STATE OF SC’s FORESTS
BY THE NUMBERS: 2015

Forest Area
- South Carolina has 13 million acres of forestland. This is 67% of the state’s total land area.
- Hardwood timber types occupy over 52% of the state’s forestland. Softwoods occupy 48%.
- South Carolina’s forestland acreage remains stable, averaging 12.6 million acres since 1968.
- The 2012 forest inventory found that there are 2.3 million more acres of forestland than there were in the first inventory in 1936.

Forest Ownership
- 88% of South Carolina’s forests are privately owned.
- 63% of private forests are family-owned.
- The average “family forest” is 80 acres. 56% of these owners have their primary residence on the land.
- Forest industries own 137,400 acres, down 93% since 2001 and continuing to decline.
- Public agencies manage 12% of South Carolina’s forests.

Forest Inventory
- South Carolina’s forests now contain 25 billion cubic feet of wood, more than at any time in the past century.
- The state’s forests, both hardwood and softwood, are growing more wood than is being harvested.
- Net annual softwood growth is double pre-Hurricane Hugo growth rates. The present annual growth of 935 million cubic feet per year is the highest ever recorded.
- Net annual hardwood growth rates have recovered since Hurricane Hugo. The present net annual growth of 321 million cubic feet per year is 39% above pre-Hugo levels.

Forest Health
- The state’s forested watersheds fulfill a critical resource role as the primary supplier of clean public water. In addition to beautiful landscapes, forests provide clean water and air, wildlife habitat, recreation, carbon storage, and soil protection.
- South Carolina’s forested watersheds are well managed as documented by a 93.4% compliance rating with state water quality guidelines.

Economic Impact
- Forestry is #1 among manufacturing industries in jobs (90,320) and payroll ($4.48 billion).
- The total economic impact of South Carolina’s forest industry is $18.6 billion annually.
- South Carolina exports $1.5 billion in forest products each year.
- Timber is the state’s #1 harvested crop at $759 million annually.