



South Carolina
Forestry Commission

STRATEGIC PLAN

PROGRESS REPORT

FOR NOVEMBER 11, 2015

Third edition

July 1-September 30, 2015

Enhance the Resource

An ample, productive forestland base and an economic climate conducive to forestry-based business are essential if forest landowners of South Carolina are to practice sustainable forest management.

Goal 1: Serve as a catalyst for promotion, development and expansion of the forest resource and forestry-related industry in the state.

Action 1. Provide leadership in the identification, recruitment, and development of appropriate primary and secondary forest industries.

- **Held Forestry Summit.** Roughly 60 attendees. Announced \$18.6 billion in forest economic impact and presented marketing plan for SC forest products.

Action 2. Cooperate with national, state, regional and local economic development organizations to promote forestry-based businesses in South Carolina.

- **State Forester and Resource Development Director met with Jennifer Noel of SC Department of Commerce** to review forestry initiatives/opportunities and sign annual MOU on mutual work and SCFC funding of portion of one position.
- **Hosted a Taiwanese delegation of lumber buyers** who were touring the southeastern states.
- **Deputy State Forester attended the SC Rural Resource Coalition meeting July 30.**

Action 3. Expand delivery of forestry-related Rural Development programs in cooperation with other agencies/entities.

- **Attended SC Biomass Council meeting and participated on biomass subcommittee that will work on submitting comments on the Clean Power Plan.**

Action 4. Identify and recommend mechanisms that would encourage management of forest lands for products and forest-related amenities.

- **Presentation about the SC forest resource made to marketing specialists at a Resolute Forest Products conference.**

Action 5. Develop mechanisms to recognize and compensate landowners who provide ecosystem services that benefit the public.

Goal 2: Improve contacts and communication with state and local levels of government concerning forestry-related issues.

Action 1. Encourage active participation in forestry issues at all organizational levels. Identify specific audiences to be reached by each program and/or operating segment of the SCFC.

- **Coastal Region- Region Personnel were instructors at Rx training sponsored by the Longleaf Alliance at the Webb Wildlife Center.**

Action 2. Increase participation in public hearings, including county council and planning commission meetings.

- Piedmont personnel monitored 27 and attended 1 County Council meeting from mid-July thru September.
- Coastal Region – Region personnel monitored 6 county council meetings from August through September 2015.
- Pee Dee Region personnel monitored 36 county council meetings from August to October.

Action 3. Invite legislative staff to participate in high profile forestry events, and plan periodic field trips for legislative staff and the Governor's office staff, focusing on all services provided to citizens of the state.

- On October 27th, agency staff arranged for the Senate Oversight Committee Staff and key Legislative Staff to tour International Paper's paper mill in Eastover and Cox Industries' wood treating plant in Orangeburg. In addition, a stop was held at the SCFC Santee Unit office in Orangeburg to view forest management practices and two tractor plow units (one open cab and one enclosed cab).

Action 4. Address regulatory and liability issues associated with forest management practices such as prescribed burning, use of pesticides, and timber harvest.

Action 5. Train personnel to be effective communicators.

Goal 3. Provide policy makers, the forestry community and the interested public accurate and timely information on the state's forest inventory and health of the forest.

Action 1. Maintain funds and personnel to re-measure the state's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) plots on a five-year cycle.

- FIA Crews have completed 82% of the data collection for Cycle 11, Panel 4 and 77% of the entire Cycle 11 inventory.
- FIA Crews completed 3 national forest intensification plots for a total of 32 for year of the 40 total plots on national forest land.
- Attended the SOFAC (Southern Forest Resource Assessment Consortium) annual meeting and SRTS (Sub-regional Timber Supply model) training.
- Ran SRTS to update SC wood supply projections to account for the 2014 ice storm.

Action 2. Survey adequate forest plots to ascertain a picture of forest health.

- FIA Crews have completed 28 of the 28 Phase 2+ plots. Phase 2+ plots are a subset of the standard FIA plot grid where additional measurements are collected for forest health.

Action 3: Continue to collect and provide information about land use, fragmentation, and ownership issues.

Goal 4. Provide landowners with optimum quality forest tree seedlings to meet needs not filled by the private sector.

Action 1. Establish 3rd generation orchards for loblolly pine seed production.

Action 2. Partner with nursery and tree improvement organizations to maintain access to technical expertise, high value plant material, and funding sources.

- Re-measured a biomass demonstration project at Manchester State Forest in preparation for a landowner meeting.

Action 3. Continue to move nursery operations toward self-sustainability.

