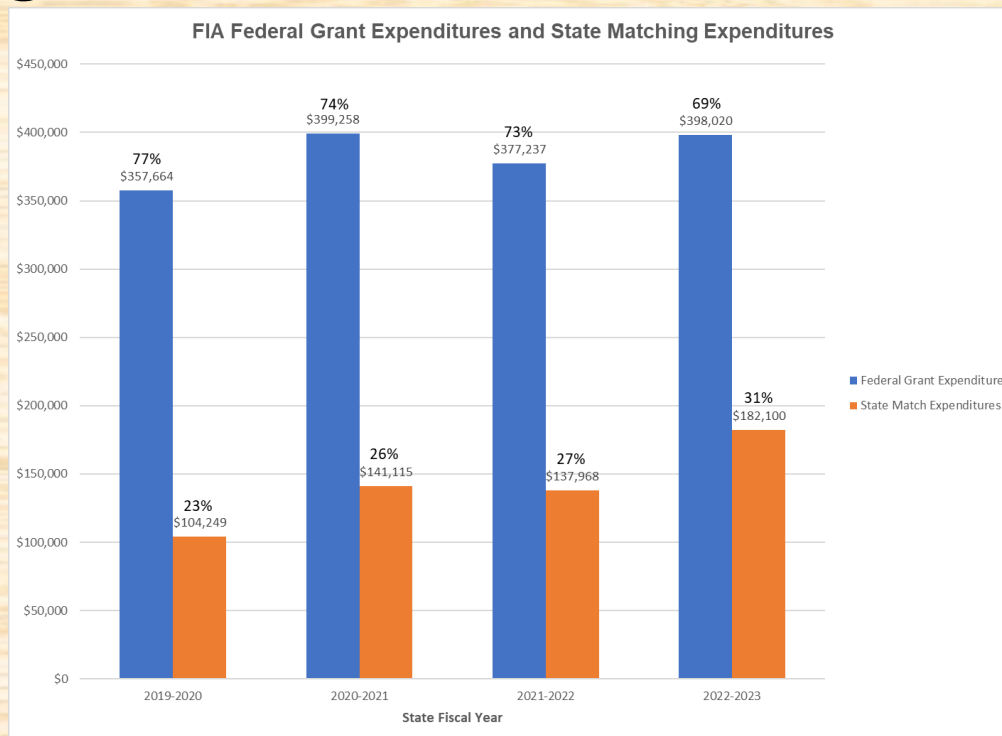
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

FIA – Funding



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

FIA – Funding





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA – Accomplishments

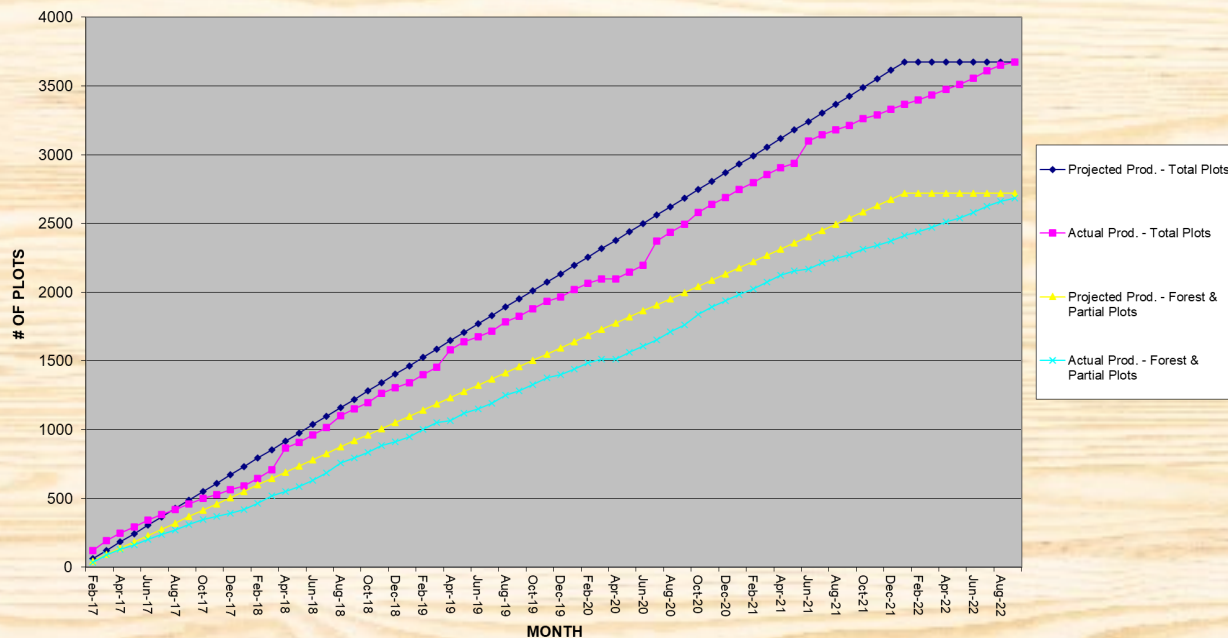
- Plot production
 - Program sets a goal of measuring a full cycle every 5 years.
- Accuracy
 - Program sets a yearly accuracy goal of an average of 95%.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA – Accomplishments - Production

Cycle 12 - 5 Year Measurement Period (Including NFX)

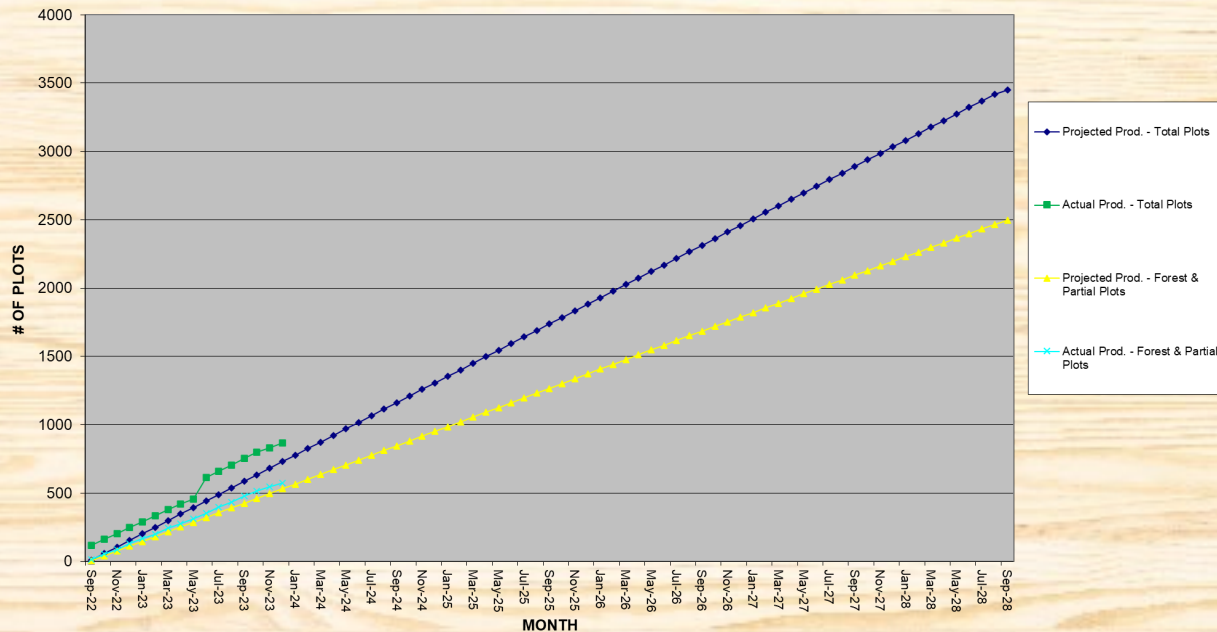


RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA – Accomplishments - Production

Cycle 13 - 6 Year Measurement Period





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA – Accomplishments - Production

- The FIA Program is currently (December 2023) 10.2 months behind in production.
- Production deficit is calculated from the beginning of the 12th inventory (February 2017) when program was fully staffed and on schedule.
- Production deficits are a result of time it takes to find quality applicants and fill vacancies.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA – Accomplishments - Production

Cycle 12 (includes NF-X Photo)

Year	Month	Subcycle	Pots Collected Per Month	Pots Collected Total	Expected Production for 20%	Number of Pots Ahead or Behind	Number of Months Ahead or Behind
2017	Feb	1	45	45	52	-7	-0.13
2017	Mar	1	76	121	104	17	0.33
2017	Apr	1	51	172	156	16	0.33
2017	May	1	46	218	208	10	0.39
2017	Jun	1	49	267	260	7	0.15
2017	Jul	1	43	310	312	-2	-0.04
2017	Aug	1	37	347	364	-17	-0.33
2017	Sep	1	39	386	416	-30	-0.58
2017	Oct	1	41	427	468	-41	-0.79
2017	Nov	1	38	465	520	-55	-1.25
2017	Dec	1	35	499	572	-73	-1.58
2018	Jan	1	27	517	624	-107	-2.06
2018	Feb	1	55	572	676	-104	-2.00
2018	Mar	1	64	636	728	-92	-1.77
2018	Apr	1/2	45	681	780	-99	-1.90
2018	May	1/2	38	719	832	-113	-2.17
2018	Jun	2	56	775	884	-109	-2.10
2018	Jul	2	54	829	936	-107	-2.06
2018	Aug	2	36	875	988	-113	-2.40
2018	Sep	2	48	923	1040	-117	-2.48
2018	Oct	2	48	971	1092	-121	-2.56
2018	Nov	2	65	1036	1144	-108	-2.31
2018	Dec	2	41	1077	1196	-119	-2.52
2019	Jan	2	38	1115	1248	-133	-2.79
2019	Feb	2	59	1174	1300	-126	-2.65
2019	Mar	2	54	1228	1352	-124	-2.62
2019	Apr	2	17	1245	1404	-159	-3.29
2019	May	2/3	58	1303	1456	-153	-3.17
2019	Jun	3	39	1362	1508	-146	-3.42

2019	Jul	3	30	1421	1560	-139	-2.67
2019	Aug	3	66	1489	1632	-143	-2.37
2019	Sep	3	40	1529	1664	-135	-2.60
2019	Oct	3	56	1585	1716	-131	-2.56
2019	Nov	3	56	1637	1768	-131	-2.52
2019	Dec	3	32	1669	1820	-151	-2.90
2020	Jan	3	55	1722	1872	-150	-2.88
2020	Feb	3	40	1771	1924	-153	-2.94
2020	Mar	3	29	1800	1976	-176	-3.35
2020	Apr	3	0	1800	2028	-228	-4.38
2020	May	3	40	1849	2080	-231	-4.68
2020	Jun	3	51	1900	2132	-232	-4.46
2020	Jul	3/4	56	1954	2184	-230	-4.42
2020	Aug	3/4	62	2016	2236	-220	-4.23
2020	Sep	4	62	2078	2288	-210	-4.04
2020	Oct	4	68	2162	2340	-178	-3.42
2020	Nov	4	91	2223	2392	-169	-3.25
2020	Dec	4	57	2273	2444	-171	-3.29
2021	Jan	4	30	2330	2496	-166	-3.19
2021	Feb	4	40	2379	2548	-169	-3.25
2021	Mar	4	56	2437	2600	-163	-3.13
2021	Apr	4	52	2489	2652	-163	-3.13
2021	May	4	30	2519	2704	-185	-3.56
2021	Jun	4/5	20	2539	2756	-217	-4.17
2021	Jul	5	46	2583	2808	-225	-4.33
2021	Aug	5	37	2620	2860	-240	-4.62
2021	Sep	5	33	2651	2912	-261	-5.02
2021	Oct	5	47	2698	2964	-266	-5.12
2021	Nov	5	30	2728	3016	-288	-5.54
2021	Dec	5	40	2768	3068	-300	-5.77
2022	Jan	5	36	2806	3120	-314	-6.04

