



South Carolina  
**Forestry Commission**

**FY2022-23**  
**BUDGET REQUEST**





# South Carolina Forestry Commission

## FY 2022-23 Budget Request Packet for Economic Development & Natural Resources Subcommittee Hearing

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# South Carolina Forestry Commission key officials

## **Scott Phillips**

State Forester

[REDACTED]

## **Tom Patton**

Deputy State Forester

[REDACTED]

## **Larry Moody**

Acting Legislative Liaison

[REDACTED]

*\* key contact for legislative issues*

## **Cathy Nordeen**

Director of Administration

[REDACTED]

## **Russell Hubright**

Chief, Management Section

[REDACTED]

## **Darryl Jones**

Chief, Protection Section

[REDACTED]

## **Doug Wood**

Director of Communications & Public Information

[REDACTED]

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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# Agency overview

## History and mission

**HISTORY:** The SC Forestry Commission was created in 1927 with its general duties defined in State Code 48-23-90. In summary, the Code requires the agency to make an annual report to the General Assembly on “forest conditions ... including recommendations to the public as to reforestation. ... to prevent, control and extinguish fires, including the enforcement of ... laws pertaining to the protection of the forests and woodlands .... ... 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 ... ... cooperate with the federal government in the distribution of funds allotted to the State for forestry ...”

**MISSION:** Our mission is to protect, promote and enhance South Carolina’s forests for the benefit of all.

## Major program areas

### Forest Protection

- Wildland Fire Suppression
- Dispatch operations
- Law Enforcement

### Forest Management

- Landowner Assistance
- State Forests
- Urban & Community Forestry
- Forest Health (insects & disease)

### Forest Development

- Industry recruitment
- Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA)
- Water quality protection (BMPs)
- Nursery & Tree Improvement

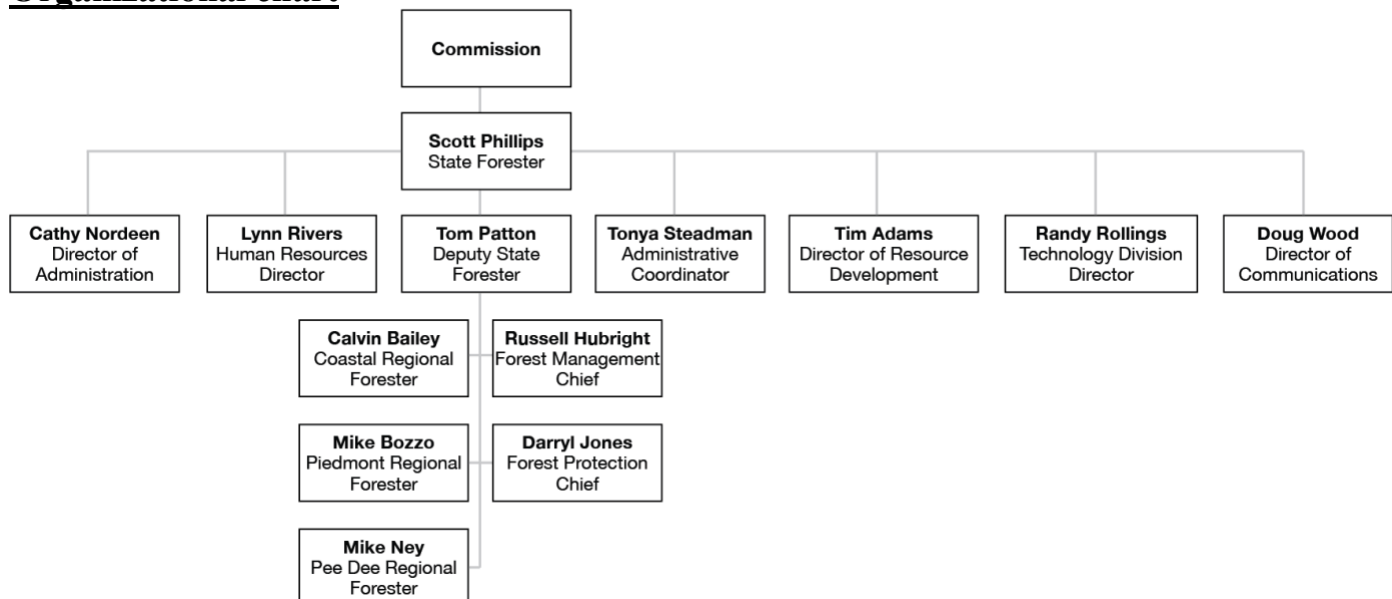
### Communications

- Public information
- Environmental education
- Media relations
- Creative services

### Technology

- I.T. services
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Telecommunications

## Organizational chart



## FTE breakdown

| <u>Authorized</u> | <u>State</u> | <u>Federal</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>Filled</u> | <u>Vacant</u> |
|-------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 366.8             | 312.65       | 15.7           | 38.45        | 335.9         | 30.9          |



# Performance update: executive summary of FY2020-21 Accountability Report

The South Carolina Forestry Commission was established in 1927 to protect, manage, develop and raise awareness about the forest resources of the state. In fulfilling those charges, the agency occupies a unique space in state government, first as an emergency response organization, but also as an economic development institution, a highly rated customer service agency and a champion for natural resource conservation. Our work continues to effectively support the responsible and sustainable growth of the state's woodlands, the industries that use them and the way of life their bounty supports.