Protect the Resource

To ensure their future health, South Carolina's forests must be protected from harm due to natural and human-caused factors.

Goal 1: Ensure prompt and effective response to wildfires and other natural disasters.

Action 1. A primary point of contact for 9-1-1 centers, fire departments and the public, Forestry Commission dispatch operations will be kept current with technology, equipment, and staffing to support the agency's statewide fire dispatch, smoke management and emergency communication roles.

Action 2. Increase emphasis on training Forestry Commission personnel and cooperators in the Incident Command System (ICS) and general wildfire suppression tactics. Seek out non-fire and additional opportunities to use ICS and complete task books.

- SCFC personnel deployed as task force leader, heavy equipment bosses, resource unit leaders, plans chief, facilities unit leader, public information officer, handcrew members and tractor plow operators in California, Idaho, Oregon, Texas, and Washington to assist in suppressing wildfires.
- Personnel participated in a SCFC conducted S-290 (Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior) training, which is a pre-requisite for future classes and leadership positions. (September 14th – 18th)
- SCFC IMT Coordinator Steve Moore deployed to Idaho on a wildland fire assignment with the Southern Area Blue Team and completed his Type 1 Task Book for Planning Section Chief.
- SCFC IMT managed the Piedmont Wood Magic event in September.
- SCFC IMT members attended the After Action Review for the South Eastern 2015 Nuclear Exercise, which the team participated.
- SCFC IMT IC provided input to Low Country Type 3 IMT in an After Action Review of their efforts at the 2015 Fire-Rescue Conference.

Action 3. Cooperate with Emergency Management Division, fire departments, and other emergency response organizations. Explore opportunities to train and utilize private and/or non-traditional cooperators.

- **Joaquin Flood Event** - SCFC personnel responded to historic flooding during October, 2015. Response included deployment of the SCFC Incident Management Team to assist

the Columbia/Richland Fire Department with search & rescue efforts, deployment of 9 chainsaw teams to clear debris from roads and dams in Richland County, providing SCFC aircraft for reconnaissance missions, deploying firefighters and portable pumps to relieve high water in Orangeburg County, providing 24 hour staffing at the State Emergency Operations Center and assessing forest resource and SCFC facility damage, and repairing damage to SCFC facilities and infra-structure.

- 25 SCFC IMT and other SCFC personnel deployed for 7 days to work with Columbia Fire Department to manage the rescue and recovery for Richland County.
 - 12 SCFC personnel staffed shifts in the ESF4 section in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) around the clock for 9 days and during daylight hours for 3 days.
 - 9 two-man chainsaw crews were deployed to Richland County for 3 days.
 - 5 SCFC personnel assisted in other emergency response activities across the state.
 - 26 SCFC personnel involved in damage assessment of forest resource and assessment & repair of SCFC facilities and infra-structure.
 - SCFC state forest personnel at MSF and HSF assessed and repaired damaged to state forest roads and trails.
 - The Upstate All Hazard IMT assisted with Staging at the Criminal Justice Academy, Finance at the Lexington EOC and Planning & Operations at the Clarendon County EOC during the flood.
- Greenville/Pickens Supervisor attended Pickens County Rescue meeting to discuss mountain rescues.
 - Piedmont East Unit Forester attended training at McCrady Fire Dept. on dealing with unexploded ordinances in September.
 - Piedmont East Unit personnel participated in the VC summer nuclear plant exercise with Newberry County EOC.
 - Coastal Region Berkeley/Upper Charleston Supervisor and Berkeley County Supervisor met to discuss Federal Excess Equipment Program.
 - Coastal Region Santee Unit personnel attended two SCE&G LNP Plant and Emergency Response Training Seminars.

Action 4. Evaluate staffing, equipment and technology to ensure adequate response to all wildfires and other disasters within the scope of the SCFC's mission.

Goal 2. Evaluate wildfire protection strategies, priorities and capabilities as urban development into forested areas creates additional hazards.

Action 1. Redefine and strengthen the cooperative relationship with local fire departments as urban developments expand into forested areas.

