March 2018
的成功故事：在Pinnacle山的康复

谢谢我们的新州林业专员，让我有机会在
这个空间写一个客座专栏，这一直被保留
为我们的机构总监的想法。Scott表示他
希望其他人也能在每月的Tree Country的
前言中写一篇，所以我感到很荣幸能
开启这个新传统。

当我四年前开始在这里工作时，我并不
知道关于林业、野外灭火或事件管理
的任何事情。这可能对一个其工作
必然需要与媒体、学生、立法者和公
众沟通的人来说有点奇怪。首字母缩
略词像FIA、PLT、BMPs、PPE、ICS——
和一百个其他人——可能对我来说
更好像是象形文字。

但我们的前任州林业专员Gene
Kodama告诉我，他们并不希望我
填补这个角色，因为我已经
精通了我们独特文化中
的术语和实践的
专业。更好的是，一个
未受过训练的人，
他说，带来新的
目光和
视角来讲述
林业委员会的
故事。在很短的
时间——以及与
成千上万的森林
经理、消防员、推
土机手、行政人
员从州
各地——我对
WUI、FRP和EAB
了如指掌。

好吧，可能
没有最好的
，但足以说
我在很短的
时间里
认识了一个
新世界
的林业
和火
我从不知道
存在，事情开始
理解。当然，我
不能计算
基材面积；然
而，我并不选择
新闻和公共关系
作为我的职业生涯
因为我的数学
才能。

一个我早
期学
习到的最
吸引人
的话题
和技能
是计划
燃烧。

就像许多人
一样，我一直在
被火所吸引，所
以当我刚
开始
听办公室的人
问他们
下一次
计划燃
烧是
什么时候时，我
就开始
听到

三月是计划燃
烧意识月

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Tree Country

March 2018

the employee newsletter of the South Carolina Forestry Commission

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from the desk of Director of Communications & Public Information

Doug Wood

many thanks to our new State Forester for giving me the opportunity to write a guest column in this space，which has customarily been reserved for the thoughts of our agency director。Scott has indicated that he'd like others to pen the monthly introduction to Tree Country as well，so I'm honored to kick off this new tradition。

When I started here nearly four years ago，I didn't know the first thing about forestry，wildland firefighting or incident management。This might seem odd for someone whose job necessarily entails communicating with the media，students，legislators and the general public about those very things。Acronyms like FIA，PLT，BMPs，PPE，ICS——和一百个其他人——可能对我来说更像是字母表。

But our previous State Forester Gene Kodama stressed to me that the agency wasn't looking for someone to fill this role who was already fluent in the terminology and practices of our unique culture and diverse，yet allied，set of professions。Better that an uninitiated person，he said，bring fresh eyes and perspective to telling the Forestry Commission story。And in a very short time — and with the patient assistance of countless foresters，firefighters，dispatchers，program managers and administrative personnel from literally every corner of the state — I was talking about WUI，FRP and EAB with the best of them。

Okay，maybe not with the best of them，but suffice it to say I was quickly absorbing this fascinating new world of forestry and fire that I never knew existed，and things were starting to sink in。Granted，I still can't calculate basal area；then again，I didn't choose journalism and public relations as a career because of my prodigious math skills。

One of the most intriguing of these new topics and skill sets I was learning about early in my tenure here was prescribed burning。Like many people，I've always been fascinated by fire，so when I started hearing folks around the office asking each other when they were going to
get out and do some burning, I was naturally very curious. Burning? You mean we get to burn stuff? At work? This job was getting better by the day, I thought.

So I finally got out in the field for my first controlled burn. Imagine my disappointment when I was told that, no, I can’t have a turn on the four-wheeler outfitted with an ignition-switch drip torch on the side. Bummer.

Growing up, then living as an adult, for the most part, in the city limits, I had no exposure to prescribed burning, its purposes, its benefits or — you guessed it — its resultant smoke. One of my first media inquiries on the job was about heavy smoke north of Mt. Pleasant coming from a prescribed burn on the Francis Marion National Forest. Never mind the apparently baffling difference in the public’s mind between our agency and the US Forest Service — that could fill another entire column — but it wasn’t long before I was fielding many more smoke calls than I was fire calls.

That trend continues today; our phones ring off the hook every time smoke from a prescribed burn is seen or smelled anywhere in or near a metropolitan area. And rightly so. People are obviously concerned that a) a wildfire may be in their area, b) the smoke is affecting them adversely or c) both.

These are not concerns to laugh off, ignore or otherwise take lightly. To the contrary, we should welcome the opportunity as a teaching moment and educate the public about the importance of prescribed burning and explain the cost-benefit nature of the practice.

March is Prescribed Fire Awareness Month in South Carolina, and in addition to securing a governor’s proclamation to that effect, the Communications & Public Information staff issues press releases and makes social media posts that tout the benefits of prescribed burning.

But this year we’d like to do more, and we need the help of our frontline firefighters, particularly county supervisors, to help spread the word. Too often prescribed burning is portrayed negatively in the media because the coverage tends to focus on the smoke impacts it has, particularly in more heavily populated areas. What’s usually missing from media coverage is the positive spin, which, as the only agency whose mission is tied so closely to the safe and responsible use of fire, we are in a unique position to provide.

This year we want to “get out in front of the story,” as the saying goes, by enlisting our personnel who are conducting controlled burns to spend time with media talking about why the practice is so important. The C&PI staff will be more actively pursuing these audio-visual opportunities this year and pitching media in all parts of the state to do stories on prescribed burning and the benefits thereof.