Cycle 13 (Standard Plot G&H, No NF-X Photo)

2022	Feb	5	31	2837	3172	-335	-6.44
2022	Mar	5	30	2871	3224	-353	-6.79
2022	Apr	5	45	2914	3276	-362	-6.96
2022	May	5	30	2948	3328	-380	-7.31
2022	Jun	5	46	2996	3380	-384	-7.38
2022	Jul	5	45	3048	3432	-384	-7.38
2022	Aug	5	42	3090	3484	-394	-7.58
2022	Sep	5	25	3113	3536	-423	-8.13
2022	Sep	1	17				
2022	Sep	5/1	40	3153	3588	-435	-8.42
2022	Oct	1	40	3197	3640	-443	-8.50
2022	Nov	1	30	3236	3692	-456	-8.69
2022	Dec	1	40	3280	3744	-464	-8.77
2022	Jan	1	45	3323	3796	-473	-8.88
2022	Feb	1	45	3368	3848	-480	-8.94
2022	Mar	1	45	3413	3900	-487	-9.01
2022	Apr	1	35	3452	3952	-498	-9.19
2022	May	1	37	3489	4004	-515	-9.42
2022	Jun	1/2	45	3534	4056	-522	-9.48
2022	Jul	2	47	3581	4108	-527	-9.51
2022	Aug	2	47	3628	4160	-532	-9.55
2022	Sep	2	40	3677	4212	-535	-9.52
2022	Oct	2	42	3719	4264	-545	-9.65
2022	Nov	2	30	3755	4316	-561	-9.93
2022	Dec	2	35	3788	4368	-580	-10.19

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA – Accomplishments - Production

Cycle 12 (Includes NFX Plots)

Year	Month	Subcycle	Plots Collected Per Month	Plots Collected Total	Expected Production for 20%	Number of Plots Ahead or Behind	Number of Months Ahead or Behind
2017	Feb	1	45	45	52	-7	-0.13
2017	Mar	1	76	121	104	17	0.33
2017	Apr	1	51	172	156	16	0.31
2017	May	1	46	218	208	10	0.19
2017	Jun	1	49	267	260	7	0.13
2017	Jul	1	43	310	312	-2	-0.04
2017	Aug	1	37	347	364	-17	-0.33
2017	Sep	1	39	386	416	-30	-0.58
2017	Oct	1	41	427	468	-41	-0.79
2017	Nov	1	28	455	520	-65	-1.25
2017	Dec	1	35	490	572	-82	-1.58
2018	Jan	1	27	517	624	-107	-2.06
2018	Feb	1	55	572	676	-104	-2.00
2018	Mar	1	64	636	728	-92	-1.77
2018	Apr	1/2	45	681	780	-99	-1.90
2018	May	1/2	38	719	832	-113	-2.17
2018	Jun	2	56	775	884	-109	-2.10
2018	Jul	2	54	829	936	-107	-2.06
2018	Aug	2	86	915	988	-73	-1.40
2018	Sep	2	48	963	1040	-77	-1.48
2018	Oct	2	48	1011	1092	-81	-1.56
2018	Nov	2	65	1076	1144	-68	-1.31
2018	Dec	2	41	1117	1196	-79	-1.52
2019	Jan	2	38	1155	1248	-93	-1.79
2019	Feb	2	59	1214	1300	-86	-1.65
2019	Mar	2	54	1268	1352	-84	-1.62
2019	Apr	2	17	1285	1404	-119	-2.29
2019	May	2/3	58	1343	1456	-113	-2.17

Cycle 12 (Includes NFX Plots)

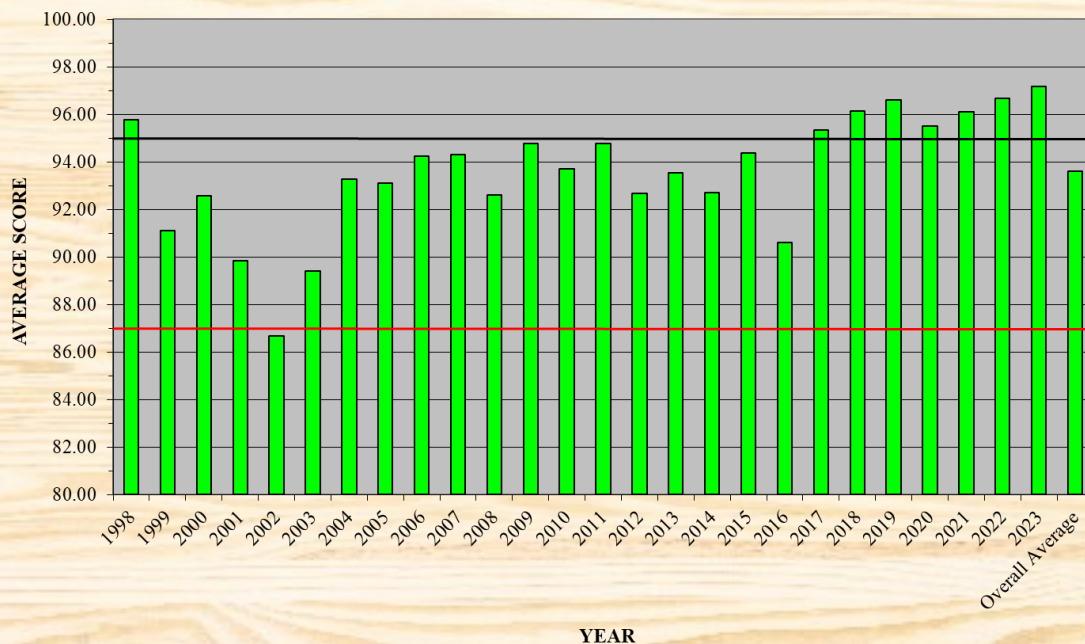
Year	Month	Subcycle	Plots Collected Per Month	Plots Collected Total	Expected Production for 20%	Number of Plots Ahead or Behind	Number of Months Ahead or Behind
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RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA – Accomplishments - Accuracy

SCFC FIA Average Check Cruise Scores





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

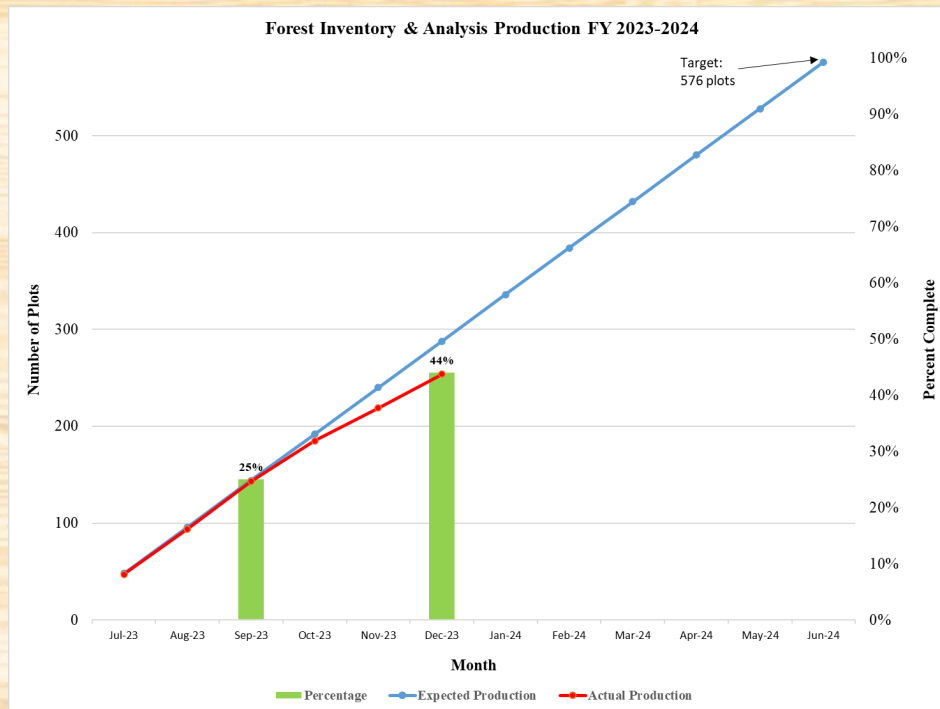


FIA – Strategic Progress Report

- **Goal 4: Raise Awareness About Our Forests**
 - FIA progress: Measure 20% of the total plots per year.
 - FIA accuracy scores: Goal of averaging 95%

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

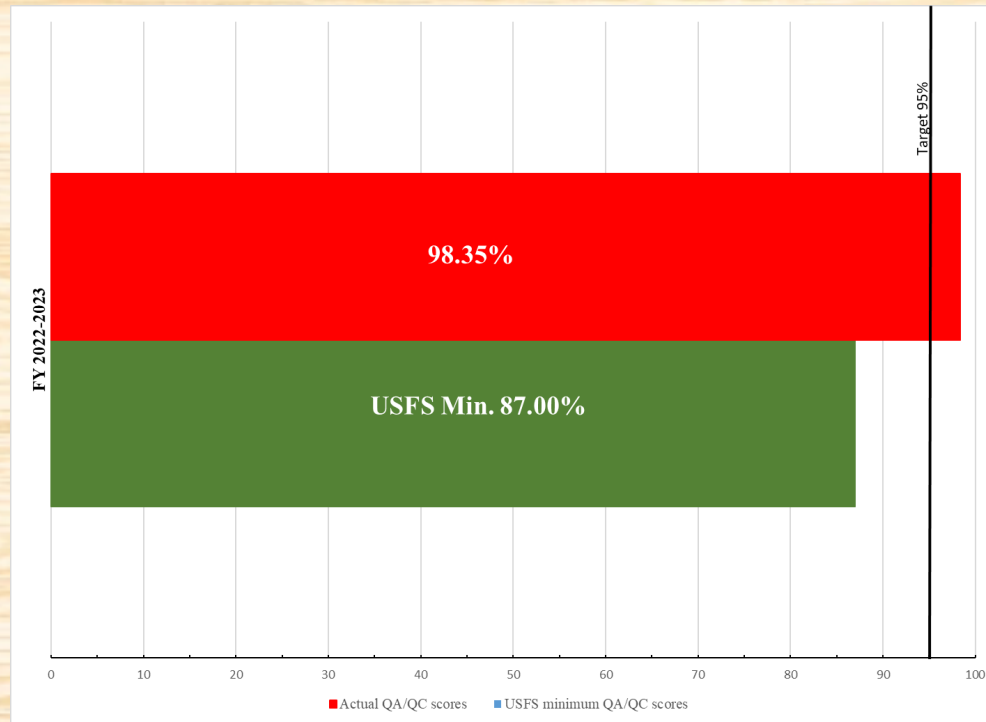
FIA – Strategic Progress Report - Progress



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FIA – Strategic Progress Report - Accuracy





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Purpose: To support the sustainable development of SC's forest resource

- The Economic Development program was re-formed in July, 2003
- The program has grown from one to three FTE's over the past 20 years.
- The current budget for this program is \$626,480 per year.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Staffing

- Tim Adams – Industry recruitment and expansion
- John Barlow – Forest products marketing specialist
- Scott Danskin – Forest resource analyst

Re-established Economic
Development Program
July 1, 2003

Added FTE – Forest
Resource Data Analyst
May 17, 2014

Added FTE – Forest Products
Marketing Specialist
May 18, 2015

2003

2005

2007

2009

2011

2013

2015

2017

2019

2023



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Program Elements

1. Mill directories (primary & secondary)
2. Timber products output mill survey
3. Forest products marketing assistance
4. Economic contribution analyses
5. Industry expansion
6. Industry recruitment
7. Woodbasket analyses
8. Outreach and education



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Funding FY'2024 - \$626,480

- State funds - Salaries & fringe benefits: \$ 385,148
 - Operating funds: \$200,000
- Federal funds – TPO grant: \$ 19,000
 - Wood flow export grant: \$ 22,332

The \$200,000 operating funds are primarily used to purchase replacement vehicles for the FIA and BMP programs as well as farm equipment for NFC. Inbound and outbound trade missions are also funded.