- Piedmont Region personnel attended 5 Fire Department meetings in Anderson (1), Newberry (3), and Oconee (1) Co., 2 Fire Chiefs meetings in Oconee and Pickens Co., 1 Oconee Fire Commission meeting, and 2 County Firemen Association meetings in Newberry Co.
- SCFC personnel received and receipted federal excess equipment. Among those received were:

- 1986 Chevy 4x4 pickup from River Falls FD
- 1987 Ford F350 4x4 4-door pickup from DMW FD
- 1967 Kaiser truck from DMW FD
- Among the equipment received were:
 - 2001 Caterpillar forklift from Camp LeJeune, NC
 - 1997 M1078 2.5-ton cargo truck from Ft. Stewart, GA
 - 2009 tool set, trailer and container from Ft. Jackson, SC
- Coastal Region- Region personnel participated in the National Night Out with Bluffton Fire and Rescue
- Coastal Region – Region personnel attended the Aiken County and Calhoun County Fire Chief meetings.
- Piedmont personnel participated in the Kids Fun Day at Newberry Fire Dept. in September.

Action 2. Implement low-impact suppression techniques where applicable.

- Coastal Region- Region Personnel monitored lightning fire on Front Coles Island near Folly Beach and determined no action required or feasible.

Action 3. Incorporate a Firewise approach to wildland urban interface areas by identifying communities at risk through hazard assessment, developing wildfire protection plans for communities, developing education/awareness efforts for communities, and developing fuels management strategies.

- During FY 15, we have completed 421 Community Assessments, with 173 rated at moderate risk, 247 rated at high risk and 1 rated at extreme risk. Fifteen Community Wildfire Protection Plans were developed with 13 delivered. Currently there are 439 Communities at Risk.
- In FY 15, grant funds (Fuel Mitigation and Stevens) totaling \$285,884.00 were utilized to assist 25 communities and fuel mitigation treatments were performed on 13 tracts totaling 528 acres.
 - SCFC personnel assisted in constructing a 5 mile firebreak on the power line Right of Way in Carolina Forest Community, Horry County to protect several Firewise communities.
 - Woodside Plantation in Aiken County recognized as the 27th Firewise USA community in SC and Hidden Harbor recognized as the 29th Firewise USA community.
 - SCFC personnel assisted with the signing of the Awendaw Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in Berkeley County.
 - SCFC personnel assisted with the Backyards and Beyond Conference by locating homes to be assessed for preconference courses and presenting during the conference.
 - SCFC personnel setup and manned the Firewise Mobile Exhibit at a Loris community event. The Firewise Mobile Exhibit was also used by the USFS at the Savannah River Plant fire prevention event in October
 - Firewise assessments were developed for the communities of Stone Ledge, Port Santorini and Lake Yonah (SC/GA border) in Oconee County with the help of

SCFC personnel and Clemson Ext. personnel. SCFC personnel also completed the assessment of Landrum Fire District in Spartanburg County.

- SCFC personnel presented a Firewise workshop for Roebuck Fire Dep. (King's Grant Community).
- Firewise contacts were made by the Upstate Firewise Coordinator who attended the Exotic Plant Pest Control Annual meeting.
- SCFC personnel presented the Firewise assessment and CWPP to Shannon Lake, Inc. (Greenville County)
- SCFC personnel worked with personnel from the SC Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism to complete a wildfire management plan for Hampton Plantation State Park. This historic property was threatened by the Windy Fire in 2011. This plan identifies access routes, archeological sites, and mitigation measures to ensure protection of this historic property.

Action 4. Emphasize wildfire prevention through the deployment of fire prevention teams during Fire Prevention Week and periods of high wildfire occurrence.

Action 5. Seek out non-traditional partners who may provide assistance with changing fire protection issues.

Goal 3. Lead in law enforcement services in wildfire and forest product theft and fraud arenas.

Action 1. Provide forest product theft awareness and prevention training to SCFC personnel, landowners, and cooperators.

- Investigators assisted with the Certified Prescribed Fire Manager Course by teaching the law enforcement portion.

Action 2. Develop and enforce a standardized procedures manual for field investigation and prosecution.

Action 3. Continue to implement a Class 1 Certification Program for SCFC officers and investigators.

- Kershaw/Lee Supervisor position filled with a class 1 certified law enforcement officer. He was sworn in and completed the new officer orientation on October 13.

Action 4. Review law enforcement officer staffing levels and adjust accordingly

Goal 4. Re-evaluate programs to ensure prompt response to insects, other forest pests, and disease outbreaks and concerns.

Action 1. Provide training to agency foresters, technicians, and cooperators (consulting foresters, industrial foresters, federal agencies in combination with USFS, other state agencies, i.e., PRT, DNR, DOT, etc.) on survey techniques, identification and control of forest pests, and integrated pest management.

- In August, the SCFC hired David Jenkins, a PhD Entomologist, as our Forest Health Specialist. In this position, he will coordinate all of the agency forest health programs, including southern pine beetle prevention, insect & disease identification, and providing assistance to forest landowners.