Some of you may have seen the positive article about prescribed burning in the Florence Morning News last week, which featured Williamsburg Sector Supervisor Terry Cook and Marion/Horry County Project Forester GraceAnna Schilz (page 4). This affirmative and constructive article conveys exactly the kind of public education that we’re trying to reinforce as part of this effort. It also dovetails nicely with one of our new State Forester’s five priorities: strengthening communications!

Making this happen on a statewide scale requires the assistance of our county supervisors as well as their staffs. As we are entering the prime time for burning, we are asking supervisors to be responsive and cooperative with requests for interviews and “ride-along” opportunities that will allow media to cover the issue from the agency’s — and responsible land managers’ — perspective. Another way supervisors can assist would be to let us know as often as possible, and preferably a few days in advance, when and how much burning they plan to be doing so that the C&PI and Protection staffs can coordinate media opportunities with precision and professionalism.

Thank you all for your cooperation and enthusiasm. Yours in forestry,
Employee News

New Employees
We would like to welcome one new employee who joined the agency in February, Tommy Williams.

Tommy Williams is the new Trades Specialist III at Sand Hills State Forest. Tommy started Feb. 5 and lives in Cheraw. He attended Chesterfield High School and Caldwell College and previously worked as a diesel mechanic for 24 years. Tommy also served four years with the U.S. Marine Corps and 20 years with the SC National Guard.

Welcome, Tommy!

Personnel News
Pee Dee Dispatcher Jennifer Owens resigned effective Jan. 31.

There are two personnel movements effective Mar. 2. Horry/Marion Project Forester Grace Anna Schilz will move to the Georgetown/Williamsburg project. Abbeville Forest Technician Clay Cooper will be assigned to Williamsburg County.

Retiree News
Retiree William C. “Bill” Moody, Jr. passed away Friday Feb. 9. Bill was the Edgefield Project Forester for many years before his retirement and father to Ray Moody, who ran the Nursery and Tree Improvement section.

Interagency Mail Service Changes
Starting March 1, 2018 we will be discontinuing interagency mail service (IMS) for quite a few offices. IMS has started charging a $30 monthly fee, and it is not economical to continue using it if they are only going a couple of times a month to the majority of our offices. The only offices that will have IMS starting March 1, 2018 are Columbia Headquarters, Pee Dee Regional Office, and Sand Hills State Forest. If you are mailing to or from any of the other offices you will need to use the US Postal Service.

Harbison State Forest Mentioned in Delta Sky Magazine
Harbison State Forest was included in the Columbia destination feature in February’s Delta Sky magazine which will be seen on Delta’s full fleet of daily flights and seen by more than 5.9 million readers throughout the month of February. The issue can be seen at https://view.imirus.com/209/document/12827/page/0. The feature on Columbia begins on page 76, and Harbison is mentioned on page 86.
Driving Safety

Driving is one of the most hazardous things we do because we literally perform the task hundreds of times in the course of our daily lives we tend to take it for granted. Based on recent accident trends, vehicle accidents are the source of more deaths and serious injuries to wildland firefighters than any other single cause.

• To be a safe driver you have to want to be one. Take a good hard look at your driving habits. Are you training yourself to do the right things the right way, like fastening your seat belt, checking your mirrors, and maintaining safe following distances?
• Inattention is a major contributing factor in motor vehicle accidents within the wildland firefighting community. Since the average adult attention span is 15-20 minutes we must develop techniques that allow us to refocus our attention on our driving.

• Many things can lure our attention away from our driving such as: fatigue, eating and drinking, reading directions and maps, writing, cell phone and radio use, conversation within the vehicle and music.
• Drive only when you are well rested and alert and avoid driving during the hours between 10:00 PM and 6:00 AM. Take a 10 to 15 minute break after every 2 hours.
• Practice situational awareness; be aware of what is happening in front, behind, and on both sides of your vehicle.
• Never drive when taking medications that make you drowsy.
• Delegate navigation and communication to a passenger or pull over.
• By constantly moving your vision, checking mirrors and distant road conditions, you can avoid highway hypnosis and daydreaming.
• Avoid eating or drinking while driving.
• When talking with passengers, keep your eyes on the road and both hands on the steering wheel. Avoid serious or argumentative conversations.
• Switch off driving with others if multiple people are in the vehicle.
• Do not be in a hurry, be patient.
• Safe driving starts with a safe vehicle. Something as simple as under-inflated tires can have serious consequences. Before operating any vehicle, do a walk-around to look for potential problems, make sure the lights and blinkers work, and adjust your seat and mirrors. If it is the first time you have driven the vehicle, make yourself aware of where everything is.

This safety message comes from the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Risk Management Committee's Six Minutes for Safety Program. https://www.nwcg.gov/committee/6mfs

Controlled Fires Can Be Good For Land, Wildlife

Below is an excerpt from a story on prescribed fire that was featured in the Florence Morning News and SCNow online Feb. 24. For the entire article, please visit: http://www.scnow.com/news/local/article_c5ae221e-19b6-11e8-b493-efbb9fc9649a.html.

South Carolina Forestry Commission employees who work so hard to extinguish and prevent forest fires also work to set them because, under the right circumstances, fire is good.

That’s the message the agency is trying to get out ahead of March, which is Prescribed Fire Awareness Month.

A series of well-planned small fires can not only encourage growth and development of some stands of trees but also leave behind a healthy environment for animals, said Terry Cook and GraceAnna Schilz with the Forestry Commission. The emphasis is on “well planned,” said Cook, Williamsburg Sector Supervisor, as she showed a 20-page workbook on smoke management that must be completed ahead of every fire.