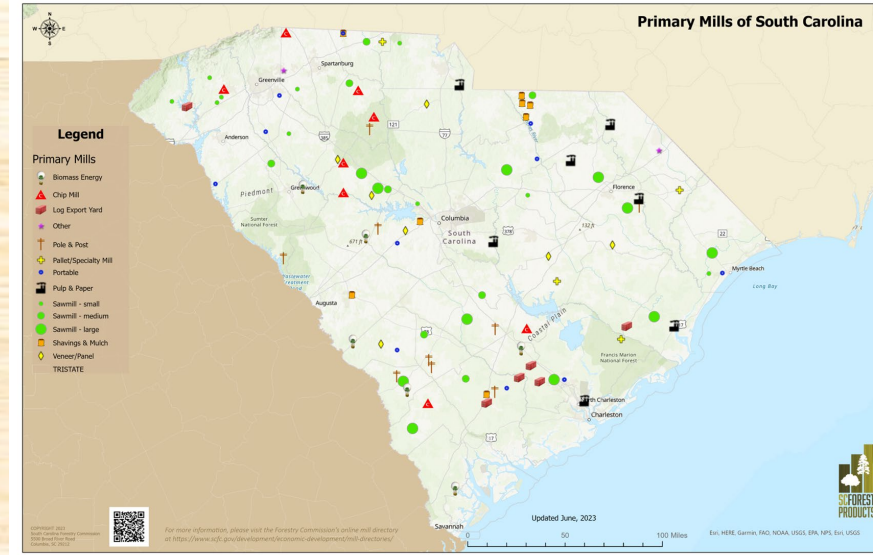
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Major Accomplishments – Mill Directories

- 83 Primary Mills
 - 6 Pulp & Paper mills
 - 28 Sawmills
 - 9 Pole & Post mills
 - 6 Chip mills
 - 8 Veneer & Panel mills
 - 7 Biomass Energy mills
 - + log export, pallet, shavings, specialty, etc.
- 988 Secondary Mills



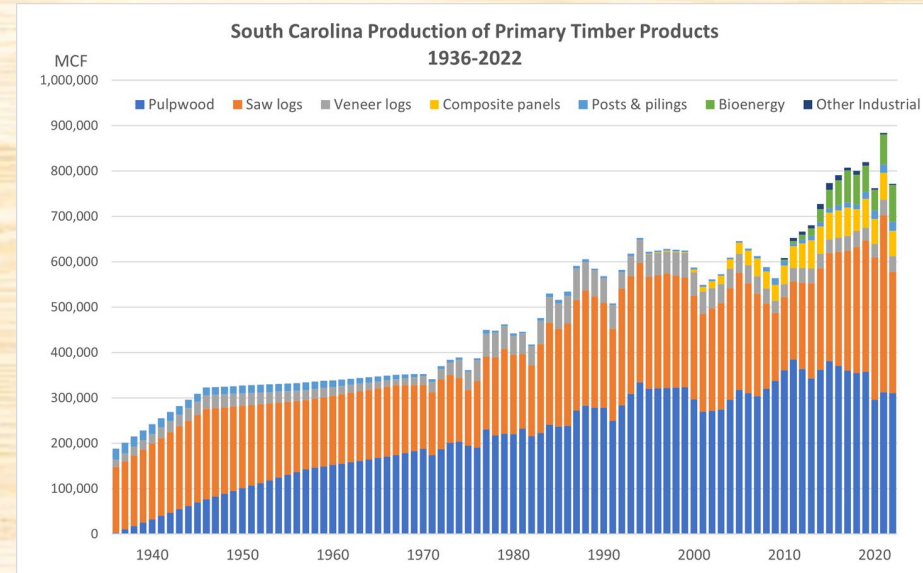
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Major Accomplishments – TPO Survey

- Forest products manufacturing in SC is at near-record highs.
- The total delivered timber value to mills in 2022 was \$1.06 billion USD.
- Sawlogs are SC's leading forest product by delivered value (\$415 million)
- Pulpwood is SC's leading product by volume (311 million cubic feet)
- Oriented-strand board, bioenergy and log export are the newest industry sectors



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Major Accomplishments – Marketing Assistance

- 2023 Vietnam & China inbound trade mission
- 2023 India inbound trade mission – Charleston SC
- 2022 International Woodworking Fair – Atlanta, GA
- 2021 India virtual trade mission
- 2019 Vietnam/India inbound trade mission – Charleston SC
- 2019 Costa Rica outbound trade mission



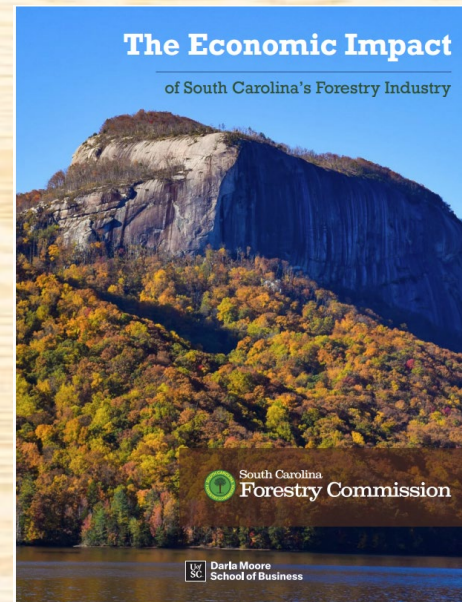
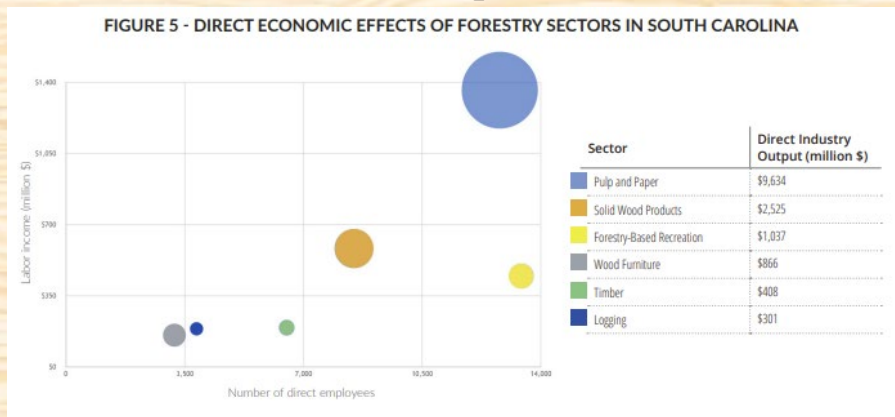
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Major Accomplishments – Economic Contribution Analyses

- In 2020, the forest industry contributed \$23.2 billion to SC's economy. Over 100,000 jobs with labor income of \$5.6 billion are in the forestry sectors.
- Among manufacturing sectors, forestry is #1 in employment, #2 in labor income and #3 in total economic output.

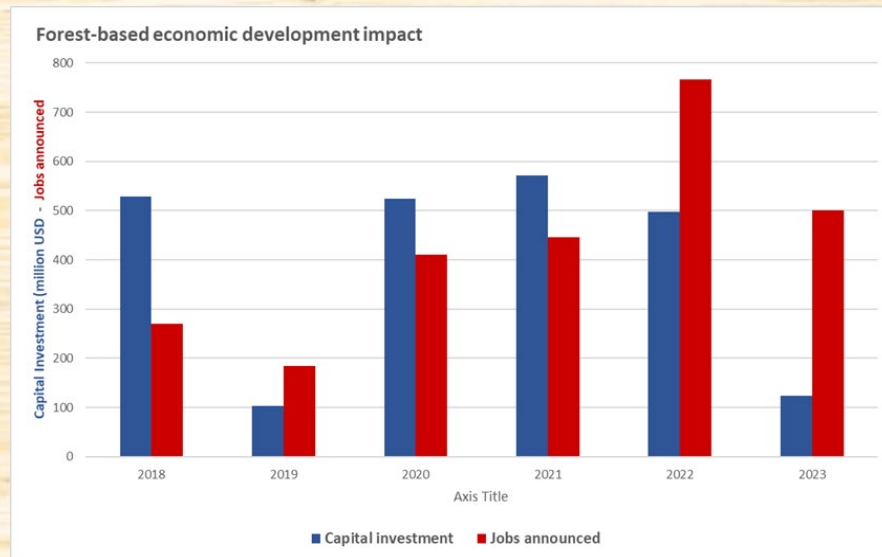
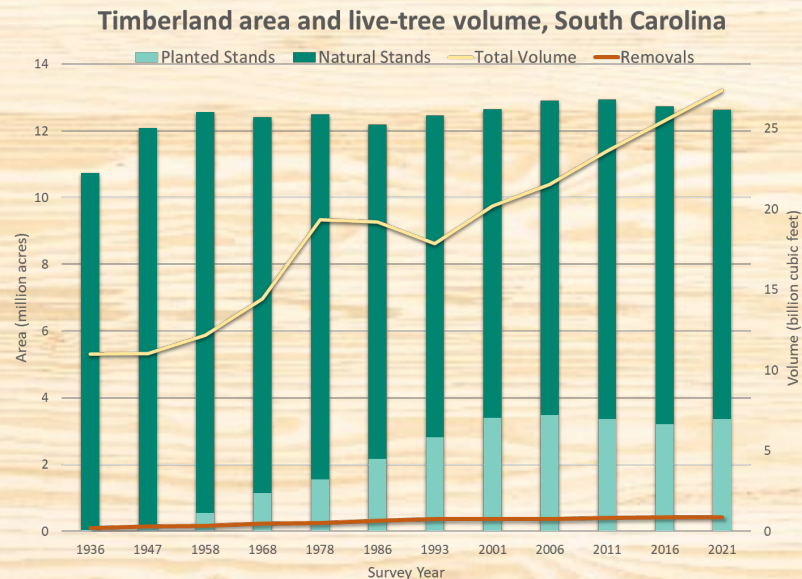


RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Major Accomplishments – Industry Expansion



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Major Accomplishments – Business Assists

In FY 2023, staff made 237 unique business assists.

- Assisted a South Carolina company find a shipper to export Paulownia logs and lumber overseas.
- Responded to a request from a pellet manufacturer for information on the sustainability of our timber resource.
- Surveyed the sawmill industry on their residue markets in order to recruit an HDF plant that manufactures laminate flooring.



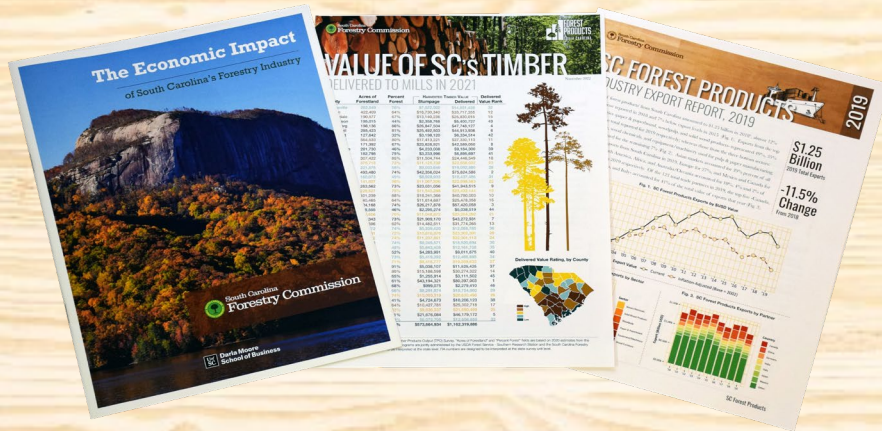
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Major Accomplishments – Outreach and Education

Economic Development staff publishes unique data available online and in print. We are popular speakers at local landowner and forester meetings as well as regional professional conferences.