Action 2. Maintain continuous monitoring of forest insect and disease activity, including invasive species.

- In September, Forest Health staff met with representatives from Clemson University to discuss detection and management of the Emerald Ash Borer. This invasive insect was recently discovered in multiple counties in North Carolina, and a statewide quarantine is in effect. The SCFC and Clemson are planning for early detection of the emerald ash borer with deployment of traps this spring.

Action 3. Provide detailed field or lab evaluation of specific forest pest problems for use by land managers. Cooperate with Clemson Plant Pest Regulatory agency.

Action 4. Maintain staffing, technology and equipment to combat forest pest problems on a timely basis and as required by state law.

Goal 5. Enhance water quality protection by increasing awareness and compliance with South Carolina Best Management Practices for Forestry (BMPs).

Action 1. Improve delivery of pre-harvest planning and BMP recommendations through the Courtesy Exam Program to protect water quality and site productivity during forestry operations.

- During July, August, and September 2015, BMP Foresters made 234 site visits and completed 72 courtesy exams.

Action 2. Provide classroom and field BMP training for forestry contractors, private landowners, industry, SCFC employees, and other agencies through the Timber Operations Professional logger training program, in cooperation with industry and through SCFC workshops.

- During July, August, and September 2015, BMP Foresters conducted 1 TOP Logger training in Georgetown, with a total of 28 forestry professionals attending.
- In July, Coastal BMP forester gave a 1 hour BMP talk to the Givhans Men's Group with 16 in attendance.
- In August, BMP Staff conducted 2 field BMP training opportunities for Plum Creek foresters on Plum Creek property with a total of 9 attending.
- In September, Piedmont BMP Forester conducted a training for Clemson's senior harvesting class at Poe Creek State Forest with 30 in attendance.
- In September, Clemson University and the SCFC held a forestry BMP training for staff from the Clemson University Center for Watershed Excellence on the Clemson Forest with 16 in attendance.
- Richland/Lexington Sector reviewed BMP firebreak plowing compliance.
- Spartanburg/Union Sector reviewed Chester County Leeds fire.

Action 3. Encourage contractors to include BMP compliance statements in their contracts.

Action 4. Work with SC Forestry Association, Association of Consulting Foresters, Clemson University, SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, SC Timber Producers Association, county landowner associations, and other organizations to encourage landowners, loggers, foresters, and contractors to request courtesy BMP examinations.

- This was done during the TOP Logger program in Georgetown in August.

Action 5. Continue BMP monitoring to document success and provide opportunities for education of landowners, loggers, and forestry professionals.

Action 6. Respond to BMP complaints and provide technical expertise to appropriate enforcement agencies.

- BMP Foresters responded to 5 complaints between July and September 2015.

Action 7. Periodically review Best Management Practices (BMP) guidelines and update as needed to better protect water quality.

Action 8. Update cooperative agreements with state and federal regulatory agencies, forest industry, and private organizations to protect environmental functions.

Goal 6. Promote the responsible use of prescribed fire.

Action 1. Continue to monitor and research smoke management guidelines to maintain air quality standards.

Action 2. Maintain an active role in leadership of the SC Prescribed Fire Council.

- The SC Prescribed Fire Council annual meeting was held in Colleton County September 23-24, 2015. The SCFC was a sponsor of the meeting, and agency staff assisted with registration, logistics, and provided an agency update. SCFC staff are members of the Prescribed Fire Council Steering Committee. Columbia, Coastal Region and Piedmont Region personnel attended.

Action 3. Examine regulations and liability issues concerning prescribed burning and seek solutions that will provide for public safety while permitting prescribed burning.

- Coastal Region-Region personnel attended Berkeley/ Charleston/ Dorchester Council of Governments Air Quality Coalition meeting in North Charleston.

Manage the Resource

Forest landowners, communities, and the public expect the South Carolina Forestry Commission to deliver financial and technical assistance while addressing social and environmental concerns.

Goal 1. Provide improved land management services to landowners of South Carolina.

Action 1. Continually identify our customers' needs and take a proactive approach. Offer forest management services that the SCFC can reasonably provide to landowners to improve timber production, aid in efficient utilization of the timber resource, foster conservation and multiple use of the forest resource, and manage and maintain healthy urban forests.

Action 2. Periodically perform internal study of current services provided by the SCFC. Solicit input from employees on how services can be better performed.

Action 3. Provide forest management assistance to public entities that hold forested lands. Conduct annual planning meetings to discuss upcoming projects, review fee structure, and discuss expansion of services.