Williamsburg Sector Supervisor Terry Cook and Horry/Marion Project Forester GraceAnna Schilz talk about the benefits of prescribed burns standing between an area that is to be burned and an area that has been burned in Vox. (Photo courtesy of Florence Morning News)
SCFC Unites With ArborGen on Taylor Nursery Reboot

The South Carolina Forestry Commission has entered into a partnership with commercial forestry seedling provider ArborGen, which will provide management services to operate the agency’s 60-year-old tree nursery in Edgefield County.

The collaboration represents a unique public-private partnership in which ArborGen will use Taylor Nursery as a production facility for its advanced genetics tree seedlings while the Commission will retain ownership of the property. As part of the arrangement, ArborGen will also make a substantial investment in modernizing the nursery’s equipment and infrastructure, including irrigation systems, seedlings storage coolers, and seeding and harvesting equipment.

The facility and its seedlings will undergo a co-branding effort as part of the deal, and the Forestry Commission will determine seedling production goals – up to 5 million – for South Carolina landowners, who are eligible to receive discounts on orders up to 100,000 seedlings.

“We’re very excited about this association with ArborGen, which is known globally as a leader in the research, development and delivery of advanced-genetic seedlings,” said SCFC Resource Development Director Tim Adams. “In addition to expanding seedling production through capital improvements, this partnership will also strengthen service delivery and long-term viability of the Forestry Commission’s nursery and tree improvement program.”

ArborGen will assume responsibility for operation of Taylor Nursery effective April 1, 2018.

Administrative Assistant Michele Ray greets customers at the door. Taylor Nursery’s customers stand to benefit most from the partnership between the Forestry Commission and ArborGen. Landowners will see increased production and greater selection variety.

Mildred Davis, Sharon Davis and Equipment Operator Tim Ames sort seedlings and pull the culls.

Nursery Manager Hamp Holmes checks survival of a planted bed earlier in the season.

Seedlings are loosened before lifting.
March Proclaimed Prescribed Fire Awareness Month

State of South Carolina
Governor's Proclamation

WHEREAS, prescribed burning is the skilled application of fire under planned weather and fuel conditions to achieve specific forest and land management objectives; and

WHEREAS, ecosystems throughout the Palmetto State evolved in an environment in which understory fires occurred naturally every few years; and

WHEREAS, prescribed burning is not only the most effective, economical protection against wildfires because it reduces accumulated fuels, it is also a key tool in managing and maintaining the ecological integrity of South Carolina’s woodlands, grasslands, agricultural areas, and wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, many plants and animals require fire for their survival; and

WHEREAS, the approximately 500,000 acres of South Carolina land that are prescribed-burned annually represent only half of the estimated one million acres that could benefit from its strategic application.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Henry McMaster, Governor of the great State of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim March 2018 as

PREScribed FIRE AWARENESS MONTH

throughout the state and encourage all South Carolinians to learn more about prescribed burning and the essential role fire plays in the stewardship of our natural resources and protection of our citizens.

HENRY MCMASTER
GOVERNOR
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

SOUTH CAROLINA
PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL
MARCH IS PRESCRIBED FIRE AWARENESS MONTH!
SCFC Featured on NWTF Turkey Call

The South Carolina Forestry Commission was featured on the second half of the National Wild Turkey Federation’s show *Turkey Call* that aired Feb. 20 on the Pursuit Channel. The episode is titled “The Mentor,” with the first half of the show dealing with mentoring others to hunt.

Video was shot for the episode last spring at the Military Appreciation Turkey Hunt, in which we cooperate with the NWTF. Former State Forester Gene Kodama was interviewed in the segment about working with cooperators. The SCFC has cooperated with NWTF on events since 2009.

For more than 15 years, *Turkey Call* has been the premiere outdoor program covering the pursuit of America’s favorite game bird. The show features amazing spring hunts across the country, and the latest tips and tactics from the best hunters in the business. It airs January – June on the Pursuit Channel.

You can watch episodes of *Turkey Call* when you sign up for a free account on CarbonTV. For more information, visit [http://www.nwtf.org/tv/turkey-call-tv](http://www.nwtf.org/tv/turkey-call-tv).

The episode featuring the SCFC isn’t online yet.

Remember South Carolina’s State Forests at Tax Time

The South Carolina Forestry Commission encourages citizens to make a charitable contribution to the SC State Forests Fund on their tax returns.

Taxpayers have the opportunity to support the five state forests – Harbison, Manchester, Poe Creek, Sand Hills and Wee Tee – by making a check-off contribution on their state tax returns using Form I-330.

South Carolina’s state forest system receives no state funding and relies solely on timber receipts, pine straw sales and recreational permit revenue for its operating funds. “We’re completely self-supporting, so any money we receive from the check-off program goes directly back into these forests and facilities,” said Mike Shealy, SCFC state lands manager.

The State Forests Fund check-off program has raised more than $94,000 in the seven years since its inception, with all of the money used to make improvements and repairs that directly benefit visitors and enhance their experience on state forest lands. Recent enhancements include a new rifle range target frames, Firewise demonstration area, fishing pier, portable bathrooms, bike trails and solar panels.

Not only do the state forests support themselves, but they also provide funding to school systems in the counties that host them, giving more than $729,000 to school districts in 10 counties last year alone.

How To Give To The SC State Forests Fund:
1. Enter the amount of your donation on Line 28 of your individual income tax form, S.C. Form 1040.
2. Then enter the amount of your donation on Line 15 of S.C. Tax Form I-330, then again on Line 17.
3. Attach S.C. Tax Form I-330 to your tax filing or give it to your professional tax preparer.
**Tree Keeper Workshop Held in Summerville**

TreesSC held a ‘Professional Tree Keeper workshop in Summerville Feb. 26. Twenty-four professionals attended to learn about keeping urban forests healthy. The course is designed for landscapers, grounds crews, landscape architects, landscape planners, builders, developers, property management companies, horticulturists, and tree care companies.