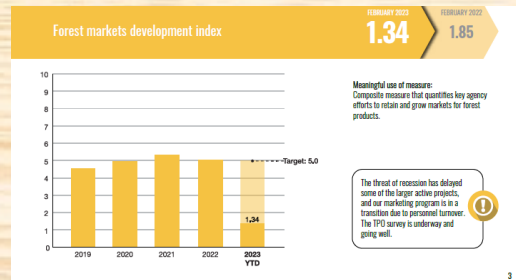
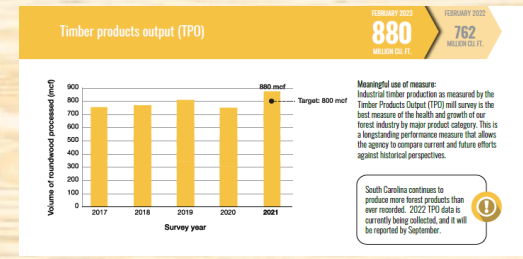
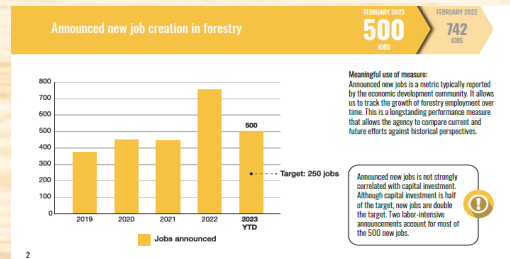
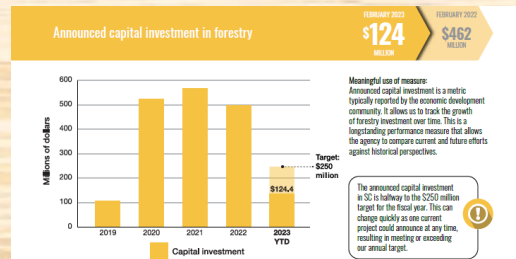
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Strategic Plan Metrics: Goal 1 – Enhance Public Benefits from Trees & Forests

- Three stand-alone metrics and one index measure closely track economic development progress.



- Active economic development projects
- Business assists
- Trade events
- Market publications
- Percent TPO surveys collected

+ Number of presentations



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

Future Plans

- 1st Quarter, 2024 – SC Forest Recovery Task Force to develop strategic plan
- 1st Quarter, 2024 – Workforce development study.
- February, 2024 - Exhibit for SC forest products at India Wood
- April/May, 2024 - Portugal outbound trade mission.
- August, 2024 – Exhibit at the International Woodworking Fair in Atlanta, GA
- September, 2024 – Vietnam/Thailand outbound trade mission
- Ongoing – Industry recruitment

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Primary purpose

To increase awareness and compliance with South Carolina BMPs for Forestry to protect water quality, soil quality and productivity, wildlife habitat, and the aesthetic integrity of the forest during silvicultural activities



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Secondary purpose

To promote the ecosystem services that forests provide, stay abreast of environmental issues, and engage with other state, federal, and private organizations on topics including endangered species, wetlands, water quality and quantity, sustainability, and source water protection.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Program Elements

- Courtesy Exam program
- BMP compliance and implementation monitoring
- Training and outreach programs
- Technical assistance
- BMP Stream Crossing Cost-Share program
- Temporary Logging Bridge Rental Program
- Ecosystem services projects



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Program Elements - Courtesy Exam Program

- SCFC has 4 Forestry BMP Specialists.
- Locate active forestry operations by air, complaint, request, and incidental
- Offer a Courtesy Exam and conduct a site visit.
- Provide technical assistance to comply.
- Answer questions, investigate complaints, and provide recommendations to forestry operators



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Program Elements - BMP Compliance and Implementation Monitoring

- Completed every three years
- Forestry operations are evaluated for BMP compliance
- The results are used to
 - Target training programs, outreach, and technical assistance to seek continuous improvement in BMP compliance and implementation in South Carolina
 - Further advance successful protection of water quality during forestry operations

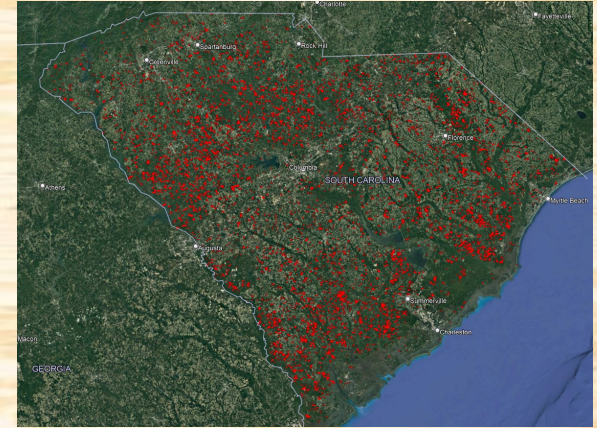
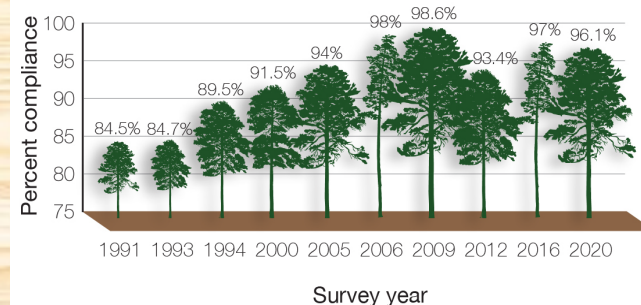


Table 1. Overall harvesting compliance by year



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Program Elements - Training & Outreach

- TOP Logger Initial Training
- TOP Logger Update Training
- Forest landowner associations
- Colleges & universities
- Garden clubs
- School visits
- Technical workshops

Program Elements - Technical Assistance

- Pre-harvest planning
- Field visits



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Program Elements - BMP Stream Crossing Cost-Share

Cost-share funds are available for:

- Purchase of portable bridges, or
- Permanent stream crossings associated with a timber harvest

Applicant must...

- Live in South Carolina
- Be certified under TOP Logger or an acceptable equivalent
- have no unresolved BMP compliance issues



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Program Elements - BMP

Temporary Bridge Rental

- Four bridge sets available for rent
 - 4' x 30' Three-piece
 - 6' x 30' Two-piece
- Rental fee \$50 per week
- Delivery available for 4'x30' set
- \$3.50/loaded mile from SCFC HQ or current location



- Southeastern Partnership for Forests and Water Core Team
- Longleaf Alliance contract work – Savannah River
- SCRWA contract work – Wateree, and Greenwood watersheds
- Keeping Forests - Emerging Markets team
- Lake Greenwood watershed based plan
- SC Forest Water Initiative
- Fishing Creek watershed based plan

Parcel Prioritization for Forestry Management

- Not Analyzed
- Low Priority (1-8)
- Medium Priority (9-16)

HUC-12 030501090503
Rabon Creek

HUC-12 030501090604
Outlet Reedy River

HUC-12 030501090603
Long Lick Branch-Reedy River

HUC-12 030501090807
Upper Lake Greenwood-Saluda River

HUC-12 030501090806
Cane Creek-Saluda River

HUC-12 030501090808
Lower Lake Greenwood-Saluda River

Greenwood County

Laurens County

Newberry County

Chappells

Greenwood

Waterloo

Indian Mound Rd

Exton Beach Rd

Boyd's Mill Pond

Reedy River

Saluda River

Wade Shoals

Laurens Rd

Old Laurens Rd

E Dineen Rd

Ninety Six

Clinton

Laurens

Chappells

Greenwood

Waterloo

Indian Mound Rd

Exton Beach Rd

Boyd's Mill Pond

Reedy River

Saluda River

Wade Shoals

Laurens Rd

Old Laurens Rd

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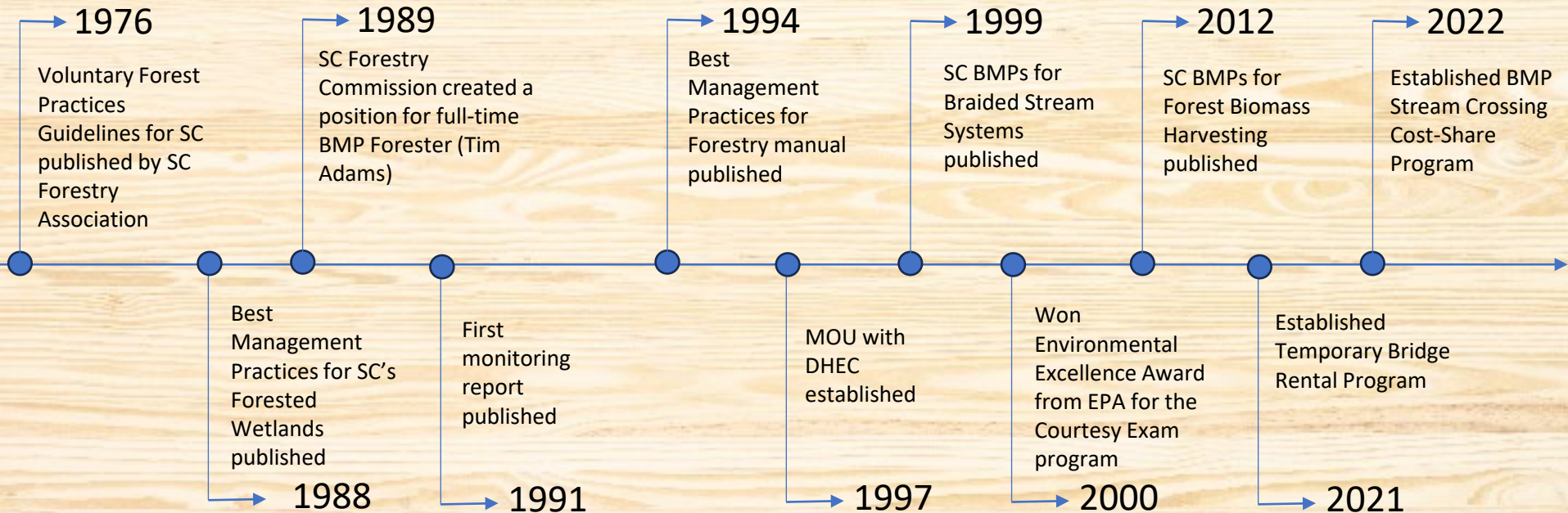
Wade Shoals