Action 4. Stay current with new management techniques and methods of forest management to ensure delivery of the best possible advice.

Goal 2: Administer reforestation programs and provide technical forest management assistance designed to meet landowners' goals.

Action 1. Develop specialized management strategies applicable to landowners with small tracts. Utilize the Stewardship program to deliver comprehensive management plans to all landowners with multiple natural resource management objectives.

Action 2. Improve utilization of trained forest technicians.

- **Piedmont West Unit Forestry Techs spent 6 hours conducting WUI assessments.**

Action 3. Provide special services, for a fee, that are not adequately provided by the private sector, such as prescribed burning, firebreak plowing, and water bar construction.

SCFC special services (from July 2014-June 2015)				
	Prescribed burn (acres)	Prescribed burn standby (acres)	Firebreak plowing	Waterbar construction
Coastal	4,732	694	427	19
Pee Dee	2,201	320	241	0
Piedmont	2,117	2,705	142	67
TOTAL	9,050	3,719	810	86

SCFC special services (from July-September 2015)				
	Prescribed burn (acres)	Prescribed burn standby (acres)	Firebreak plowing (miles)	Waterbar construction
Coastal	105	0	39	0
Pee Dee	0	0	23.5	0
Piedmont	0	0	10	0
TOTAL	105	0	72.5	0

- Pee Dee Region personnel completed one site preparation prescribed burn and installed 23.5 miles of firebreaks as requested by landowners.

Action 4. Continue to re-evaluate use and administration of current reforestation funds. Actively seek partnerships that increase the diversity of sources for reforestation assistance and the funding available for forestry practices.

Goal 3. Provide technical, educational and financial assistance in urban and community forestry to local governments and organized groups living and working within established developing and populated areas.

Action 1. Meet with local government personnel, advocacy groups and professional organizations periodically to assess needs and provide technical assistance in the development and management of public trees and forests.

- Coastal Region- Region Personnel attended Tree Protection Committee meetings. .
- Provided technical assistance to 29 government, professional organizations and advocacy groups.

Action 2: Develop and/or acquire tools to facilitate technical, educational and financial assists and services.

- SCFC Urban & Community Forest program manager serving on the Southern Group of State Forester’s Urban Forest Institute planning committee. UFI is designed to keep state coordinators updated with the latest in urban forestry technology and planning.
- Submitted an abstract to the USFS on a grant project entitled “Protecting and Restoring Urban Tree Canopy for Storm water Management” along with six other states (AL, FL, GA, NC, OK, and VA).

Action 3. Administer the community forestry grant program as available and provide information on other available sources of grants and funding to assist in the development and management of public trees and forests.

- Completed Community Forest Management grant in partnership with the Conversation Fund, resulting in the completion of 10 forest management plans, 4 workshops (83 attendees) and 3 demonstration sites.
- Awarded 6 grants funded by the USFS to Anderson County, Darlington County, Jasper County, East Cooper Land Trust, Santee-Lychees Council of Government, and

Summerville. Grant awardees will create green infrastructure maps and a plan. The maps include a green infrastructure base map and themed overlay maps (i.e. water or working lands, any maps of risk and opportunities identified). Awardees will also create a plan for restoring at risk areas and maintain current high value natural areas that form an interconnected network of natural assets. The grant will enable communities to better assess, manage, protect or restore their natural assets to create healthy ecosystems, communities and economies by utilizing the six-step process set forth in “Evaluating and Conserving Green Infrastructure Across the Landscape: A Practitioner’s Guide for SC.”

Action 4. Conduct on-site programs, provide literature and web site information, and work through partners to sponsor / present information regarding arboriculture, community forestry issues, and the value of ecosystem services to targeted audiences.

- Presentation/Canopy session in North Myrtle Beach Sept 17th.
- Presentation for Federal Employee Retiree Interest Group of Sun City, Carolina Lakes on Sept 28.
- Presentation to the Manning Tree Board about Urban & Community Forestry Best Management Practices July 28.
- Presented Lake City their Tree City USA award to city council.
- Assisted in planning, logistics and program of SC Arborist Workshop in partnership with Trees SC in September 2015 held at Harbison State Forest Environmental Center.
- Held a SC Green Infrastructure Model workshop for community planners and GIS specialists in partnership with the Green Infrastructure Center in September at the Columbia Headquarters. Twenty-one people attended the workshop.

Action 5. Offer expertise to other SCFC program areas and support opportunities for professional development and technical skill enhancement of agency foresters regarding arboriculture and/or community forestry issues and involve them in local forestry issues within their assigned areas.