A healthy urban forest begins with proper tree planting and continues with proper mulching and long-term tree care. Mature trees provide economic, environmental, and public health benefits so we need newly planted and established trees to thrive, grow, and survive. Trees that are properly planted, mulched, and cared for will live longer.

Coastal Region Urban Forester Frances Waite instructed attendees on proper pruning and young tree pruning. Other speakers addressed such topics as: soils, pests, diseases, tree risk, species selection, tree installation and establishment, and pesticides. The participants planted four trees in downtown Summerville’s Azalea Park.

**Kodama Honored by CAFLS for Professional Achievement**

Clemson University’s College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences (CAFLS) honored former State Forester Gene Kodama and other alumni at the South Carolina AgriBiz and Farm Expo Jan. 16 at the Florence Civic Center.

The CAFLS Professional Achievement Award is presented to alumni annually for outstanding service and dedication in their professional responsibilities and accomplishments along with their service to Clemson and CAFLS.

Gene Kodama received his degree in Forest Management in 1975 and his master’s in 1977. After finishing his degrees, Kodama entered the private sector as an assistant district forester with Mead-Westvaco and rose through the ranks throughout his 29-year career with the company. He became the State Forester in 2008 and served until his retirement in Jan. 2018.

“In this position of public trust and authority, he used his experience in the corporate world and his excellent reputation as a results-oriented man of action to boost the profile, influence and reach of forestry and the South Carolina Forestry Commission in many ways,” Watkins said. “He has logged thousands of miles traveling the state and country to make presentations and meet with landowners, professional foresters, legislators, industry representatives and employees for all manner of hearings, conventions, hunts for veterans and the disadvantaged, and innumerable other forestry and natural resources conclaves. Mr. Kodama is a person of faith and action whose service reflects his passion and whose words match his deeds.”

Congratulations, Gene!

For more information on award, visit https://www.clemson.edu/cafls/alumni/alumni_awards.html.
The Southern Group of State Foresters Water Resources Committee (WRC) held its winter meeting in Savannah Jan. 22-25. The group is composed of each BMP program representative from the 13 SGSF member states from Texas to Virginia. They were joined by representatives from the US Forest Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers Savannah District, the Southeastern Partnership for Forests and Water (SEPFW), the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, and the SGSF executive team.

Topics around this meeting included the Waters of the US rule and its ever-changing standing in the court system, endangered species and the possible implications for forest management, wetlands trends and status reports, drone use for BMP purposes, research on the correlation between BMP implementation rates and sediment loading, and the ongoing work of the Southeastern Partnership for Forests and Water.

BMP
- Herb Nicholson

Usually one day of the WRC’s winter meeting is dedicated to a field trip to showcase exceptional or new practices in the field so that other state representatives can take that knowledge back to their perspective states. This year’s outing was centered on the work done with the SEPFW in Georgia and South Carolina. Both states, along with Texas and Arkansas, were awarded a Landscape Scale Restoration grant to highlight the importance of healthy working forests to clean drinking water by working with forest landowners upstream from drinking water utilities. South Carolina and Georgia have both contributed to a fund along with five drinking water utilities along the Lower Savannah River to hire a landowner outreach coordinator to be the conduit between the landowners and technical service providers (forestry commissions, Natural Resource Conservation Service, land trusts, etc.) to ensure healthy working forests remain in the Savannah watershed.

On the morning of Jan. 24, the group toured the City of Savannah’s water treatment facility with Laura Walker, the city’s Environmental Administrator, as our guide. We first visited the water intake, located on Abercorn Creek about two miles from its confluence with the Savannah, which is manned around the clock. Four pumps are able to draw up to 60 million gallons of water per day if needed. On average, 36 million gallons are needed per day, but that number peaks during the summer due to irrigation. Water is then pumped over seven miles to the treatment facility, where the group headed next. We were walked through the entire treatment process, toured the lab, and even were able to tour the city’s storm shelter, which is only one of two in the country able to withstand a category 5 hurricane and can house and feed 250 employees.

After lunch, the WRC headed across the Savannah River into SC to tour Recess Plantation. This is a 5,500-acre former MeadWestvaco property with eight miles of river frontage along the Savannah, now owned by Billy Exley. Exley was joined by representatives from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Lisa Lord with the Longleaf Alliance. Lisa is the contractor hired with the LSR funds to do the landowner outreach, and she worked for TNC when Exley placed a conservation easement on his property. Exley is still able to have a working farm and forest on his land while setting aside a wider-than-normal hardwood buffer along several creeks, oxbow lakes, and the Savannah River where harvesting is prohibited. Exley was excited to host the group and showcase his property as a prime example of how a conservation easement and a working forest go hand in hand to protect water quality.
SC PLT Tree Environmental Education Centers

South Carolina Project Learning Tree (PLT) started a new program this year – SC PLT Environmental Education Centers. A PLT Environmental Education Center is a special designation for nature centers, museums, 4H centers, school district sponsored centers, state parks, etc., that use Project Learning Tree. These centers agree to host at least one educator workshop per year and also check in/out its “Tree Trunk” to facilitators who are leading a workshop nearby. The Tree Trunk will have materials to lead some of the most popular PLT activities for a workshop. Each center has a host site director on staff and a center coordinator, who is also a PLT Facilitator, to handle workshop logistics. These new centers are a great way to initiate collaborations of organizations all over the state and to expand our PLT outreach.