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Timeline

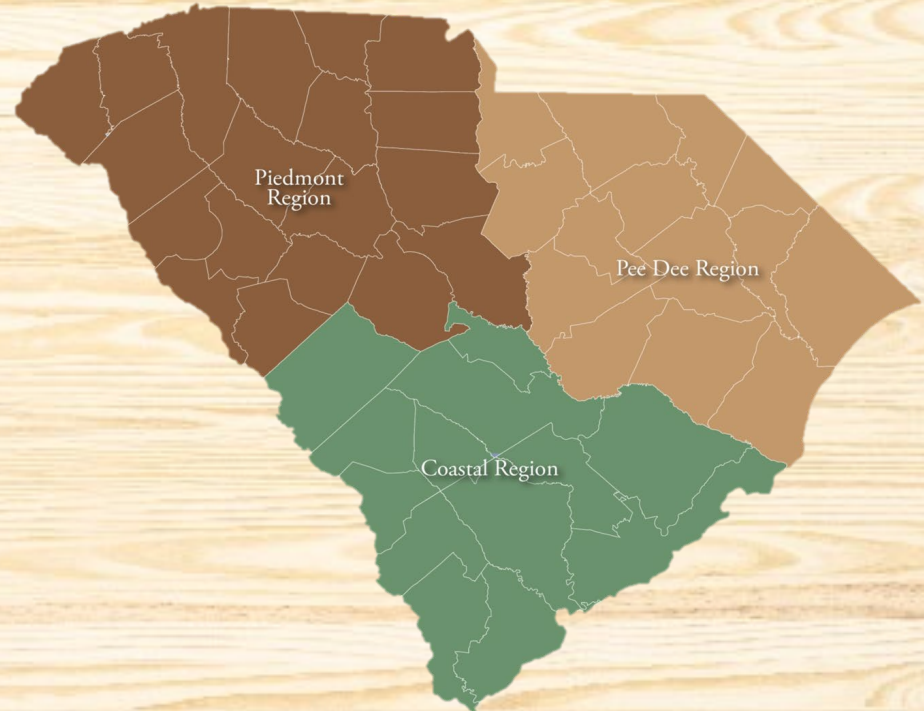
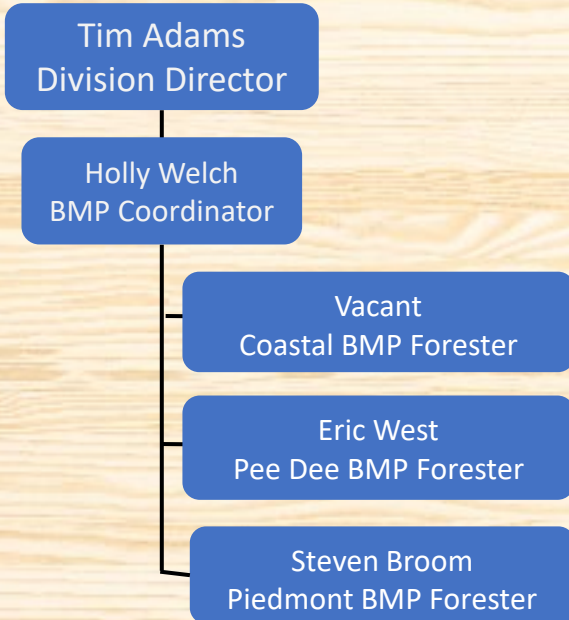


RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Organization Chart





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Staffing

- Currently, 75% staffed
- One vacant position, Coastal BMP Forester, vacant since March



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Duties

- Environmental Program Manager
 - Coordinate the operations of the Environmental Management Program '
 - Provide oversight to the BMP Courtesy Exam Program
 - Conduct BMP compliance and implementation monitoring
 - Administer the cost-share and bridge rental programs
 - Provide technical assistance to regional BMP foresters, agency personnel, and other state and federal agencies
 - Secure and manage program funding through state and federal grants
 - Serve as the point of contact for technical assistance concerning ecosystem services issues related to forestry



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental Management

Duties

- Best Management Practices Foresters
 - Coordinate the BMP Courtesy Exam Program in their respective regions
 - Coordinate BMP education programs in respective regions
 - Encourage the use and familiarity with BMPs by SCFC personnel
 - Assist with BMP monitoring surveys
 - Serve as SCFC representatives on River Basin Councils



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental management

Sources of Funding

- Section 319 funds from South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control - \$190,000
- State appropriations - \$126,667
- Other funds
 - Landscape Scale Restoration grant funds from the US Forest Service - \$3,680
 - Good Neighbor Authority funds from Courtesy Exams on USFS land - \$10,000 (total, not annually)
 - Bridge rental fees (set aside for repair and/or replacement of rental bridges) – varies based on rental frequency



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental management

Record Retention

- Courtesy Exam data is stored on Survey123
- Cumulative monthly report information is saved on OneDrive from 2004-present
- Monthly records are stored on OneDrive and published on the SCFC website



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental management

Accomplishments

- Courtesy Exam BMP compliance for the last 12 months is 100%
- Implementation monitoring BMP compliance rate is 96.1%
- Over the last 12 months BMP Foresters have...
 - Made 676 site visits to 371 different sites
 - Completed 86 monitoring site visits
 - Delivered 27 hours of training in 16 programs to 578 people
 - Responded to 19 complaints



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Environmental management

Accomplishments continued...

- Temporary rental bridges have been used to access over 3,000 acres of forestland for timber harvesting
- BMP Stream Crossing Cost-Share Program has reimbursed nine forestry operators for the purchase of portable bridges
- Federal funding has been secured to expand the BMP Cost-Share Program
- BMP manual review and revision in progress
- 2023 BMP compliance and implementation monitoring in progress



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Purpose: To provide improved seed and high-quality seedlings at competitive prices to all landowners in South Carolina.

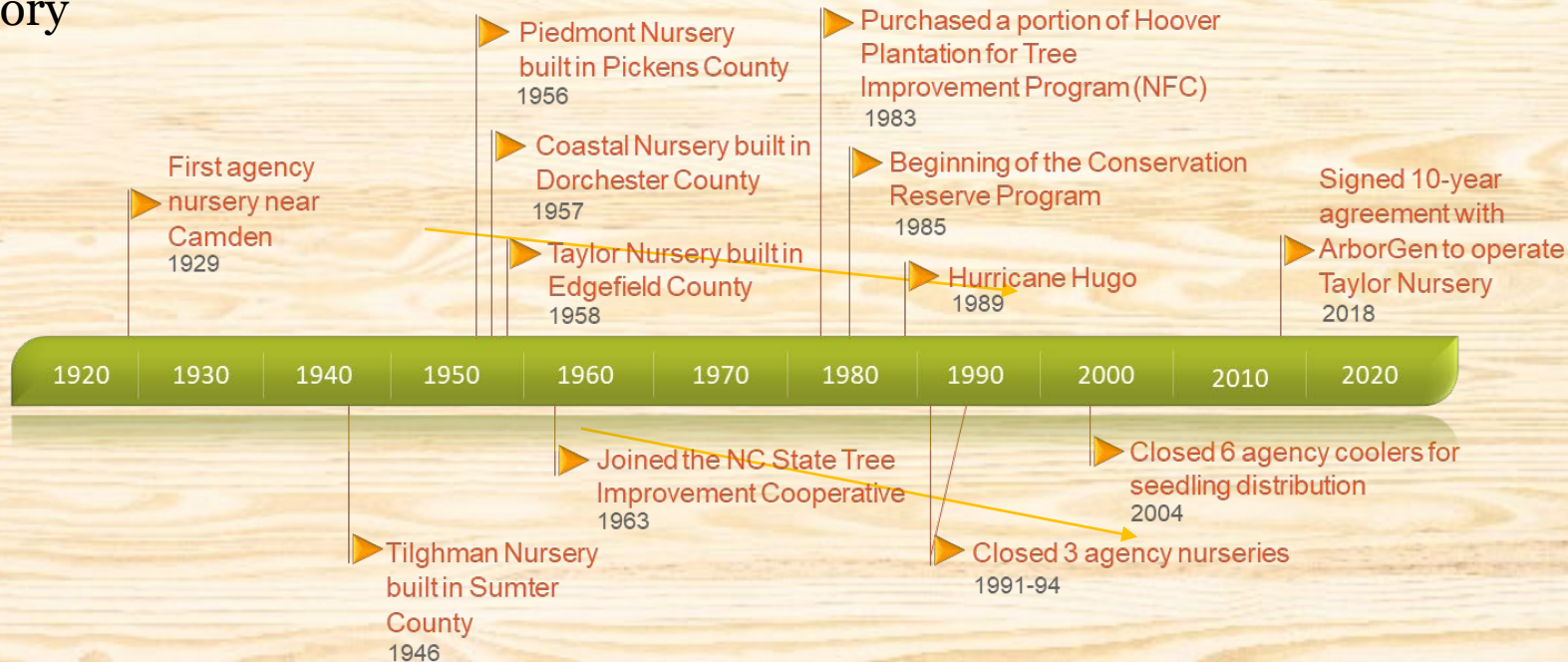
- The N&TI program dates back to the very beginning of the agency.
- The first two SCFC employees were the State Forester and a Nursery Manager
- At its peak, the N&TI program had four nurseries and two tree improvement facilities.
- The average budget for this program is \$334,117 per year.
- There are two full-time FTE's in this program.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

History



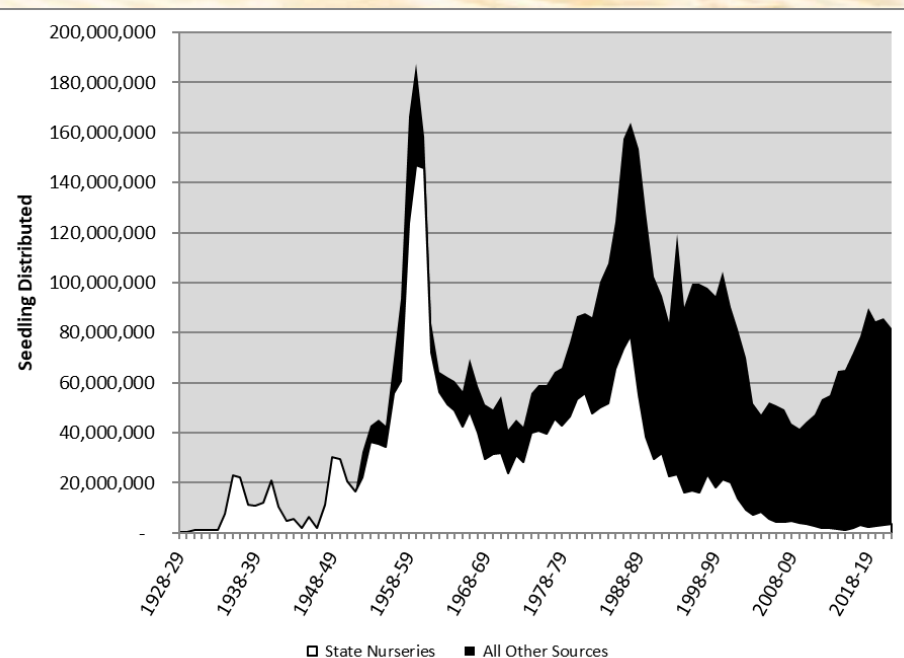
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Tree Planting Chart in South Carolina

- From 1928 to 1952, the SCFC was the only source of seedlings in SC
- Two major government tree planting programs, the Soil Bank and Conservation Reserve Programs incentivized private nursery expansion.
- The SCFC responded by closing 3 nurseries and 7 seedling distribution sites in the early 1990's.
- The SCFC and ArborGen entered into a public-private partnership in 2018 to produce seedlings for SC landowners.