## **Accomplishments**

As documented in the agency's FY2020-21 Accountability Report, the Forestry Commission's accomplishments are numerous and varied, with notable progress being made toward each of the five goals around which our newly revised strategic plan is based. Several years in the making, this new and highly improved strategic plan refocuses the five mission-critical areas of the agency's infrastructure by tying very specific performance measures to the key services that the Forestry Commission provides. The strategic plan now centers its attention exclusively on measurable components of performance across all divisions of the agency. Organized by the five principal areas, or goals, of our agency's multifaceted mission – *Enhance Public Benefits From Trees And Forests*, *Protect Forests From Harm*, *Conserve Working Forests*, *Raise Awareness About Our Forests*, and *Strengthen The Commission For The Future* – the plan lays out explicit strategies supporting each goal, and the achievement of each of the strategies is gauged by a combination of individual and composite key performance indicators (KPIs). FY2020-21 marked the first full year under which agency operations were evaluated according to the goals set forth under this new plan.

## **Goal 1: Enhance Public Benefits From Trees And Forests**

- Continued capital investment within the forestry sector indicates that SC's forest industry continues to grow and remains a pillar of the state's economy. More than \$571 million in forest-products-based capital investment projects were announced in FY21, resulting in the creation of 446 new jobs around the state.
- With the recruitment of a full-time tree improvement specialist to meet requirements for our membership in the NC State Tree Improvement Cooperative, the agency's Tree Improvement program has increased revenue levels and is now self-sustaining.
- For FY21 the Forest Ecosystem Benefits Index was 6.54, which is more than 6% above the annual target. The agency's Environmental Management Program provided 15.5 hours of instruction in 11 logger training programs with 98 participants. Conducted 250 BMP courtesy exams to aid in ensuring compliance. Compliance remains very high at 96%. BMP staff conducted more than 700 total site visits in FY21.

## **Goal 2: Protect Forests From Harm**

- The agency purchased an additional 12 safer enclosed-cab dozers, which now make up 71% of the agency's frontline firefighting fleet. In fact, with the generous support of the General Assembly in the form of its FY22 budget appropriation, the Forestry Commission is pleased to report it now has the funding to reach its long-held goal of maintaining a frontline fleet of 160 enclosed-cab dozers that are also within their 15-year recommended service lives by calendar year 2025.
- Firefighters' average wildfire response time was 37.21 minutes in FY21, which is below the agency's target response time of 38 minutes.
- As part of the agency's succession planning efforts, Fire Dispatch operations were moved from the IT Division to the Protection Section, which has resulted in improved interaction and engagement between Fire Staff, field operations and Dispatch.

## **Goal 3: Conserve Working Forests**

- The agency assisted 2,201 landowners during FY21, and customer satisfaction for forest management assistance remains very high at 93%.
- The State Forest system generated nearly \$3.9 million in total revenue from the sale of forest products and paid nearly \$952,000 to counties in which they operate. The agency operates its State Forests 100% from revenue generated by the management of these properties using no state-appropriated funds to support their operation. The agency's ability to operate the State Forests without state funding, while providing 25% of its gross proceeds to the counties in which they are located, illustrates the productive capacity of actively managed forests and the good stewardship of this agency. Additionally, the SCFC has paid more than \$8.3 million since 2011 to schools in the counties in which the

State Forests are located. Harvest scheduling models for State Forests are being used to ensure that these properties continue to be managed on a sustainable basis and that revenue production is optimized. Dual third-party certification through the American Tree Farm System and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative ensure that State Forests are managed to the highest standards.

- Reforestation was completed on 12,448 acres via the Forest Renewal Program (FRP) during FY21. FRP is a cost-share program that incentivizes private investments in forestry to increase the productivity of South Carolina's forests. To date, more than 370,000 acres have been reforested using FRP assistance.

#### **Goal 4: Raise Awareness About Our Forests**

- FIA plot production achieved 102% of the agency's target for FY21, repeating the previous year's rate of accomplishment. Moreover, FIA technicians' accuracy scores, which quantify the reliability of forest resource estimates, remain very high (>94%), exceeding the agency's goal of 92%.
- Agency staff conducted forestry education programs that reached 2,600 participants during FY2020-21. This is 35% below the target. Despite the reduced number of participants in education programs because of continued COVID-19 restrictions, the Communications & Public Information (C&PI) staff bolstered its effectiveness by producing 92 publications and providing more than 500 combined internal and external assists. Assists are defined as collaborations between the C&PI staff and either internal or external partners in which media/communications collaterals are produced (videos, press releases, photography, logos, physical or virtual items, interviews, joint projects, etc.).
- The Communications, Forest Health and Urban Forestry staffs collaborated on a comprehensive Invasive Species manual that won one of the 10 SC State Library's Notable State Documents Awards for the 2020 calendar year. The Forestry Commission has won this award five out of the last six years with a variety of publications about the forest resource, economic development and the Forest Renewal Program.

#### **Goal 5: Strengthen The Commission For The Future**

- Efforts to address compensation issues in recent years have greatly improved recruitment and retention efforts. The overall turnover rate for FY21 was 9.2%.
- The agency conducted an employee engagement survey, identical to its FY18 survey, during the spring of 2021. By measuring employee engagement using a repeatable methodology we can see what has changed since 2018 and if the actions implemented in response to employee feedback led to improvements. The results were extremely positive and showed significant improvements in every category. The employee engagement index for FY21 was 7.53, which represents an 85% improvement over the FY18 results.

#### **Challenges**

The challenges noted in the agency's Accountability Report provide the basis for, and are in most cases directly linked to, our current budget requests for FY2022-23.