SC PLT received a grant from PLT National to run six PLT environmental education centers across the state. Our selected centers are: Anne Springs Close Greenway, Charles Towne Landing, Hobcaw Barony Discovery Center, Lynches River County Park – Environmental Discovery Center, Roper Mountain Science Center, and Ruth Patrick Science Center. The grant funding provided each center with 25 PLT Pre K-8 Guides, a Tree Trunk full of supplies, and an engraved plaque recognizing the partnership. Through certification as a PLT Environmental Education Center, the host site is advised to continue PLT lessons and workshops outside of the formal school setting and foster area partnerships.

Assistant Education Coordinator Beth Foley and Education Coordinator Matt Schnabel met with five of the six centers this month to drop off supplies and start planning the center’s first workshop! They will be meeting with Ruth Patrick Science Center in March.

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**Lynches River County Park**

Lynches River County Park Naturalist Mikaela Coker, Park Superintendent Jennifer Majors and Environmental Discovery Center Supervisor Retha Horne with Foley.

**Roper Mountain Science Center**

Roper Mountain Science Center Life Science Specialist Tim Taylor and Instructor Carrie Whitlock with Foley and Schnabel.

**Charles Towne Landing**

Schnabel and Foley with SC State Parks Regional Program Director Terry Conway, Charles Towne landing Park manager Rob Powell, and Barron Alage Renee Chewning.
Retired State Forester Gene Kodama was honored by the SC Timber Producers Association President and CEO Crad Jaynes at their annual meeting in Myrtle Beach Feb. 10 for his outstanding leadership, service, and dedication to South Carolina’s forestry, forest products and timber harvesting industries while serving as State Forester.

Protection Chief Darryl Jones caught up with Utah Fire Chief Brett Ostler Jan. 25 in Arizona at the National Association of State Foresters Chiefs, Managers, and Supervisors meeting last month in Prescott, Arizona. Brett worked on the Pinnacle Mountain Fire and has since been promoted to the Fire Chief for the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands. Brett told Darryl “the IMT assignment to SC was the best experience his team has ever had!”

The SCFC hosted the annual Cooperators meeting with the Federal fire agencies and the National Weather Service. The group creates an annual operating plan, reviews agreements for sharing and dispatching resources, and assesses training needs that all can benefit from. Representatives from the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests, Kings Mountain and Congaree National Parks, Sand Hills and Savannah National Wildlife Refuges, Fort Jackson, and the National Weather Service attended the meeting Jan. 30 in the HQ large conference room.

Darlington/Marlboro Sector Forest Technician Bert Kelley patrolling the firebreak around a prescribed burn in Darlington County Feb. 1, as viewed from the SCFC drone.

Retiree Jimmy Walters sent in this photo of Protection Chief Darryl Jones speaking at the South Carolina Vegetation Management Association annual meeting Feb. 7 in Myrtle Beach. Darryl’s talk included prescribed burning as a vegetation management tool, legal considerations, and the Certified Prescribed Fire Manager Program.

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Congaree National Park Hosts PLT Workshop

Classroom teachers and informal educators from across the state learned about how our forests are changing as a result of climate change Feb. 9 at Congaree National Park. Participants were also trained in Project Learning Tree materials to teach this important issue. The workshop was led by David Shelley, Education Coordinator for Congaree National Park, and PLT Facilitators Chanda Cooper, Richland Soil & Water Conservation District, and Assistant Education Coordinator Beth Foley and Education Coordinator Matt Schnabel with the Forestry Commission.

Educators were trained in the Southeastern Forests and Climate Change (SFCC) and Focus on Forests secondary modules. The SFCC materials were developed through the University of Florida on research related to the goals of PINEMAP, a regional research, education, and extension program focused on Southern pine management and climate change. Educators participated in PLT activities, a hike to examine effects of climate change at Congaree National Park, and also discussions about how to teach this controversial topic. Much fun (and many ticks) were had by all during this fun day of professional development.

Cape Romain Environmental Education Charter School Wins PLT Grant

Allie Kreutzer, environmental education teacher at Cape Romain Environmental Education Charter School (CREECS), has been awarded a Project Learning Tree GreenWorks grant for 2018! Allie is a trained PLT Educator (the entire staff at her school is PLT-trained) and works with all students at the school. She had a small observation beehive in her classroom, and her students have learned about the importance of pollinators.

Allie was awarded $800 to build multiple beehives on the school’s campus to support honeybee populations. She is partnering with her local beekeepers club to maintain the hives and to collect honey. She plans on learning how to maintain them too. Students will be enhancing pollinator and vegetable gardens on campus to support the honeybee populations. Congratulations to CREECS!
Low Visibility Occurrence Risk Index

Low Visibility Occurrence Risk Index -- The LVORI was derived as a function of relative humidity and the dispersion index. It ranges from 1 to 10, and the likelihood of a smoke/fog related accident increases exponentially as the index increase. For example, at an LVORI of 6, the likelihood of an accident related to smoke/fog is 10 to 20 times higher than when the LVORI is 1.

You have probably seen news reports regarding smoke-related vehicle accident that occurred during the night or early in the morning. This is the period that fog normally forms and when mixed with smoke becomes “superfog.” Superfog can quickly produce zero visibility over roadways.

When we are seeing a lot of prescribed burning and increased wildfire activity, we need to be paying close attention to the nighttime dispersion and other indices that can help us devote the appropriate amount of attention to public safety on roads. The Low-visibility Occurrence Risk Index is a tool provided on every fire weather planning forecast that should help us decide when problems are more likely to occur.

We need to make sure that our field personnel are aware of this, and they need to monitor smoke from wildfire and coordinate with SC Highway Patrol when they identify a problem.