- Worked with WUI staff for ETV program preparation.

Action 6: Work through local, regional, and state partners to educate them on the workload and financial challenges of the community forestry program and encourage them to advocate for state support and funding.

- Trees SC board meeting on July 23rd.

Goal 4. Use landholdings to demonstrate innovative forest management techniques as well as for in-house training and applied research.

Action 1. Develop relationships with educational institutions and research organizations to encourage the use of state forest lands as potential research sites.

Action 2. Work with Clemson University Extension, local forestry landowner organizations, and other partners to promote state forests as forestry practices demonstration sites.

Action 3. Actively seek out grants, federal funds and other income sources to expand the state forest system, with the primary goal of acquiring tracts contiguous to existing properties.

Raise Awareness about the Resource

We must raise the awareness among decision-makers and the public in general concerning the environmental and economic benefits of sound forest management.

Goal 1. Develop and promote forestry education programs for all audiences.

Action 1. Continue to develop Harbison State Forest and the Piedmont Forestry Center as forestry education centers, and expand programs to selected field locations.

- Harbison State Forest hosted three forestry education programs that reached 27 adults and 9 high school students.
- Environmental Education staff conducted three forestry education programs at other locations that reached 525 elementary students and 11 high school students.

Action 2. Promote conservation education programs such as Wood Magic, Project Learning Tree and Teaching KATE (Kids About The Environment). Increase SCFC personnel participation in education programs.

- West Unit Forester and Oconee/Anderson Supervisor taught “Good Fire/Bad Fire” at 4H Forestry Camp in Greenville County and had the Oconee Type 6 Engine on display.
- The Wood Magic Forest Fair at the Piedmont Forestry Center was conducted September 15-18. This event reached 456 students, 26 teachers, and 59 parent/chaperones. Twenty-Five SCFC personnel were among the 57 volunteers for the event.
- Six Project Learning Tree workshops conducted for 92 participants. SCFC personnel served as facilitators for three of those workshops.
- Developed forestry-related messaging for a forestry exhibit being planned at Bee City tourist attraction in Cottageville.

Action 3. Continue annual teacher's tour and development of forestry educational material.

- Updated economic impact, fire facts and forestry facts sheets.

Goal 2: Enhance the image of the Forestry Commission as an initial source for forest management information and assistance in South Carolina.

Action 1. Develop creative approaches to reaching landowners through civic involvement, group meetings, tours, workshops, advertising and other opportunities.

- Regional meetings of County Forestry Boards were held.
- Columbia and Piedmont Region personnel assisted with the Indian Creek Field Tour in Newberry County.
- SCFC personnel attended the annual Tree Farm Awards Ceremony and Field Tour in Saluda County.
- Coastal Region Santee Unit enclosed cab tractor plow unit was exhibited at National Guard Family Day on September 12 near Moncks Corner.

- Coastal Region- Region Personnel attended the annual Plantation Managers Meeting and the Lowcountry RC&D Council meeting in Walterboro, and the Seewee Longleaf Conservation Cooperative meeting in Awendaw.
- Developed statewide “Don’t Move Firewood” campaign in conjunction with the Protection Division to raise awareness about the dangers of moving firewood. This campaign included placing signs and informational literature at every state park in South Carolina, purchasing +\$10K worth of campaign-branded promotional items, and contracting with SC Radio Network to run two different 30-second radio spots multiple times daily on 31 stations around the state in addition to being featured nightly on the statewide “Sportstalk” radio program.
- Wrote and distributed press releases on:
 - BMP annual report numbers, courtesy exams
 - Out-of-state firefighter assignments
 - Firewise designation ceremony
 - SC Forest Products Week
 - Law enforcement arrests (2)

Action 2. Explore diverse methods for marketing the agency's programs and promoting services to new audiences (continually reference “Manage the Resource” Goal 1, Action 2 in doing so).

- Pee Dee Region personnel explained SCFC programs and services available to landowners at the Kershaw County Young Farmers meeting.
- Began publishing a digital newsletter titled *Forest Products Export & Marketing Report* to communicate key information to our forest industry in a timely manner.
- Established a new target of one social media message/post daily on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, promoting agency, forestry and industry news, events and people.

Action 3. Maintain and continually update the Forestry Commission website.

- Created a special flood-related section on the homepage of the agency’s website to provide assistance, response and assessment information to landowners, loggers and citizens. The special section also featured research and technical information about trees submerged in water, BMP assistance and flood maps produced by emergency response partners.