- Limited capacity in critical program areas is causing firefighters and foresters to cover greater territory, increasing response time, fire size and wildfire damage risk while reducing landowner assistance, wildfire prevention and outreach. Ideally, the agency needs to add 9 FTEs (and shift 4 from Other to State), meanwhile providing operating funds to support these critically needed positions that will increase firefighting capacity and landowner assistance, while also allowing for better succession planning. It will also improve staffing in our Fire Dispatch Centers, provide a much needed General Counsel for the agency, and cover increased insurance premium costs.
- The Forestry Commission is not sufficiently staffed to perform the full range of communications and public relations activities with which it is charged, nor is it positioned to take advantage of the many outreach opportunities it is reasonably expected to pursue and devote time and resources to, especially in relation to the agency's size and by comparison with its natural resource-related partner agencies. The agency's Communication & Public Information (CPI) Division needs an additional staff person to perform media relations, handle emergency communications, produce content for a wide range of media channels, and conduct outreach for the agency.
- While the overall implementation of SC's BMPs for Forestry is very high (>96%), stream crossings consistently have the lowest compliance rating, as documented by SCFC Implementation Monitoring, while being one of the most critical for the protection of water quality. This high cost of installing appropriate stream crossings is limiting compliance. Establishing a cost-share program will encourage BMP compliance by assisting contractors in off-setting the high costs associated with the installation of compliant stream crossings, thereby improving water quality protection.
- As the agency's air fleet has aged, the availability of replacement parts has decreased, making repairs take longer and cost more. If newer aircraft are acquired upon the funding of the Forestry Commission's capital budget request, the SCFC will incur fewer costs related to maintenance while simultaneously improving safety for agency pilots and increasing the reliability of air operations.



# Prioritized summary of FY2022-23 budget request

| FY2022-23 Prioritized Budget Request Summary |              |   |   |                   |                      |       |         |             |       |       |         |       |
|--|--------------|---|---|-------------------|----------------------|-------|---------|-------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| SC Forestry Commission                       |              |   |   |                   |                      |       |         |             |       |       |         |       |
| BUDGET REQUESTS                              |              |   | Description   | FUNDING           |                      |       |         |             | FTEs  |       |         |       |
| Priority                                     | Request Type | Request Title                           |   | General-Recurring | General-Nonrecurring | Other | Federal | Total       | State | Other | Federal | Total |
| 1  | Recurring    | Firefighting and Service Capacity       | Funding for salary/ fringe for 13 FTEs and operating expenses to support those positions, which will increase firefighting capacity and landowner assistance, while also allowing for better succession planning. | \$2,164,000       | \$0                  | \$0   | \$0     | \$2,164,000 | 13.00 | -4.00 | 0.00    | 9.00  |
| 2  | Recurring    | Outreach Capacity                       | Funding for salary/ fringe for 1 FTE and operating expenses to support that position.   | \$105,000         | \$0                  | \$0   | \$0     | \$105,000   | 1.00  | 0.00  | 0.00    | 1.00  |
| 3  | Recurring    | Stream Crossing Cost-Share Program      | Funding to establish cost-share assistance for temporary bridges, which will bolster BMP compliance.  | \$125,000         | \$0                  | \$0   | \$0     | \$125,000   | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00    | 0.00  |
| 4  | Capital      | Fire Support Aircraft                   | Funding to replace aging fleet with newer aircraft.   | \$0               | \$425,000            | \$0   | \$0     | \$425,000   | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00    | 0.00  |
| 5  | Capital      | Wee Tee State Forest Bridge Replacement | Funding to construct five bridges on Wee Tee State Forest, which is largely inaccessible to the general public.   | \$0               | \$5,000,000          | \$0   | \$0     | \$5,000,000 | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00    | 0.00  |
| TOTAL BUDGET REQUESTS                        |              |   |   | \$7,819,000       | \$0                  | \$0   | \$0     | \$7,819,000 | 14.00 | -4.00 | 0.00    | 10.00 |

**Carryforward balance:** \$2,173,498

|              |                     |          |    |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|----|
| Agency Name: | Forestry Commission |          |    |
| Agency Code: | P120                | Section: | 43 |

## **FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>AGENCY PRIORITY</b> | 1 |
|------------------------|---|

*Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.*

|              |                                   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>TITLE</b> | Firefighting and Service Capacity |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|

*Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.*

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>AMOUNT</b> | <p><b>General: \$2,164,000</b></p> <p><b>Federal: \$0</b></p> <p><b>Other: \$0</b></p> <p><b>Total: \$2,164,000</b></p> |
|---------------|---|

*What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2022-2023? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.*

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| <b>NEW POSITIONS</b> | 9.00 |
|----------------------|------|

*Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.*

|   |                                     |   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST</b>                                      | <b>Mark "X" for all that apply:</b> |   |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines          |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program        |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas                    |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative                     |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program            |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | IT Technology/Security related  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Consulted DTO during development  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # |                                     |   |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b> | <b>Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:</b> |  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Education, Training, and Human Development     |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Healthy and Safe Families                      |
|  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  | Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security    |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Public Infrastructure and Economic Development |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Government and Citizens                        |

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS</b> | <p>This funding request supports the following agency strategies:</p> <p>2.1 Ensure prompt and effective response to wildfires and other disasters in an increasingly complex environment.</p> <p>3.1 Support landowners with programs and services that promote active forest management and help them meet their goals.</p> <p>4.1 Promote the Forestry Commission as South Carolina's first and foremost source for forest management information and assistance.</p> <p>5.1 Prioritize safety across all agency operations.</p> <p>5.2 Develop and maintain a workforce that is inclusive, skilled, engaged and productive.</p> <p>This request will allow the agency to increase its capacity to respond to wildfires, improve capabilities to predict fire weather, increase capacity to provide forest management technical assistance and services to landowners and enhance aerial detection and suppression support for wildfires which will decrease wildfire risk. It will establish much needed supervisor positions for successional planning and career path development for dispatchers and foresters as well as improve customer service to our internal and external customers to include landowners, employees, other state and</p> |
|--------------------------------|--|



federal agencies and the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.