As always, we need to constantly monitor the weather as it relates to both fire behavior and smoke, and make an effort to stay informed about the night time dispersion and LVORI predictions.

Because of the current weather pattern, LVORI is in the HIGH RISK range.

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<th>LVORI Category</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lowest proportion of accidents with smoke and/or fog reported (10% of 127/601 accidents, or just over 0.0010 accidents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Physical or statistical reasons for not including in category 1, but proportion of accidents not significantly higher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Higher proportion of accidents than category 1, by about 30% to 50%, marginal significance (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Significant higher than category 1, by a factor of 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Significant higher than category 1, by a factor of 3 to 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Significant higher than category 1, by a factor of 10 to 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Significant higher than category 1, by a factor of 20 to 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Significant higher than category 1, by a factor of 60 to 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Significant higher than category 1, by a factor of 153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on discussion with the National Weather Service, we can break the LVORI down into the following categories:
- LVORI of 1-4 = LOW RISK
- LVORI of 5-7 = MODERATE RISK
- LVORI of 8-10 = HIGH RISK

You Know You Are Living in 2018 When...

1. You accidentally enter your PIN on the microwave.
2. You haven’t played solitaire with real cards in years.
3. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
4. You e-mail the person who works at the desk next to you.
5. Your reason for not staying in touch with friends and family is that they don’t have e-mail addresses.
6. You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the groceries.
7. Every commercial on television has a web site at the bottom of the screen.
8. Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn’t even have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic, and you have to turn around to go and get it.
BMP Rehab After the Pinnacle Mountain Fire

When the Pinnacle Mountain Fire was declared controlled Dec. 16, 2016, the firefighting was over, but there was plenty of work left to be done.

Piedmont Region Best Management Practices (BMP) Forester Holly Welch led the effort to address potential water quality issues.

Working with personnel from Table Rock State Park (TRSP), South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), North Carolina Forest Service (NCFS) and Greenville Watershed, South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) personnel completed rehabilitation projects on the interior roads and more than 31 miles of firelines in the months after the fire to eliminate potential water quality issues.

“This showcases the agency’s effort as a whole to protect our state’s timber and water resources,” Welch said. “It also shows our ability to coordinate and cooperate with other agencies to achieve this goal.”

Welch authored a report about the issues and actions taken by the agencies involved. She included the following sections with details of the work done by each agency:

South Carolina Forestry Commission

An evaluation of specific areas was done by the SCFC BMP staff and recommendations were conveyed to regional personnel. When rehab work began, SCFC personnel walked dozers around exterior fire lines and addressed any areas where water quality issues were present or had the potential to develop.

Some of the issues noted were existing issues on roads, not necessarily caused by the firefighting activity. Most of the area had naturally stabilized, but waterbars were installed where necessary. Inadequate stream crossings were removed and restabilized. A Department of Corrections crew was used to complete handwork along one section of line: they cleaned out a creek crossing and stabilized the area with seed and straw. All remaining work was completed by SCFC personnel.

Table Rock State Park

TRSP personnel worked with the SCFC BMP forester and a private consultant, Benchmark Trails, Inc. (BTI) to gather recommendations for trail and water quality rehabilitation.

The major water quality concerns found by both parties were inadequate crossings and unstabilized slopes. The BTI report stated, “Major rutting and extremely poor drainage patterns have caused erosion patterns that will continue to deteriorate over time, soil displacement into creeks, and in some cases blockages of creeks due to track rutting from dozers.”

The Forestry Commission recommended removing all debris and dirt from stream crossings and restabilizing the
crossings and approaches. BTI provided recommendations on how to rehabilitate the trail aesthetically and functionally along with recommendations for creek restoration. All parties were in agreement that the creeks should be cleaned out and stabilized.

TRSP completed all of the recommended work with their personnel and rented equipment. They removed all stream crossings and restored the natural flow of water. The crews also utilized naturally occurring stone to stabilize the crossings and restore them aesthetically to pre-fire conditions. TRSP also performed extensive trail rehabilitation work to bring the widened, damaged trails back to a more natural state.

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

SCDNR focused its work on two sections of line on the southwest edge of the fire. They noted approximately 14 stream crossings that needed repair or replacement as a result of fireline activity.

Supplies were purchased by SCDNR, and their personnel assisted a contracted equipment operator to install new culverts at all locations. Installation was successful at all but one location where an unusually large storm blew out one of the newly installed crossings. SCDNR plans to repair and replace that crossing as soon as possible. Most of the firelines on SCDNR property did not require any additional stabilization work; these areas were mainly existing roads where water control structures were not damaged by fireline equipment.

North Carolina Forest Service

Firelines on and around the NC/SC state line were repaired in a cooperative effort between SCFC and NCFS. The area was evaluated, and several issues were noted: active sedimentation, crossings that needed improvement, roads that needed reshaping, and areas where current conditions created the potential for sedimentation issues to arise.

Two dozers and operators from each agency, along with additional NCFS employees, worked to address all observed issues. Broad-based dips were installed where necessary to stop active sedimentation and prevent future problems.

Two culvert crossings were repaired and improved to prevent any future water quality impacts. Several areas were stabilized with seed and straw. Silt fence was installed where necessary, and roads were outsloped to facilitate better drainage.

Greenville Watershed

Protecting the quality of the County’s drinking water was the main priority of Greenville Watershed personnel. They evaluated their property and used a conservation crew to install water control structures where necessary along firelines on their property. The work needed was minimal, and they were able to complete the work in a timely fashion.