Goal 3. Utilize all media to reach targeted audiences with relevant forestry information.

Action 1. Research potential audiences to develop targeted information and/or education campaigns.

- Generated widespread positive press coverage of forestry’s economic impact in SC by promoting the SCFC/SCFA 20x15 Summit. This coverage included full-length video stories by several TV stations around the state, AP wire pickup coverage in almost every newspaper in SC, in dozens of other news outlets regionally and nationally, and through all local, regional and national forestry partners’ websites, newsletters and other communication vehicles.

- Sent promotional media kits (containing forest products and their derivatives) to Midlands-area print and broadcast media to entice them to cover the Wood Magic Forest Fair at Harbison State Forest.
- Edgefield/McCormick/Saluda Project Forester was interviewed by the SC Radio Network on his deployment to California for wildfire control.

Action 2. Develop audio-visual, print, and exhibit material, promoting forestry and forest management, for use by agency personnel in their communities. Encourage use of these items through assignment of EPMS goals.

- Worked with SCFC staff to conceive and construct a large wooden sign depicting SC forestry's \$18.6 billion economic impact, which served as a backdrop for the 20x15 Summit and also a focal point for broadcast media to highlight.
- Promoted agency people, programs and services by gathering information for articles to include the agency's employee newsletter *Tree Country*.
- Designed and produced a series of promotional pop-up banners highlighting several different divisions of the agency, including Urban & Community Forestry, Firewise, Careers and General Services.
- Designed a Taylor Nursery ad for placement in SCFA's bimonthly journal, SCDOA's Market Bulletin and other print outlets.
- Produced new PowerPoint presentation templates for Executive, BMP and Protection staff.
- Worked with the Resource Development Division to write, design and publish SC Forest Products exports and marketing reports (via e-mail marketing website, Constant Contact).

Goal 4: Increase interaction, cooperation, and communication with other state agencies, local governments, forestry organizations, universities, professional societies, environmental and conservation groups.

Action 1. Partner with the South Carolina Forestry Association (SCFA), American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA), Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF), Clemson University, the National Association and Southern Group of State Foresters (NASF, SGSF) and other sister organizations to identify common messages and deliver to targeted audiences.

- Developed all collateral materials and a set of new publications for the 20x15 Summit, including the agency's full economic impact study, Ice Storm Damage Report, Forest Products Exports Report, and Economic Impact one-pager.
- Coastal Region- Region Personnel attended Tree Farm Inspectors training at the KapStone lumber mill in Summerville.
- State Forester attended National Association of State Foresters (NASF) annual meeting in Lake Tahoe in September and chaired Forest Markets Committee meeting for last time. He will continue to be a member of the committee.
- State Forester and Resource Development Director attended Volvo Corporation's ground-breaking ceremony on former Mead Westvaco forest land in Berkeley County in September.
- Worked with Governor Nikki Haley's office to have her sign a proclamation designating the week of Oct. 19 as SC Forest Products Week in the Palmetto State.

Action 2. Improve contacts and communication with local governments.

- SCFC disbursed \$481,464.17 to school districts in counties where SCFC state forests are located. Three check presentations were made in Chesterfield, Jasper and Sumter counties; the remaining checks were mailed to eight county/school districts.

Action 3. Encourage SCFC personnel to participate in landowner associations and other forestry and conservation- related organizations.

- Piedmont Region personnel attended 3 forest landowner association meetings - Newberry County Landowners, Lexington County Forest Landowners and Anderson County Forest & Wildlife Associations.
- Assistant Sand Hills State Forest Director Justin Smith gave a presentation on pine straw management to the Lexington County Forest Landowner Association.
- Pee Dee Region personnel attended two forest landowner association meetings – Sumter County Forest Landowner and Chesterfield County Forest Landowner Associations.

Action 4. Provide leadership for state agencies to cooperatively provide forest conservation information to landowners in forest management, recreation, wildlife management and wildland/urban interface concerns.

Prepare to Meet Future Demands

To meet future demands and provide quality customer service, the South Carolina Forestry Commission must have well-trained, qualified staff that enjoy a safe and rewarding work environment.

Goal 1. Strive to maintain a capable, satisfied and diverse work team.

Action 1. Provide forward-thinking leadership that is creative, clear, innovative and demanding of excellence.

Action 2. Actively recruit and employ highly-qualified, diverse individuals who are committed to providing public service.

- Recruited and hired the following positions during July, August and September 2015: Forest Health Program Manager/Columbia; Public Information Coordinator/Columbia, Mechanic III/Piedmont, Forestry Technician II/Manchester State Forest.
- Hired a new Public Information Coordinator, Justin Holt, to serve as writer, graphic designer, social media manager and general communication specialist.

