**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 48‑34‑40, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENTS FOR CONDUCTING A PRESCRIBED FIRE, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A FIRE MANAGER WHO SUPERVISES A PRESCRIBED FIRE MUST CONSIDER BOTH FIRE BEHAVIOR AND SMOKE MANAGEMENT AND TO PROVIDE CITATIONS TO OTHER SPECIFIC STATUTORY AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS; AND TO AMEND SECTION 48‑34‑50, RELATING TO LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES CAUSED BY A PRESCRIBED FIRE, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT NO PROPERTY OWNER, LESSEE, AGENT, OR EMPLOYEE MAY BE HELD LIABLE FOR DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE RESULTING SMOKE OF A PRESCRIBED FIRE UNLESS GROSS NEGLIGENCE IS PROVEN.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 48‑34‑40 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 48‑34‑40. Prescribed fires conducted pursuant to this chapter:

(1) must have a prescribed fire plan prepared before authorization to burn is given by the State Commission of Forestry, and the plan must be on site and followed during the burn;

(2) must have at least one certified prescribed fire manager present ~~and~~ who, must consider both fire behavior and smoke management issues while supervising the burn from ignition until it is declared safe according to certification guidelines;

(3) are considered in the public interest and do not constitute a public or private nuisance when conducted pursuant to state air pollution statutes, smoke management guidelines (S. C. Code of Regulations 61‑62.2), and regulations applicable to the use of prescribed fire (Chapter 35, Title 48 and Chapter 2, Title 50); and

(4) are considered a property right of the property owner.”

SECTION 2. Section 48‑34‑50 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 48‑34‑50. ~~No~~ A property owner or lessee or his agent or employee conducting a prescribed fire pursuant to this chapter is not liable for damage, injury, or loss caused by fire, ~~resulting smoke,~~ or other consequences of the prescribed fire unless negligence is proven. A property owner or lessee or his agent or employee conducting a prescribed fire pursuant to this chapter is not liable for damage, injury, or loss caused by the resulting smoke of a prescribed fire unless gross negligence is proven.”

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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