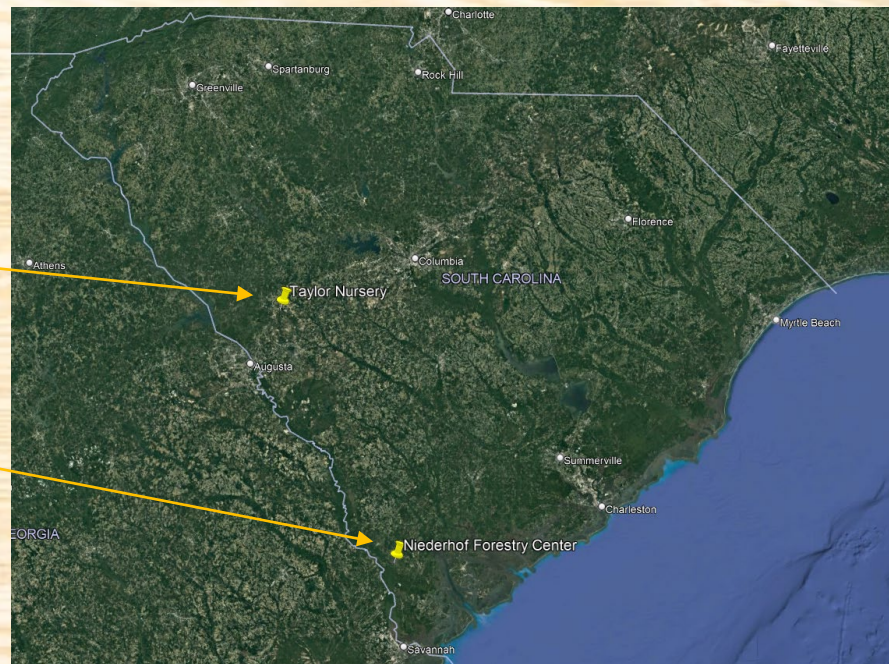
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Current Facilities

- Taylor Nursery (Edgefield County)
- Niederhof Forestry Center (Jasper County)



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

ArborGen Taylor Nursery

- In 2018, ArborGen signed a 10-year agreement to manage Taylor Nursery.
- An annual lease payment is made to the SCFC.
- All employees and operating costs are born by ArborGen.
- The SCFC retains the right to set the selections and prices for up to 5 million seedlings for SC landowners.
- Individual landowners are limited to 100,000 seedlings per year at SC reduced pricing.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Niederhof Forestry Center (NFC)

- NFC was originally designed to produce genetically-improved tree seed for seedling production at the agency's four nurseries.
- Home to agency's 2nd and 3rd generation loblolly orchards and 1.5 generation longleaf orchard.
- Has capability to process cones and seed on-site.
- When fully staffed, had 5 FTE's assigned to NFC.



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Niederhof Forestry Center (NFC) - Staffing

Chris King – Seed Orchard Manager

Carla Castro – Tree Improvement Specialist





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Niederhof Forestry Center (NFC) - Staffing

Chris King – Seed Orchard Manager

- Seed orchard establishment
- Seed orchard management
- Cone harvest
- Seed processing
- Seed & cone marketing

Carla Castro – Tree Improvement Specialist

- Control pollinations
- Progeny test establishment
- Progeny test maintenance
- Progeny test measurement
- Genetic evaluation of selections

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Budgets and Funding

Budgets	FY '23	FY '22	FY '21
State -	\$ 72,265	\$66,872	\$ 63,519
Other -	<u>\$307,405</u>	<u>\$261,040</u>	<u>\$231,249</u>
Total -	\$379,670	\$327,912	\$294,768
Revenue -	\$252,097	\$314,445	\$452,108

Federal Grants

- Shortleaf Pine Initiative and restoration partners. \$14,000
- Enhancing the ability to harvest, extract, clean and store Longleaf and Shortleaf Pine: \$90,728
- Improving the capacity for delivery of high-quality seedlings to landowners in SC: \$160,000



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Major Accomplishments

- Manage 96 acres of advanced generation orchards
 - Loblolly Pine – 63 acres
 - Longleaf Pine – 30 acres
 - Virginia Pine – 3 acres
- Harvested 4,012 bushels of cones Fall, 2022
- Processed 1,793.2 pounds of improved seed.
- Established 1 progeny test in Fall, 2023, and managed 9 active progeny tests.
- Arborgen sold 2.46 million seedlings to SC landowners at discounted pricing

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

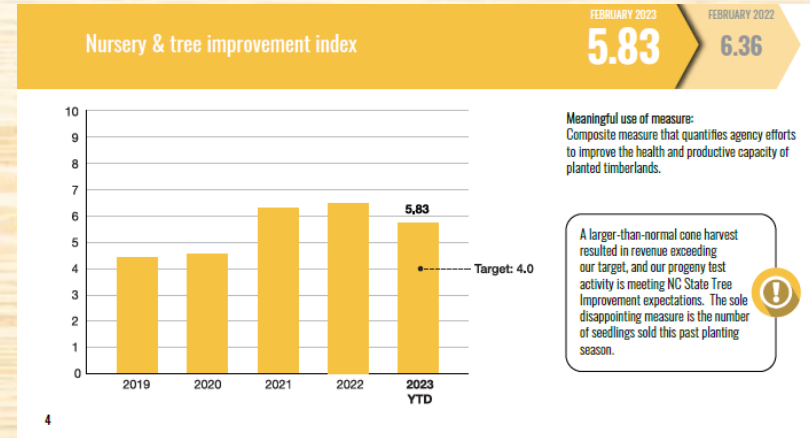


Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

Strategic Plan Metrics: Goal 1 – Enhance Public Benefits from Trees & Forests

N&TI is monitored by one index measure that includes the following:

- The gross revenue generated by the N&TI program
- The total bushels of cones harvested from agency orchards.
- The percentage of our annual seedling production that is sold
- The PRS Index (PRS - Production, Rust Resistance & Straightness) value for loblolly pines sold.
- The percentage of NC State Tree Improvement Cooperative assigned progeny test workload that is completed.





RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



Nursery & Tree Improvement (N&TI)

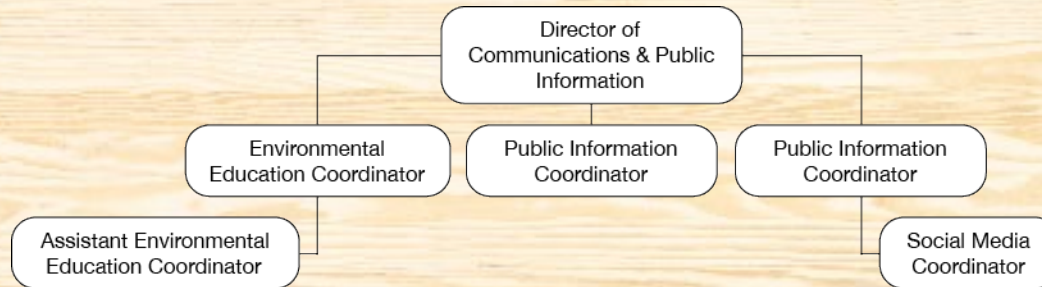
Future Plans

- New orchard establishment
 - Piedmont & Coastal 4th generation Loblolly Pine orchards.
 - Advanced generation Longleaf orchard
 - Shortleaf and Virginia Pine orchards.
- Increased seedling advertising in print and social media and through exhibits.
- Fill the vacant Tree Improvement Specialist position at NFC
- Improve seedling distribution through SCFC regional offices.

COMMUNICATIONS



Organizational chart



COMMUNICATIONS



Charges

1. Raise awareness about and promote public appreciation of forestry
 2. Provide information services
 3. Conduct forestry education and outreach
 4. Provide creative services
- ❖ 6 staff members:
- 1 Public Information Director
 - 2 Public Information Coordinators
 - 2 Environmental Education Coordinators
 - 1 Social Media Coordinator

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 1: Raise awareness of forestry and its benefits

“[The Commission] shall ... promote ... a proper appreciation by the public of the advantages of forestry and the benefits to be derived from forest culture and preservation” (SC 48-23-90)

- The Division of Communications & Public Information works to raise awareness of forestry and its many associated topic areas and issues by:
 - Performing (traditional) media relations
 - Producing targeted, information-rich publications and videos
 - Advertising
 - Using social media
 - Perform public relations
 - Developing broad-based campaigns

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 1: Raise awareness of forestry and its benefits

- Media relations
 - Pitching stories to news outlets
 - Providing timely response to media inquiries about forestry issues, wildfire, etc.
- Producing targeted, information-rich publications and videos
 - Approximately 100 publications annually → ❖ We've won the SC State Library Notable Documents Award the last 7 of 9 years!
 - Fact sheets
 - Flyers
 - Reports
 - About 10 videos every year
 - Benefits of forestry
 - Agency operations and accomplishments
 - Training

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 1: Raise awareness of forestry and its benefits

- Advertising
 - Annual 3-month advertising campaign through SC Broadcasters Association
 - Occasional grant-funded opportunities, usually wildfire- or burning-focused
- Social media
 - Strong social media presence and following → ❖ We have the largest FB following among our 13 Southeastern neighbor states, based on population
 - Facebook
 - YouTube
 - Twitter
 - Instagram

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 1: Raise awareness of forestry and its benefits

- Practice public relations via engaging partners in conservation
 - Cultivate interagency relations and support at local, state, regional and national levels
 - News media
 - SCFC commissioners and county boards
 - SC-based forestry and natural resource organizations (FASC, Clemson, Tree Farm, ACF, DNR, PRT, etc.)
 - Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF)
 - National Association of State Foresters (NASF), US Forest Service (USFS)

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 1: Raise awareness of forestry and its benefits

- Conduct broad-based campaigns
 - Typically statewide in scope, using multiple channels for outreach
 - Examples include:
 - Think Before You Burn
 - CancelWildfiresSC
 - Grow Some Green
 - ❖ Forest Life

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 1: Raise awareness of forestry and its benefits

- Broad-based campaigns: Forest Life
- Agency has secured federal trademark protection (®) for a “lifestyle brand” called Forest Life (similar to “Salt Life,” “Lake Life,” etc.)
- Forest Life mark to be used on wide variety of apparel and other promotional products
- Revenue from sale of “Forest Life” products can be retained by SCFC
- Next steps:
 - Establish business entity, state tax ID
 - Partner with retailing experts on leveraging brand, procuring merchandise
 - Investigate fulfillment service(s) and other business best practices

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 2: Provide information services

- Distribute news releases, media advisories
- Fulfill numerous requests for information, materials from citizens, media, legislators
- Manage website
- Publish two newsletters
- Perform emergency communications, usually revolving around wildfire
- Produce reports
- Handle FOIA requests

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

- Deliver Project Learning Tree (PLT) curriculum
- Conduct school programs
- Help lead annual Teachers' Tour
- Conduct other education/adventure programs

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

- SCFC education staff delivers the curricular activities of Project Learning Tree (PLT), an award-winning international environmental education program of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative
- PLT is designed for teachers and informal educators who work with students from early childhood through high school
 - Lessons, materials and activities supplement existing curricula
 - Activities are hands-on and action-oriented
 - Adaptable to many settings: classroom, home, city, forest
 - ***Teaches students “how to think, not what to think”***

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

- PLT curriculum is also taught to teachers, who in turn use the materials and activities in their own classrooms, which amplifies SCFC's forestry-focused educational outreach
 - Teachers encouraged to become certified PLT facilitators
- PLT correlates its curricula to state and national standards
 - National Common Core State Standards for both English Language Arts and Mathematics, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and National Social Studies Standards
 - ❖ SCFC education staff has correlated all PLT materials and activities to the SC Academic Standards and SC Early Learning Standards, covering every grade level from K-12

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

- SCFC school programs encompass a wide variety of educational outreach:
 - Wood Magic Forest Fair
 - Harbison State Forest programs
 - In-school programs
 - Virtual field trips

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

Wood Magic Forest Fair

- Now in its 25th year, the Wood Magic Forest Fair is a free, fun, forestry-fact-filled field trip and festival for fourth-graders
- Program consists of a day-long set of forestry-related educational experiences and activities:
 - Welcome/Introduction
 - Good Fire/Bad Fire
 - Gifts of the Forest
 - Sawmill
 - Makin' Paper
 - Magic Show