The use of these funds will be evaluated by demonstrating a decrease in wildfire response times, and increase in the number of landowners assisted, improved forest management customer satisfaction levels and enhanced ability of the agency to prepare our workforce for future demands

*What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?*

## RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funds will go towards the salary and fringe for 9 new FTE's and 4 FTE's shifted from Other to State. Statewide vendors would receive operating funds to support these positions as well as the SC Army National Guard by establishing an agreement to provide aerial delivery of water and other aviation support during wildfires.

*What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?*

The Forestry Commission's mission is to protect, promote and enhance the forest lands of South Carolina. The agency accomplishes this mission primarily through our Forest Protection and Forest Management operations. Limited capacity in these critical program areas has resulted in firefighters and foresters covering greater territory, increasing response time, fire size and wildfire damage risk, while reducing landowner assistance, wildfire prevention and outreach activities. Also, with this request the agency has the unique opportunity to fill four critical positions through the transfer of existing unfunded FTE's.

We are requesting funding in our Forest Protection division for a fire support position (\$116,000) and operating (\$350,000) to support our Forest Protection programs. Having a dedicated fire support position would allow the Forestry Commission to provide more accurate fire weather and fire intelligence to agency firefighters and cooperating fire agencies which would result in increased public and firefighter safety. The operational funds will allow the Commission to strengthen our wildland fire program and our partnerships with the US Forest Service, SC Army National Guard, and other agencies that provide wildland fire support and prescribed fire assistance.

We are also requesting two new FTE's (\$130,000) for shift supervisor positions for nighttime dispatch shifts and an additional \$55,000 for salary and fringe to promote six daytime dispatchers to shift supervisor positions. Currently we only have three supervisory employees for our three dispatch centers (one in each center) which does not provide adequate supervisory coverage for full shifts or on weekends and holidays. We need to create shift supervisor positions to provide a clear chain of command at all times while also addressing succession planning needs and career path development. In addition to the salary and fringe we are requesting \$175,000 in operating to cover annual maintenance costs at our dispatch centers that have previously been paid from less stable federal funds. This request will benefit the landowners of South Carolina and Forestry Commission personnel by having our dispatch centers adequately staffed and managed 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

In addition to the Forest Protection funding request, we are requesting funding for seven FTE's, six new and one shifted, (\$676,000) and operating to support these positions (\$70,000) in our Forest Management division. These FTE's will improve supplemental firefighting capacity and increase landowner assistance while also providing much-needed training and supervisory experience for succession planning efforts. These positions will benefit the landowners of South Carolina by providing additional supervisory positions for fire response, increasing timber supply, improving forest health, ensuring soil and water quality and reducing wildfire risk which increases forestry's economic impact.

## JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

We are requesting \$200,000 and to shift two FTE's from other to state to hire two full-time pilots. These positions will provide necessary aerial support/detection information to firefighters on the ground regarding fuels, fire behavior and values at risk during wildfire suppression which will increase public and firefighter safety while also improving the efficacy of the agency's fire suppression efforts. We currently only have two full-time pilots to support the agency's 24/7 firefighting mission across the whole state. The addition of two full-time pilots will provide much better coverage. An additional \$150,000 in operating is requested to supplement federal grant funds used by our Forest Protection division to operate and maintain the agency's fleet of aircraft. Additional funding is needed for preventative maintenance, scheduled replacement of

aircraft engines and to upgrade avionics. This request is related to our capital funding request to purchase two fixed-wing aircraft (see priority #4).

We are requesting \$100,000 in operating funds due to insurance premium increases implemented by the Insurance Reserve Fund. Since FY 2019 our premiums have increased 45% because of the IRF increasing premiums due to natural disasters, increased losses in the IRF's tort line and an increase in the tort cap to \$1 million. We have covered this increase in premiums with carry forward thus far, but need a long-term solution for this increase.

We are requesting \$142,000 and to shift one FTE from other to state to fund a General Counsel position. The agency currently has no legal staff and must rely on private attorneys for legal matters involving landowner, human resources, regulatory and legislative issues. This position would also assist with contractual, strategic planning and accountability issues related to the agency.

If funds are not received the effectiveness of wildfire prevention efforts will be reduced, leading to more damage to homes and forest resources. The agency will also lack the capacity to provide needed technical assistance to forest landowners, causing a reduction in active forest management that will lead to less healthy and productive forests, which will in turn increase wildfire risks.

The amounts of this request were calculated by using the average salary and fringe benefits of like positions within the agency and operating costs associated with those positions related to forest protection and management efforts.

With the exception of the four requested transfers, the Forestry Commission does not have the vacant positions to fulfill this request, as they are obligated to other areas within the agency.

*Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.*



|              |                     |          |    |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|----|
| Agency Name: | Forestry Commission |          |    |
| Agency Code: | P120                | Section: | 43 |

## **FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>AGENCY PRIORITY</b> | 2 |
|------------------------|---|

*Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.*

|              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>TITLE</b> | Outreach Capacity |
|--------------|-------------------|

*Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.*

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>AMOUNT</b> | <p><b>General: \$105,000</b></p> <p><b>Federal: \$0</b></p> <p><b>Other: \$0</b></p> <p><b>Total: \$105,000</b></p> |
|---------------|---|

*What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2022-2023? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.*

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| <b>NEW POSITIONS</b> | 1.00 |
|----------------------|------|

*Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.*

|  |   |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
|--|---|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <b>FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST</b> | <p><b>Mark "X" for all that apply:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience</td></tr> <tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>IT Technology/Security related</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Consulted DTO during development</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #</td></tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines | <input type="checkbox"/> | Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program | <input type="checkbox"/> | Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas | <input type="checkbox"/> | Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> | Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program | <input type="checkbox"/> | Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program | <input type="checkbox"/> | IT Technology/Security related | <input type="checkbox"/> | Consulted DTO during development | <input type="checkbox"/> | Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience   |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines  |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program  |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas  |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative   |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program  |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program  |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | IT Technology/Security related  |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Consulted DTO during development  |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #  |                          |   |                                     |  |                          |  |                          |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |  |

|  |   |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
|--|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b> | <p><b>Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Education, Training, and Human Development</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Healthy and Safe Families</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Public Infrastructure and Economic Development</td></tr> <tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>Government and Citizens</td></tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Education, Training, and Human Development | <input type="checkbox"/> | Healthy and Safe Families | <input type="checkbox"/> | Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Infrastructure and Economic Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Government and Citizens |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Education, Training, and Human Development  |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Healthy and Safe Families   |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security   |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Public Infrastructure and Economic Development  |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>              | Government and Citizens   |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS</b> | <p>4.1 Promote the Forestry Commission as South Carolina's first and foremost source for forest management information and assistance.</p> <p>4.2 Educate the public on the environmental benefits of working forests and the role of strong markets and family forest owners in keeping our forests healthy.</p> <p>4.3 Continue to promote the economic benefits of forestry.</p> <p>4.5 Promote trees and forests as a way to offset the effects of a changing climate.</p> <p>The Forestry Commission's Communications and Public Information Division would be able to better perform media relations, handle emergency communications, produce content for a wide range of media channels and conduct outreach for the agency.</p> <p>This request will be evaluated by monitoring the communications and outreach that the Communication and Public Information Division is able to provide to the citizens of South Carolina.</p> |
|--------------------------------|---|

*What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?*

## RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funds will go towards the salary and fringe for one new FTE and provide operating expenses for our Communications and Public Information Division.

*What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?*

## JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

A core function of the Forestry Commission is to promote the advantages of forestry and the benefits of active forest management. The agency has done a great job in recent years promoting the economic benefits of forestry and establishing the forestry sector as a pillar of SC's economy. As our state's population becomes more urbanized, we must strengthen our message on the environmental benefits of working forests and the role strong markets and family forest owners play in keeping our forests healthy, so they can continue to provide jobs, clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat and beauty that benefit the citizens of our state.

Currently we have a very small (3 FTEs), but talented, group of employees working in the Communication and Public Information Division but we need additional capacity to tell our story. Understaffing in this area creates the lack of specialization needed for a more robust integrated marketing communication program, which also leads to missed opportunities for public relations and outreach.

We are requesting one FTE (\$80,000) and \$25,000 in operating funds to increase communications and outreach capacity that will allow the Commission to better promote the advantages of forestry and the benefits of active forest management to landowners and the public.

If the funding is not received the Commission will continue to have an insufficient level of communications support during wildfire suppression/emergency operations. The agency will also continue to miss opportunities to promote the benefits of forestry to the general public, media and agency partners.

The Forestry Commission does not have the vacant positions to fulfill this request, as they are obligated to other areas within the agency. The SCFC does not currently receive any grant funds or any other sources of income that can be used to fund this position.

*Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.*



|              |                     |          |    |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|----|
| Agency Name: | Forestry Commission |          |    |
| Agency Code: | P120                | Section: | 43 |

## **FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>AGENCY PRIORITY</b> | 3 |
|------------------------|---|

*Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.*

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>TITLE</b> | Stream Crossing Cost Share Program |
|--------------|------------------------------------|

*Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.*

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>AMOUNT</b> | <p><b>General: \$125,000</b></p> <p><b>Federal: \$0</b></p> <p><b>Other: \$0</b></p> <p><b>Total: \$125,000</b></p> |
|---------------|---|

*What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2022 2023? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.*

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| <b>NEW POSITIONS</b> | 0.00 |
|----------------------|------|

*Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.*

|  |  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
|--|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <b>FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST</b> | <p><b>Mark "X" for all that apply:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Non mandated program change in service levels or areas</td></tr> <tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>IT Technology/Security related</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Consulted DTO during development</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Related to a Non-Recurring request    If so, Priority #</td></tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience | <input type="checkbox"/> | Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines | <input type="checkbox"/> | Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program | <input type="checkbox"/> | Non mandated program change in service levels or areas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> | Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program | <input type="checkbox"/> | Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program | <input type="checkbox"/> | IT Technology/Security related | <input type="checkbox"/> | Consulted DTO during development | <input type="checkbox"/> | Related to a Non-Recurring request    If so, Priority # |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines   |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program   |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Non mandated program change in service levels or areas   |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>        | Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program   |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program   |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | IT Technology/Security related   |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Consulted DTO during development   |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                   | Related to a Non-Recurring request    If so, Priority #  |                          |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |  |                                     |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                |                          |                                  |                          |   |

|  |   |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
|--|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b> | <p><b>Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Education, Training, and Human Development</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Healthy and Safe Families</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security</td></tr> <tr><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Public Infrastructure and Economic Development</td></tr> <tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>Government and Citizens</td></tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Education, Training, and Human Development | <input type="checkbox"/> | Healthy and Safe Families | <input type="checkbox"/> | Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Infrastructure and Economic Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Government and Citizens |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Education, Training, and Human Development  |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Healthy and Safe Families   |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security   |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Public Infrastructure and Economic Development  |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>              | Government and Citizens   |                          |  |                          |                           |                          |   |                          |  |                                     |                         |