Action 3. Encourage continuous improvement through individual and team efforts.

Action 4. Ensure an organizational culture that promotes high performance, access to educational opportunities, and employee accountability.

- Administrative personnel attended the *Benefits at Work* Conference hosted by the SC Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA).

- Piedmont Administrative Specialist attended the TM-200 Time Administration Class.

Action 5. Continuously assess the organization's future human resources needs and identify the potential of staff for advancement opportunities.

Action 6. Develop and implement strategies to promote positive agency and employee morale.

- On September 29, Kim Aydlette, Director, Division of State Human Resources, South Carolina Department of Administration met with the State Forester, Deputy State Forester, Director of Administration, Information Technology Director, Human Resource Director and Public Information Director. In July 1, 2015, Mrs. Aydlette was appointed Division Director of State Human Resources by Governor Haley when the Division of State Human Resources transitioned to become part of the new Department of Administration. She was provided an overview of the Commission and discussed current and future human resource issues statewide and specific to the agency.

Goal 2. Enhance professional development for agency personnel to efficiently, safely, and professionally provide better services.

Action 1. Encourage foresters to pursue various specialties (e.g. hardwood management, GIS, arboriculture, taxation issues) as well as basic forest management.

- SCFC personnel attended the Longleaf Academy in Aiken.

Action 2. Provide informational sessions and educational material to SCFC employees on the services provided by the agency.

Action 3. Identify training needed through self-assessment processes and a training council. Send employees to outside training if necessary and utilize them as instructors for the balance of staff.

- Coastal Region- Region Personnel participated in monthly conference call for the National Wildfire Coordinating Group Fire Weather Sub-committee.

Action 4. Evaluate and adopt appropriate technology to improve the efficiency of SCFC personnel so that they may provide improved services to customers.

Action 5. Encourage and facilitate employees in pursuing State Government's Associate Public Manager (APM) and Certified Public Manager (CPM) awards.

Action 6. Support professional development of personnel. Encourage membership in professional societies that allow employees to develop skills and contacts outside their normal work routine.

- Piedmont forester attended 2 meetings with the Newberry Exchange club during months July thru October.

Goal 3. Review staffing levels and organizational structure to ensure the agency is in a position to supply needed services.

Action 1. Performance measures will be generated for each program area.

Action 2. Perform unit forest management and forest protection reviews on a timely basis and utilize results to examine staffing level at unit offices.

Action 3. Support changes in legislation that would alter the status of county forestry boards, as recommended by the Legislative Audit Council.

Action 4. Review workforce planning status (i.e. TERI, retirement eligible employees) and develop a preparation plan for staff changes.

Goal 4. Implement plans and establish performance measures to reduce the number of job-related injuries.

Action 1. Implement applicable safety regulations and guidelines and develop procedures to ensure agency compliance.

Action 2. Maintain the physical fitness standards based on job requirements.

Action 3. Provide information to employees on the benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle and encourage employee participation.

- On August 11, the Human Resource Office coordinated a free preventative health screening for SCFC personnel at the Columbia headquarters available to employees and spouses whose primary health insurance is the State Health Plan. The preventative screening is valued at \$300 and is offered through the state's benefit insurance program. State Law Enforcement employees and the Criminal Justice Academy employees were invited to attend. Forty individuals participated in this event.
- On September 29, the Human Resource Office coordinated a free flu shot clinic at the Columbia headquarters. Newberry County office employees, State Law Enforcement employees and the Criminal Justice Academy employees, and any other eligible state employees in the area were invited to attend. Walgreen's Pharmacy conducted the clinic and administered 49 flu vaccines to participants.
- October 1-31, 2015 is open enrollment for active state employees. Human Resource staff conducted benefit overview sessions for all employees. These sessions were conducted multiple locations in all three regions and the Columbia office.

Goal 5. Establish goals and implement vehicle and equipment operation safety training to reduce the number of accidents.

Action 1. Provide Driver Improvement and Fire Suppression Equipment Operator Task Training programs and make improvements as needed. Ensure employees who drive state vehicles on a regular basis have completed Driver Improvement training.

Action 2. Evaluate the need for additional vehicle and equipment operator training and other specialized training such as chainsaw use. Develop programs needed.

- Newberry/Fairfield Sector watched training video of Two Sides of Fire and preventive maintenance.
- Richland-Lexington Sector reviewed BMP compliance concerning firebreak plowing.