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

Wood Magic Forest Fair

- Each Wood Magic Forest Fair is a week-long event, hosting 5-7 groups of school children each day
- Held 3 times annually: 1 week each in the Upstate, at HSF and on the coast
- SCFC hosts and plans Wood Magic, but it is jointly sponsored by the Forestry Association of South Carolina and the US Forest Service along with other grants and corporate donations
- Dozens of instructors, guides and other volunteers needed for every event, most of whom come from forest industry

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

Wood Magic Forest Fair

- Key takeaways:
 - Importance of natural resource conservation, generally
 - Importance of sustainable forest management, specifically
- Wood Magic lessons are correlated to state science standards
- Post-tests reveal an average of 51 percent improvement in students' understanding of the material presented More than 40,000 students have been through the program since 1999
- SCFC education staff developed an alternative virtual Wood Magic experience for those who can't attend in person

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

Harbison State Forest programs

- SCFC education staff hosts formal (traditional school groups) and informal programs (home-school groups/day camps) for hands-on, engaging and fun learning experiences related to forestry and natural resource conservation
- All HSF programs are free (must be scheduled)
- All programs are correlated to SC science standards

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

In-school programs

- SCFC education staff has developed in-school versions of the environmental education programs offered at Harbison State Forest

Virtual field trips

- SCFC education staff has also developed virtual field trips (live forest hikes) of the programs offered at Harbison
- ❖ All programs are free (must be scheduled)
- ❖ All programs are correlated to SC science standards

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

SC Sustainable Forestry Teachers' Tour

- Annual week-long tour of various forest products mills, public and private forests, logging operations and historic sites around the state
- Aimed at, tailored to and specifically offered for SC teachers
- Provides educators with in-person, on-the-ground experiences with actual sustainable forestry practices and operations

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

SC Sustainable Forestry Teachers' Tour

- Educators learn from industry professionals about current conservation issues, sustainable forest management, history, mathematics, engineering, technology, etc.
- SCFC education staff deliver much of the in-class/workshop educational programming
- Teachers' Tour operated by the Forestry Association of South Carolina and jointly sponsored by the SC Timber Producers Association

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

Other education/adventure programs

- Scouting programs
 - Boy Scouts
 - Forestry Merit Badge workshop
 - Eagle Scout and other service projects
 - Girl Scouts
 - Cadette “Naturalist” Tree Badge workshop
 - Gold Award and other service projects
 - Cub Scouts
 - Webelos activity badges and service projects

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

Other education/adventure programs

- The Junior Forester Program is a self-guided educational activity for parents and kids or small groups visiting Harbison State Forest
 - Families can visit the HSF Ed Center to check out a backpack loaded with nature investigation supplies and a grade-appropriate activity book (K-2 or 3-5)
 - Activity features hands-on learning experiences that children complete while taking a self-guided hike in the forest
 - Upon completion, each child receive a prize
 - Program free of charge (reservations suggested)

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 3: Forestry education and outreach

Other education/adventure programs

- In 2017, SCFC education staff created a geocaching course at Harbison State Forest that winds along two established hiking trails
- Participants download coordinates and set of questions from website
- 7 geocaches hidden along forest trails, each cache containing a log book and information about SCFC and/or forestry operations and practices
- Those who find the geocaches and answer the associated questions correctly win a special commemorative SCFC “Forest Life” coin

COMMUNICATIONS



Charge 4: Provide creative services

- Graphic design
- Monument/interpretive/display signage
- Printing services/contracting
- Special event planning and support
- Employee recognition and appreciation program leadership and support
- Ad hoc projects of infinite variety

COMMUNICATIONS



Program metrics

While the activities of the Division of Communications & Public Information are broadly described in SC 48-23-90, those duties correspond directly to Goal 4: 'Raise Awareness About Our Forests' in the agency's strategic plan and are tracked by four specific metrics:

- Number of active, certified Project Learning Tree (PLT) facilitators
- Social media analytics index
- Outreach effort index
- Website analytics index

HUMAN RESOURCES



Charges

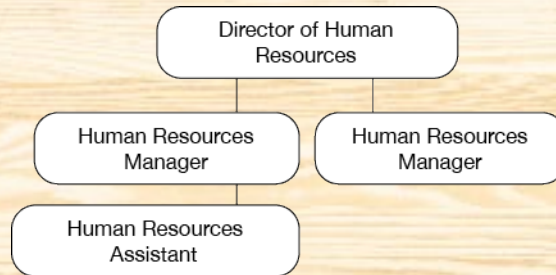
- Recruit, screen and onboard employees
- Administer employee benefits and payroll
- Manage employee performance evaluation processes and records
- Manage progressive disciplinary processes
- Ensure compliance with agency policies/procedures, federal and state laws
- Advise on compensation, classification matters
- Conduct reporting





HUMAN RESOURCES

Organizational chart





Charge 1: Recruit, screen and onboard employees

- Prepare and advertise job listings
- Screen prospective applicants
- Develop/approve position descriptions
- Conduct new hire orientation





HUMAN RESOURCES



Charge 3: Performance evaluation process

- Ensure supervisors are informed of the EPMS process annually
- Maintain records of all submitted annual EPMS evaluations
- Submit timely EPMS ratings to SCEIS through the data-load process for easier upload



HUMAN RESOURCES



Charge 2: Employee benefits and payroll

- Present the state's benefits package to all new hires during new hire orientation.
- Explain changes to the state's benefits during Annual and Open enrollment and assist employees with updating their benefit options
- Assist employee's in making changes to benefits if they have a qualifying event
- Manage payroll every two weeks to ensure all employees are paid correctly
- Run payroll reports every two weeks to audit payroll actions



HUMAN RESOURCES



Charge 4: Progressive discipline

- Advise supervisors and leadership on all progressive discipline issues
- Ensure all progressive discipline is compliant with SCFC policy, state HR regulations, and state and federal laws.
- Ensure supervisors have acceptable documentation



HUMAN RESOURCES



Charge 5: Compliance

- Manage HR policies and procedures and ensures they are compliant with state HR regulations, and state and federal laws
- Ensure all employee progressive discipline actions are compliant with state HR regulations, and state and federal laws
- Ensure all reporting is submitted in a timely fashion



HUMAN RESOURCES



Charge 6: Classification/compensation issues

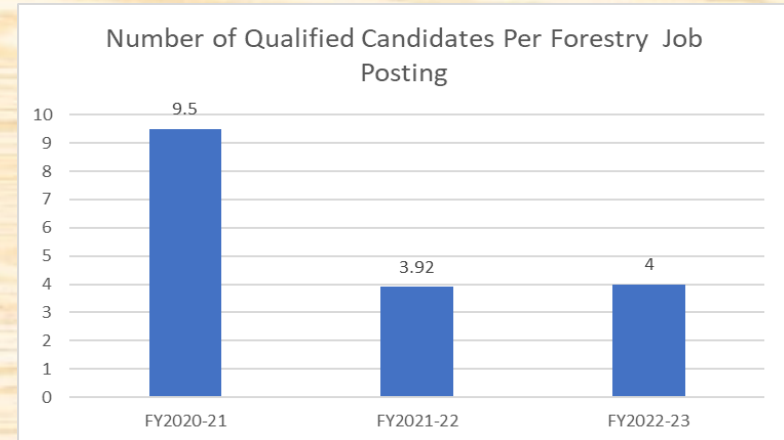
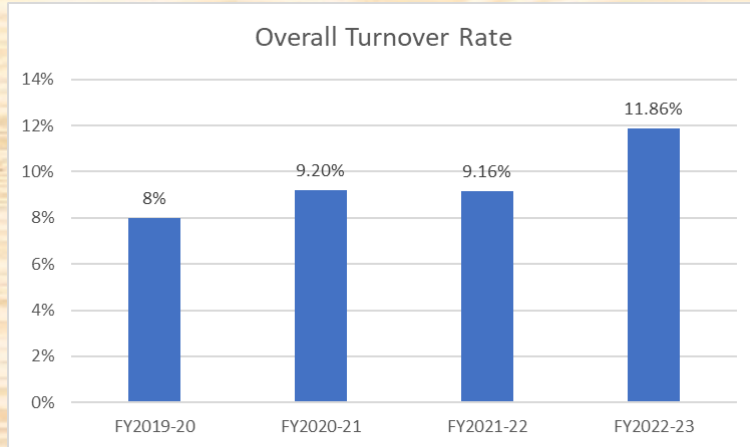
- Work with executive management to ensure internal pay structure alignment and equity
- Review minimum qualifications of position descriptions to ensure compliance with state specs
- Communicate the importance of creating and maintaining a PD for every employee
- Work with management to ensure positions are classified correctly
- Work with management manage to identify paths for career progression

HUMAN RESOURCES



Charge 7: Reporting

- Submit all HR reporting by the due date,
- Analyze report data to review trends in the workforce. Make necessary changes to HR policies and procedures or strategic direction

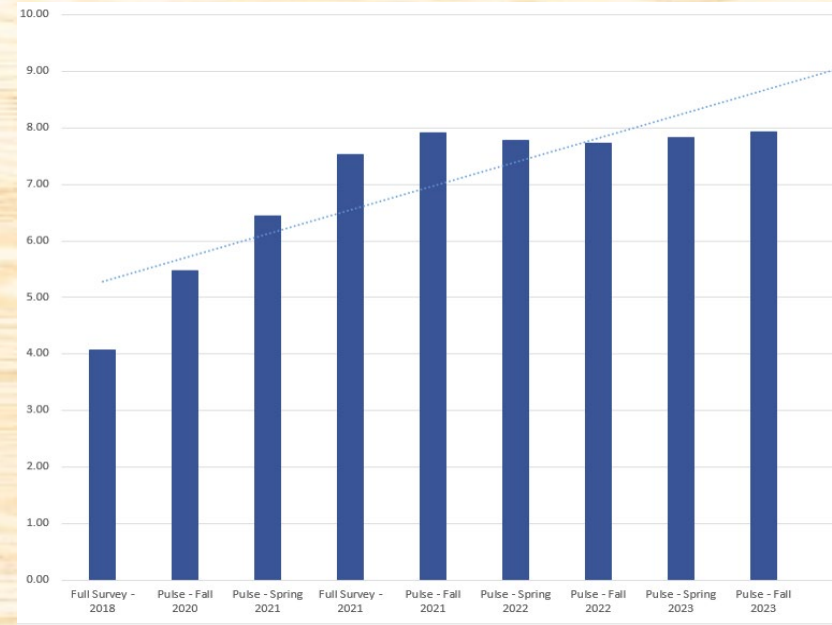




HUMAN RESOURCES

Employee Engagement

We are committed to encouraging a highly engaged workforce. We strive to ensure employees feel valued and are motivated to help the Commission be successful. Open-door practices for leadership, engagement surveys and exit interviews provide employees opportunities to provide feedback and voice their perceptions of the Commission.