This fireline was constructed during the Pinnacle Mountain Fire on Table Rock State Park. Note the soil and woody debris pushed into the stream by the bulldozers. During an active wildfire, preventing the loss of life and property are the first priority. Afterwards, lines are rehabbed as shown in picture at right.

All soil and woody debris was removed down to the original grade of the stream restoring its natural flow. The approaching fireline was stabilized by the leaf fall that occurred soon after the fire was contained and controlled.
Stronger Than Steel, Able to Stop a Speeding Bullet—It’s Super Wood!

Some varieties of wood, such as oak and maple, are renowned for their strength. But scientists say a simple and inexpensive new process can transform any type of wood into a material stronger than steel, and even some high-tech titanium alloys. Besides taking a star turn in buildings and vehicles, the substance could even be used to make bullet-resistant armor plates.

Wood is abundant and relatively low-cost—it literally grows on trees. And although it has been used for millennia to build everything from furniture to homes and larger structures, untreated wood is rarely as strong as metals used in construction. Researchers have long tried to enhance its strength, especially by compressing and “densifying” it, says Liangbing Hu, a materials scientist at the University of Maryland, College Park. But densified wood tends to weaken and spring back toward its original size and shape, especially in humid conditions.

Now, Hu and his colleagues say they have come up with a better way to densify wood, which they report in the February 7 Nature. Their simple, two-step process starts with boiling wood in a solution of sodium hydroxide (NaOH) and sodium sulfite (Na2SO3), a chemical treatment similar to the first step in creating the wood pulp used to make paper. This partially removes lignin and hemicellulose (natural polymers that help stiffen a plant’s cell walls)—but it largely leaves the wood’s cellulose (another natural polymer) intact, Hu says.

The second step is almost as simple as the first: Compressing the treated wood until its cell walls collapse, then maintaining that compression as it is gently heated. The pressure and heat encourage the formation of chemical bonds between large numbers of hydrogen atoms and neighboring atoms in adjacent nanofibers of cellulose, greatly strengthening the material.

The results are impressive. The team’s compressed wood is three times as dense as the untreated substance, Hu says, adding that its resistance to being ripped apart is increased more than 10-fold. It also can become about 50 times more resistant to compression and almost 20 times as stiff. The densified wood is also substantially harder, more scratch-resistant and more impact-resistant. It can be molded into almost any shape. Perhaps most importantly, the densified wood is also moisture-resistant: In lab tests, compressed samples exposed to extreme humidity for more than five days swelled less than 10 percent—and in subsequent tests, Hu says, a simple coat of paint eliminated that swelling entirely.

A five-layer, plywood-like sandwich of densified wood stopped simulated bullets fired into the material—a result Hu and his colleagues suggest could lead to low-cost armor. The material does not protect quite as well as a Kevlar sheet of the same thickness—but it only costs about 5 percent as much, he notes.

The team’s results “appear to open the door to a new class of lightweight materials,” says Ping Liu, a materials chemist at the University of California, San Diego, unaffiliated with the Nature study. Vehicle manufacturers have often tried to save weight by switching from regular steel to high-strength steel, aluminum alloys or carbon-fiber composites—but those materials are costly, and consumers “rarely make that money back in fuel savings,” Liu says. And densified wood has another leg up on carbon-fiber composites: It does not require expensive adhesives that also can make components difficult, if not impossible, to recycle.

Densified wood provides new design possibilities and uses for which natural wood is too weak, says Peter Fratzl, a materials scientist at the Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces in Germany who did not take part in the study. “Instead of creating a design for the material at hand, researchers can create a material to suit the design they want,” he says, alluding to a familiar process among aerospace engineers who have a long history of developing ever-stronger alloys to meet their needs.

One possible obstacle to the widespread use of densified wood will be engineers’ ability to scale up and accelerate the process, Liu notes. Hu and his team spent several hours making each coffee-table book-size slab of densified wood used for testing. But there are no practical reasons the process could not be sped up or used to make larger components, Hu contends.

Although Hu and his team have sought to enhance wood’s strength, other researchers have pursued more unusual goals—such as making it transparent. One team, led by materials scientist Lars Berglund at the KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, has come up with a way to make windowpanes of wood. The first step in that process (as in Hu’s) is to remove lignin, a substance that not only stiffens wood but also creates its brownish color. The researchers infuse the lignin-free wood with a polymer called methyl methacrylate, a material better known by trade names such as Plexiglas and Lucite.

Because MMA’s index of refraction (a measure of how much it bends light) matches that of the lignin-free wood, rays of light pass right through the MMA-infused composite instead of getting bounced around inside empty cells. This renders the material remarkably clear. Berglund and his team described their feat two years ago in Biomacromolecules. Coincidentally, at the same time Hu and his colleagues were also developing a method for rendering wood transparent.

Research like Hu’s and Berglund’s can only add to the wild prospects for the future of materials science. Someday soon it might be possible to live in a home made almost completely from one of Earth’s most abundant and versatile building materials—from floors to rafters, walls to windows. In the garage there may be a car whose chassis and bumpers could be composed of densified wood rather than steel and plastic—knock on wood.

Watch Out For Typosquatting

A common cybersecurity threat are attempts to take advantage of typographical errors (i.e. typos) by users when they are typing a web address in a browser application known as “typosquatting.” Capitalizing on common misspellings or typing errors with popular, high traffic, or sensitive websites, cyber criminals can funnel unsuspecting users to illegitimate websites that closely mimic the originals. This allows them to gain unauthorized access to restricted information like user ID, passwords, and account information; or infect users with malware. Other uses of typosquatting is to generate ad revenue or spread scams and other fraudulent activities.