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS</b> | <p>1.1 Promote programs and practices that safeguard South Carolina's water, air, soil, wildlife habitat, recreation and natural beauty.</p> <p>1.2 Deliver programs and services that retain, develop and expand sustainable timber and non-timber markets.</p> <p>Fully funding this request will establish a Best Management Practices for Forestry (BMP) cost-share program enhancing water quality protection during forestry operations.</p> <p>The use of these funds will be evaluated by comparing future stream crossing BMP compliance with historical baselines as determined during the Forestry Commission's BMP implementation monitoring of harvesting operations.</p> |
|--------------------------------|--|

*What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?*

## RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Timber operations professionals, which are private contractors, would receive the funds to help off-set a portion of the costs associated with the installation of a proper stream crossing during logging operations that minimizes water quality impacts. This cost-share program would provide 50% of the actual cost of the installation of a proper stream crossing up to \$6,000 per participant/year on a first come/first served basis.

*What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?*

## JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

The high cost associated with the installation of stream crossings limits compliance with Best Management Practices for Forestry (BMP). While the overall implementation of SC's BMPs is very high, greater than 96%, stream crossings consistently have the lowest compliance rating as documented by SC Forestry Commission BMP Implementation Monitoring, while being one of the most critical for the protection of water quality. Increased BMP compliance would allow everyone in the State to benefit from cleaner water.

In South Carolina 54% of all surface water originates on forest land. BMPs are proven to be successful in controlling and preventing nonpoint source pollution during forestry activities. SC BMP implementation monitoring studies show that knowledge of BMPs has expanded over the last 30 years with over 1,000 people trained annually through the Timber Operations Professional (TOP) program. Currently, failure to install adequate BMPs is more commonly a result of the high costs of implementation, not a lack of understanding in the standard.

Stream crossings have historically had the lowest BMP compliance rates, ranging from just 74% compliance in 2016 to 89% in 2020, and continue to be the area with the greatest opportunity for improvement. Stream crossings are critical for water quality protection since they often involve use of heavy equipment and soil disturbance in and near bodies of water. Scientific studies have shown that stream crossings constructed below BMP standards produce 2.8 times more erosion and 11.6 times more sediment than one constructed in compliance with BMPs.

Installing a stream crossing in compliance with BMPs requires a significant investment by the contractor. Costs include a culvert or portable bridge, equipment hours for installation and materials for stabilization. A cost-share program would encourage increased BMP compliance by assisting contractors with off-setting some of the costs associated with the installation of proper stream crossing that minimizes water quality impact. In order to ensure BMP compliance continues to improve and water quality continues to be protected during forestry operations a cost share program should be established to help cover the cost of BMP implementation on private lands.

This cost-share program is modeled after a similar program in Virginia and would provide 50% of the actual cost of the installation of a proper stream crossing up to \$6,000. The Virginia program has been very successful and has benefited BMP compliance rates for stream crossings in that state, improving from 81% in 2006 to an average compliance of 95% over the last five years.

If this funding request is not approved BMP compliance with stream crossings will continue to be lower than the desired level and could decline as the costs of installing stream crossings increase. This could have a negative impact on the water quality in South Carolina.

*Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.*



|              |                     |          |    |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|----|
| Agency Name: | Forestry Commission |          |    |
| Agency Code: | P120                | Section: | 43 |

## **FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST**

### **AGENCY PRIORITY**

4

*Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.*

### **TITLE**

Fire Support Aircraft

*Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.*

### **AMOUNT**

\$425,000

*How much is requested for this project in FY 2022-2023? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.*

### **CPIP PRIORITY**

Although this was not included in the CPIP report, this funding will be used to replace two federal excess property aircraft with newer fixed-wing aircraft (used, preferably less than 10 years of age) and to outfit these aircraft with current avionics and communications technology. If this request is not funded we will continue to operate with the aging fleet we currently have.

*Identify the project's CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency's CPIP. If not included in the agency's CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency's contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.*

### **OTHER APPROVALS**

Once funding is secured for the purchase of two fixed-wing aircraft approval will be needed from JBRC and SFAA before the aircraft can be purchased.

*What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)*

### **LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Currently, aircraft maintenance and operational costs are supported with federal grant funds obtained through the USDA Forest Service (approximately \$200,000/ year). An additional \$150,000 in recurring state funds is being requested for FY 2023 as part of our Firefighting and Service Capacity decision package and, if funded, will provide the necessary funding for the maintenance of the aircraft. The expected service life of these aircraft is 20 years once placed into active service with the SC Forestry Commission.

*What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency's expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?*

The Forestry Commission is requesting \$425,000 to purchase two newer fixed-wing aircraft (used, preferably less than 10 years old) to replace two federal excess property aircraft that have exceeded the safe service life. Due to no availability of these types of aircraft through the federal excess property programs state funding is needed to replace these aircraft.