HUMAN RESOURCES



Ongoing staff professional development

- HR Staff attend multiple trainings annually, including:
 - Best HR practices
 - Employee relations and engagement
 - Classification and compensation
 - SC Enterprise Information System (SCEIS) proficiency



HUMAN RESOURCES

Challenges

Agency-wide

- 30% of Forestry Technician Is & Forestry Warden Is are eligible to retire now; 49% eligible to retire in 5 years
- 41% of FMOs eligible to retire in the next 5 years
- 27% of Forest Supervisors are eligible to retire now; 72% in 5 years
- SCFC law enforcement personnel are the lowest-paid Class I officers in the state
- Difficulty recruiting foresters, generally

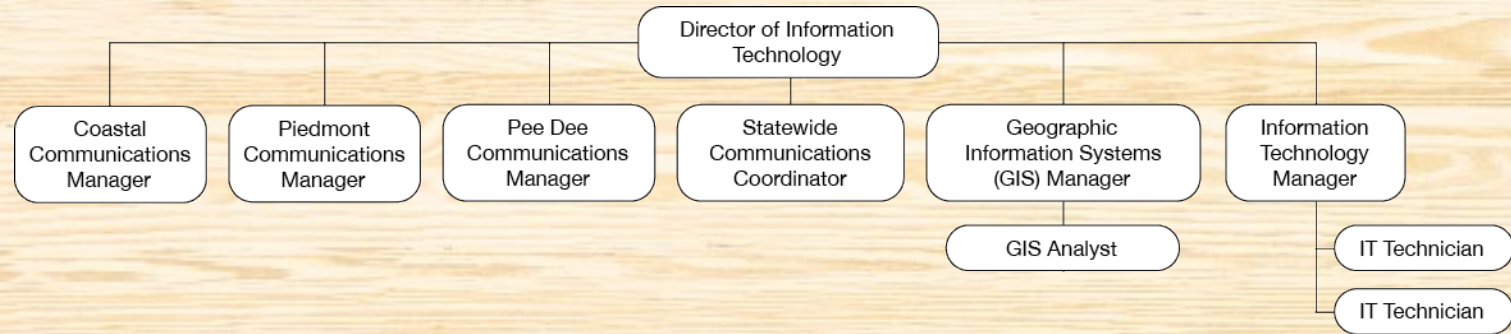
Department-specific

- An FTE Recruitment Coordinator is needed to proactively and consistently partner with universities and employment agencies across the country to address our recruitment challenges.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Organizational chart



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charges

1. Deploy and maintain hardware and software that enables the agency to operate and collaborate efficiently
 - Network infrastructure
 - Computers, servers, applications, databases
 - Repeaters
 - Radios
 - Phones
2. Provide support and service to end users and equipment
3. Ensure compliance with agency policies/procedures, federal and state laws
4. Stay abreast of new technologies and develop long-range plans for sustainable operations

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 1: Deploy hardware and software

Program Area: Information Technology Section

- Plan and develop the agency's data processing systems, networking and applications
- Research, recommend, purchase and deploy equipment and applications

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 1: Deploy hardware and software

Program Area: Communications Section

- Install, maintain and repair data/voice communications systems and equipment:
 - Dispatch communications systems
 - Remote office radios
 - VoIP/telephone systems
 - Repeaters
 - Mobile and portable radios, cellphones, other mobile devices

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 1: Deploy hardware and software

Program Area: Communications Section

- Maintain agency's private VHF system
 - Existed prior to and is separate from Motorola's Palmetto 800 network
 - Supports agency's wildland firefighting mission in rural areas better than 800 MHz
 - Law Enforcement employees/dispatch centers have Palmetto 800 radios for interoperability with other state agencies

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 1: Deploy hardware and software

Program Area: GIS Section

- Develop, update and obtain GIS data layers and imagery to support many different agency activities and needs:
 - Wildland Urban Interface assessments
 - Forest and fuel modeling
 - Change detection
 - Forest management
 - Fire suppression
 - Pest management
 - Dispatch operations

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 2: Provide support and service

Program Area: Information Technology

- Respond to and consult with users to address needs and/or problems
- Train and provide technical guidance to users on existing and new systems

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 2: Provide support and service

Program Area: Communications

- Support ~550 mobile radios, 7 base stations, 29 control stations, 30 repeaters, 400 portable radios, 19 communications consoles and related systems
- Timely resolve system issues
- Work with state, regional and federal organizations and agencies on interoperability

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 2: Provide support and service

Program Area: GIS

- Serve as staff expert on GIS matters
- Train and provide technical guidance to users

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 3: Ensure compliance

- Complete annual surveys
 - Admin IT Data Collection and Planning System*
 - Admin Information Security and Privacy Survey*
 - Nationwide Cybersecurity Review
- IT Planning approval for purchases greater than \$50k*
- Develop and maintain IT Strategic Plan*
- Maintain FCC licenses for agency VHF frequencies.

* 2023-2024 Appropriation Act: Part 1B SECTION 117 - X900 - General Provisions

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Charge 4: Long-range planning

- Develop and maintain replacement cycles for mission critical communications equipment.
- Develop and maintain replacement cycles for end user computing equipment.
- Work with agency staff to determine future needs.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Program metrics

IT is responsible for tracking one key metric in Goal 5: 'Strengthen The Commission For The Future' of the agency's strategic plan.

- Percent of technology spending to run and transform the agency.

Fiscal year	Transformative %	Day-to-day %
FY2019-20	2.49%	97.51%
FY2020-21	27.6%	72.4%
FY2021-22	64.24%	35.76%
FY2022-23	45.12%	54.88%

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Challenges

Communications

- 50% of staff eligible to retire now, one more eligible in the next 5 years.
- Difficulty in finding staff with required skillset.

GIS

- Increased need for geospatial data to support internal and external stakeholders.

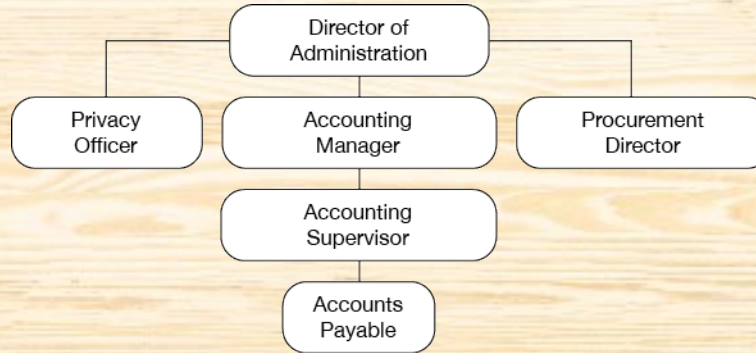
Information Technology

- IT manager eligible to retire in the next 5 years.
- Increased costs for subscription software services (CADS, ESRI, Microsoft).

ADMINISTRATION



Organizational chart



ADMINISTRATION



Charges

1. Provide accounting, procurement and budget-related services for the agency
2. Manage auditing and privacy-related functions of the agency
3. Lead SCFC's annual legislative budget request proceedings

ADMINISTRATION



Charge 1: Financial services, accounting

- Supervise all aspects of the accounting section
 - accounts payable
 - accounts receivable
 - fixed assets
- Ensure accurate documentation of all financial transactions / timely payment and receipt of all money
- Coordinate GAAP reporting between the agency and the Comptroller General's Office
- Grant management from award to closeout for approximately 20 multi-year grants.

ADMINISTRATION



Charge 1: Financial services, accounting

- Submit all financial reports and requests for reimbursement to the awarding agencies and work with program managers to make sure all funds are expended before grant end
- Work with the State Auditor's Office during annual audits to make sure they have all documentation needed to perform the audit

ADMINISTRATION



Charge 1: Financial services, procurement

- Monitor all purchasing activities and ensures compliance with both the State Procurement Code and SCFC Policies and Procedures
- Compile specifications and issues bids/solicitations for the agency for purchases over \$25,000
- Manage the agency procurement card program and acts as the agency liaison with Bank of America and their Works system
- Serve as the liaison to the State Procurement Office on the procurement of goods and services for the agency

ADMINISTRATION



Charge 2: Auditing / privacy

- Plan, design, implement, manage and monitor SCFC privacy program
- Identify areas of potential compliance vulnerabilities and risk; develops and implements corrective action plans
- Perform audits and special reviews evaluating internal processes, systems and operations to determine effectiveness, efficiencies, compliance and other quality controls
- Leads effort to compile the agency's accountability report
- Work with the Department of Archives and History to make sure SCFC is in compliance with state laws and regulations pertaining to recordkeeping, retention

ADMINISTRATION



Charge 3: Budget request process

- Develop SCFC's annual legislative budget request
- Work with the Governor's Office, General Assembly and legislative staff regarding budget proceedings throughout the year

ADMINISTRATION



Budget

\$49.1 Annual Operating Budget Fiscal Year 2024

31.2 million General Fund

6.2 million Federal Fund

11.7 million Earmarked Fund

376.8 Total FTEs

326.65 State FTEs

15.7 Federal FTEs

34.45 Earmarked FTEs

ADMINISTRATION



Budget

General Fund					
Appropriation and Expenditures					
FY 2019 – 2023					
	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Appropriation	\$ 18,458,176.00	\$ 21,462,962.00	\$ 22,004,592.00	\$ 24,112,125.00	\$ 26,980,219.00
Expenditures	\$ 16,284,677.62	\$ 19,461,730.77	\$ 20,121,176.41	\$ 21,978,613.84	\$ 22,282,239.43
Carry-Forward	\$ 2,173,498.38	\$ 2,001,231.23	\$ 1,883,415.59	\$ 2,133,511.16	\$ 4,697,979.57*

* Use of new Proviso 43.6 allowed us to carry forward \$2 million for firefighting equipment that was not received before 6/30/2023.

ADMINISTRATION



Budget

Federal Fund					
Appropriation and Expenditures					
FY 2019 – 2023					
	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Budget	\$ 4,763,560.00	\$ 4,763,560.00	\$ 4,882,067.00	\$ 4,763,560.00	\$ 5,963,560.00
Expenditures	\$ 3,069,533.00	\$ 3,558,514.00	\$ 3,503,950.00	\$ 3,697,711.00	\$ 3,929,990.00
Unspent	\$ 1,694,027.00	\$ 1,205,046.00	\$ 1,378,117.00	\$ 1,065,849.00	\$ 2,033,570.00

ADMINISTRATION



Budget

Earmarked Fund					
Appropriation and Expenditures					
FY 2019 – 2023					
	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Budget	\$ 9,678,713.00	\$ 9,678,713.00	\$ 9,678,713.00	\$ 11,678,713.00	\$ 11,678,713.00
Expenditures	\$ 5,839,670.00	\$ 8,500,009.00	\$ 6,867,532.00	\$ 7,932,384.00	\$ 8,491,716.00
Unspent	\$ 3,839,043.00	\$ 1,178,704.00	\$ 2,811,181.00	\$ 3,746,329.00	\$ 3,186,997.00

LEGAL AFFAIRS



Charges

1. Develop the role of General Counsel
2. Provide in-house legal services
3. Serve as Legislative Liaison
4. Support Agency land acquisitions
5. Support Agency LEOs



LEGAL AFFAIRS



Charge 1: Develop the role of General Counsel

- May 2023: David Jones hired as first-ever SCFC General Counsel
- This represents both the greatest challenge and greatest opportunity
- Ongoing processes:
 - Integration and internal communication
 - Establishing workflow processes
 - Contingency planning
 - Comprehensive policy & procedure review

LEGAL AFFAIRS



Charge 2: Provide in-house legal services

- Serve as internal resource for legal questions
- Review MOUs, MAAs, and lease documents
- Oversee FOIA and subpoena responses
- Brief newly appointed Commissioners
- Serve as legal counsel during Commissioner meetings
- Manage outside counsel
- Identify opportunities for process improvement

LEGAL AFFAIRS



Charge 3: Serve as Legislative Liason

- Primary point of contact for legislative needs
- Maintain and develop strong working relationships with other State agencies
- Review draft legislation and advise State Forester
- Contact information:
 - 803-922-7002 (mobile)
 - David.Jones@scfc.gov

LEGAL AFFAIRS



Charge 4: Support Agency land acquisitions

- Integrated into our land acquisition process
- Review conservation easements for compatibility with SCFC mission
- Ongoing: in cooperation with agency leadership, collaborating to identify opportunities for process improvement in the acquisition process

LEGAL AFFAIRS



Charge 5: Support Agency LEOs

- Sought and received authority to prosecute summary court cases
- Attend LEO in-service days
- Brief officers on GC as a resource

LEGAL AFFAIRS



Thank you!