The 10 fixed-wing aircraft currently in use by the SCFC are on loan to the agency through the Federal Excess Personal Property Program and are owned by the USDA Forest Service. These aircraft are acquired for use in wildfire suppression through this program when federal agencies have determined them to be surplus. This aerial support is critical to detect wildfires in rural areas and to help firefighters fight wildfires safely by keeping them aware of hazards and changing fire conditions. When engaged in wildfire suppression, the "eye in the sky" provided by these aircraft enhances the safety of



## SUMMARY

firefighters and the public. Agency pilots serve as aerial observers, alerting firefighters on the ground to changes in weather, fire behavior and to make sure they are aware of threatened homes, infrastructure, and fuel conditions that may impact the ability to fight fire safely.

The average age of the agency's aircraft is 51 years, with individual aircraft ranging from 42 to 58 years. Maintenance costs and availability of parts are making it more difficult to ensure that the fleet is operational when needed to support wildfire control, hurricane response, search & rescue, and other operations. The agency's flight missions are considered high hazard because aircraft fly at very low altitudes under less than optimum conditions, when wildfires occur, and often encounter high winds, extreme temperatures and turbulent air. Maintaining these aircraft is essential to pilot safety during flights, and to increase safety for firefighters on the ground being supported by these aircraft. All funding to support aircraft maintenance, engine replacements, and communications upgrades has come from federal grant funds, and acquiring state funds, through our companion recurring funds request, to support the air operations program will enable the agency to improve the readiness of the fleet.

Acquiring newer aircraft will reduce maintenance costs and improve the safety for agency pilots, and increase the reliability of air operations. As the fleet has aged, the availability of replacement parts has decreased, making repairs take longer and cost more. If newer aircraft are acquired, the SCFC will dispose of (on behalf of the USDA Forest Service) a corresponding number of fleet aircraft, so the overall fleet size will not increase.

*Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.*

|              |                     |          |    |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|----|
| Agency Name: | Forestry Commission |          |    |
| Agency Code: | P120                | Section: | 43 |

## **FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST**

### **AGENCY PRIORITY**

5

*Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.*

### **TITLE**

Wee Tee State Forest Bridge Replacement

*Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.*

### **AMOUNT**

\$5,000,000

*How much is requested for this project in FY 2022-2023? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.*

### **CPIP PRIORITY**

The Wee Tee State Forest Bridge project was included in the CPIP for the first time in FY 2022 and is the top CPIP priority. If this request is not funded there will continue to be limited road access due to impassable bridges limiting management and public enjoyment of this property.

*Identify the project's CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency's CPIP. If not included in the agency's CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency's contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.*

### **OTHER APPROVALS**

The Wee Tee State Forest Bridge Project # 9603 has already received approval from JBRC and SFAA.

*What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)*

### **LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY**

The Forestry Commission has already set aside an initial \$60,000 of state carry-forward money to start the process of procuring estimates and engineered drawings for the nine complete bridge systems. The State Forest system in South Carolina is generally self-sufficient, but replacing these bridges is a major capital expense that is outside of their fiscal abilities. If this project is fully funded all future operating expenses will be covered by the state forest. We expect the useful life of these bridges to be 50 years, or more.

*What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency's expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?*

A goal of the Forestry Commission is to conserve working forests by ensuring their sustainability and active management in order to maintain the economic, environmental and social benefits these lands provide. One of the ways we do this is by demonstrating active, sustainable, and multiple-use management practices on our State Forests. Currently the agency's ability to utilize Wee Tee State Forest, a beautiful riverine hardwood forest on the Santee River, to further this goal and benefit the public is severely limited due to access issues.

The current access to Wee Tee State Forest, a 12,403 acres property with approximately 12 miles of frontage on the Santee River in Williamsburg and Georgetown Counties, is severely limited due to unsafe and impassable bridges. Wee Tee has approximately 56 miles of roads. However, only two miles can be currently utilized to access the property for management and public recreation due to nine bridges that have been rendered unsafe by severe flooding in recent years. The main supports (abutments, piers and

## SUMMARY

pillars) of these nine bridges have been undercut and destabilized to the point that some of the bridges are assuming precarious angles, the entire decking is very suspect and none are safe for vehicular usage. Currently only about 8% of the property is readily accessible. This is limiting public use as well as management of the property. Most importantly, this limited access impairs the ability of first responders to come to the aid of anyone injured on the property. In order to increase safety, public recreational opportunities and to facilitate management of this property nine bridges need to be completely replaced.

We are requesting \$5 million dollars to replace the five most critical bridges on Wee Tee State Forest. This property is an asset of the state of South Carolina and needs to be accessible to its citizens. Installing new bridges will provide improved safety and public access for all aspects of recreational use: hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and hiking. It will also greatly enhance our ability to manage the area for the production of sustainable forest products which will benefit local businesses and the Williamsburg and Georgetown school systems. The Forestry Commission pays 25% of the gross proceeds from the sale of forest products from a State Forest to the county where it is located to benefit the schools. Since 2010, the Forestry Commission has paid more than \$9.3 million to schools in counties where State Forests are located.

If full funding is not received, the Forestry Commission will only be able to replace the number of bridges commensurate with funding received. Due to economies of scale the cost per bridge is likely to increase if fewer bridges are replaced as part of a single project.

*Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.*



|              |                     |          |    |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|----|
| Agency Name: | Forestry Commission |          |    |
| Agency Code: | P120                | Section: | 43 |

## **FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>TITLE</b> | Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan |
|--------------|---|

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| <b>AMOUNT</b> | \$706,938 |
|---------------|-----------|

*What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.*

|                                  |         |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| <b>ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS</b> | 17 FTEs |
|----------------------------------|---------|

*How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?*

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>PROGRAM /<br/>ACTIVITY IMPACT</b> | <p>I. Administration</p> <p>II. Forest Protection and Development</p> |
|--------------------------------------|---|

*What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?*

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>SUMMARY</b> | <p>The Forestry Commission's mission is to protect, promote, enhance and nurture the forest lands of South Carolina. To achieve this mission, agency employees provide numerous services to the citizens of South Carolina and to the forest lands themselves. Forestry Commission personnel provide a service to not only protect the forest lands and surrounding communities from wildfires, but they also provide outreach services to landowners who enable forestry to be a top industry and economic driver in South Carolina.</p> <p>In order to accommodate a 3% budget reduction, the Forestry Commission will have to eliminate 17 FTEs. These FTEs directly serve the citizens of South Carolina. By eliminating these positions, services that are currently provided will be significantly reduced. This will be a negative effect on the economic value that the forest industry provides to the state and will further reduce the Commission's ability to protect the forest resource, homes, other structures and lives.</p> <p>The agency will use vacant positions if available at the time of the cut. However, if positions are not vacant, the agency will use other methods to reduce state operating funds. Such methods will include a combination of elimination of at-will employees, temporary employees, furlough of current employees and/or a reduction in operating expenditures.</p> |
|----------------|---|

*Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.*

## **AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS**

The agency evaluates operations throughout the year to ensure we are operating efficiently and effectively. In FY2018 the agency entered into a 10 year public-private partnership with Arborgen at the Commission's Taylor Nursery. The partnership allows the agency to continue to provide state-of-the-art seedlings to forest landowners for tree planting in the future while mitigating agency budget shortfalls associated with the operation of the nursery. As a result of this agreement, we continue to see savings of approximately \$200,000 annually in salary/fringe and operating costs associated with nursery operations. The agency has repurposed the salary and fringe funds to assist with our recruitment and retention efforts. The operating funds saved are being used to bolster our Tree Improvement program to ensure SC landowners have access to the best available genetics that will be critical to maintaining and improving the productivity and health of our forests in the future.

*What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than \$50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?*

|              |                     |          |    |
|--------------|---------------------|----------|----|
| Agency Name: | Forestry Commission |          |    |
| Agency Code: | P120                | Section: | 43 |

## **FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>TITLE</b>                                       | Forestry Commission Regulation Changes<br><i>Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.</i>  |
| <b>EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS</b> | We expect no savings from these changes. However the changes should make regulations easier to understand and eliminate potential conflict with other regulations.<br><br><i>What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.</i>   |
| <b>FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST</b>         | <b>Mark "X" for all that apply:</b><br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repeal or revision of regulations.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other  |
| <b>METHOD OF CALCULATION</b>                       | N/A<br><br><i>Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.</i>  |
| <b>REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES</b>                  | N/A<br><br><i>Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?</i>   |
| <b>REDUCTION OF REGULATION</b>                     | The Forestry Commission is proposing to amend three regulations: 55-1, 55-6 and 55-11. The Forestry Commission is proposing to delete one regulation: 55-10. The enabling authority for this action is 48-23-200.<br><br><i>Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?</i>  |
| <b>SUMMARY</b>                                     | The Forestry Commission is proposing to amend three regulations (55-1, 55-6 and 55-11) and delete one regulation (55-10) in the upcoming legislative session. The three amendments will update and remove obsolete language and clarify conflicting language with other agencies regulations. The deletion removes an old regulation that is no longer applicable to the Commission's operations. These changes will not impact agency operations. |



*Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?*

## Proviso requests/changes

| FY2022-23 Proviso Request Summary |                               |                                  |  |   |                    |  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|--|
| FY 22-23 Proviso #                | Renumbered FY 22-23 Proviso # | Proviso Title                    | Summary  | FY of Proviso Introduction/<br># of years in budget | Recommended Action | Proviso Language   |
| 43.1                              |                               | Grant Funds Carry Forward        | Authorization to use unexpended federal funds in the current year to pay for prior year expenditures.  | FY 96/26 Years                                      | CODIFY             | The Forestry Commission is authorized to use unexpended federal grant funds in the current year to pay for expenditures incurred in the prior year.  |
| 43.2                              |                               | Retention of Emergency Funds     | Authorization to retain funds received through reimbursement from other state and federal agencies when Forestry Commission personnel or equipment are used.     | FY 00/22 Years                                      | CODIFY             | The Forestry Commission is authorized to retain all funds received as reimbursement of expenditures from other state or federal agencies when personnel and equipment are mobilized due to an emergency.   |
| 43.3                              |                               | Commissioned Officers' Physicals | Authorization to pay costs of physical examinations for agency law enforcement personnel.  | FY 06/16 Years                                      | CODIFY             | The Forestry Commission is authorized to pay the cost of physical examinations for agency personnel who are required to receive such physical examinations prior to receiving a law enforcement commission.  |
| 43.4                              |                               | Compensatory Payments            | Authorization to pay exempt Forestry Commission personnel actual hours worked in lieu of compensatory time, when the Governor has declared a state of emergency. | FY 12/10 Years                                      | CODIFY             | In the event a state of emergency is declared by the Governor, exempt employees of the Forestry Commission may be paid for actual hours worked in lieu of accruing compensatory time, at the direction of the agency director, and providing funds are available.  |
| 43.5                              |                               | Sale of Promotional Items        | Authorization to sell promotional items that advocate for forestry and forest culture.   | FY 22/ 1 Year                                       | CODIFY             | The Forestry Commission may sell promotional items that advocate for forestry and forest culture, including items featuring the South Carolina Forestry Commission Forest Life brand and logo, for the purpose of generating funds for agency operations. Unexpended funds may be carried forward from the prior fiscal year into the current. |