Typosquatting is also used with embedded hyperlinks in emails and text messages to make it look very familiar to a legitimate web address or send you to a website to generate ad revenue or for other malicious activities.

There are six main variations of typosquatting:

2. Addition of characters – www.gooogle.com (an additional “o” is added)
3. Substitution – www.scfc.gov as substitution for actual web address of www.state.sc.us/forest; or .com replaced with .org
4. Transposition – characters are relocated or switched around
5. Hyphenation – portions of address are hyphenated (www.state-sc-us/forest)
6. Homoglyph – character lookalikes are used; example: www.googie.com (the “l” is swapped for an “i”).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- When visiting known websites, ensure the web address, or URL is free from typographical errors. If the URL is not known, use an Internet search engine to identify the legitimate website from the results.
- Verify links before clicking on them. The easiest way to check an embedded link is by hovering over it with your mouse and carefully checking for typosquatting techniques.
- Bookmark or save “As Favorites” websites you visit often in your web browser application.

Golden Rules (Part 7 of 9)

These are the Golden Rules developed by Dale Carnegie will change anyone’s mind positively, even by attempting them. When such change happens, it will change the life for them and hence the lives of everyone the come in touch with them. http://www.dalecarnegie.com/

Principles from How to Stop Worrying and Start Living

Cultivate a Mental Attitude that will Bring You Peace and Happiness

1. Fill your mind with thoughts of peace, courage, health and hope.
2. Never try to get even with your enemies.
3. Expect ingratitude.
4. Count your blessings - not your troubles.
5. Do not imitate others.
6. Try to profit from your losses.
7. Create happiness for others.
Trump’s Budget Proposal is Bad News for Forestry Programs

President Trump released his FY19 budget proposal, as well as his associated Infrastructure investment proposal, which is to cover the next 10 years. The Budget proposal contains many of the same disappointing cuts to forestry priorities as the FY18 proposal, which was roundly ignored on the Hill. Hopefully this version will be received similarly.

The proposal includes the following:

• Funding is zeroed out for Urban and Community Forestry, Landscape Scale Restoration, and Forest Legacy Programs. The justification given is that “the Forest Service will focus on the maintenance of existing National Forest System lands in FY 2019”
• FIA funding is reduced by 2% from current levels, from $77 to $75 million. Proposal text says this funding level will still maintain a federally-funded 7yr cycle in the East. Non-FIA R&D is reduced by 19% from current levels, to $171M.
• The Forest Stewardship Program is renamed as “Working Forest Lands”, and is reduced by 2% compared to current funding, to $19.5M.
• State and Volunteer Fire Assistance are renamed “National Fire Capacity” and “Rural Fire Capacity” respectively. They are moved from the Wildfire part of the budget to the State and Private Forestry part of the budget. SFA is cut by 15% to $66M, and VFA is cut by 26% to $11M.
• Forest Health on Cooperative Lands is reduced by 11% compared to current funding, to $34.4M
• It funds 100% of the 10-year average of wildfire suppression expenses at USFS and Department of Interior. However, there is no proposal to cap expenses at a historical level and fund additional costs through an offline budget account, as we have been advocating for in a fire funding fix. (see trailing E&E Story)
• Within USDA programs, both the Conservation Stewardship Program and Regional Conservation Partnership Program are proposed to be eliminated. EQIP is slated for a $60M increase. (see trailing E&E Story)
• The EPA Non-Point Source Pollution (Sec 319) grants program, which fund silvicultural BMP work in many states, is proposed to be zeroed out.
• The Infrastructure proposal includes a rewriting of the National Environmental Policy Act guidelines, as well as amending the section 404 permitting process from the Clean Water Act (Dredge and Fill) to remove the EPA and allow for full authority by the Army Corps of Engineers.

For those interested, the full documents can be found at:

The Trump administration proposed flat funding for wildfire suppression for fiscal 2019 at the Forest Service and urged Congress to create the separate wildfire disaster fund that has so far eluded lawmakers. Overall funding at the Forest Service would fall to $4.7 billion in fiscal 2019, from $5.6 billion in fiscal 2017 and from $5.5 billion in the budget estimate for this fiscal year. With wildfire costs increasing every year, the Forest Service may have to rely again on transfers from non-fire-related accounts to cover the expense, unless Congress reaches a comprehensive budget fix. The administration cited that issue in its budget proposal this morning, saying the practice erodes other programs even though funding is restored later.

Previous administrations have asked Congress to treat wildfires like natural disasters, in order to ease budget pressures. But the issue has faced hurdles, including diverging opinions about adjusting budget caps and a strong push in the House to attach provisions promoting forest thinning for wildfire prevention. The White House acknowledged forest management as a priority, saying the issues go hand in hand, but is not urging a specific approach.

Did You Know?

Q. What do bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers and laser printers have in common?
   All were invented by women.

Q. What is the only food that doesn’t spoil?
   Honey
Kodama and SFI Provide Editorial for Papers

Former State Forester Gene Kodama teamed with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative to write an opinion-editorial on forest certification and protecting our forests. Charleston's *Post & Courier* published the letter Feb. 25. The entire op-ed can be read at https://www.postandcourier.com/opinion/commentary/protecting-s-c-forests/article_d3d0c6d0-181c-11e8-b14c-f3341027d0c3.html.

Here is an excerpt:

*Throughout my 40-plus year professional forester career serving in both the public and private spheres, I’ve come to view forestry as an “ideal” business sector. That’s because good forestry conserves the whole range of environmental, social and economic forest values.*

*Sustainable forest management ensures that a forest’s soil, air and water quality, wildlife habitat and recreational values are protected over the long term. Sustainable forest management also provides well-paying jobs that strengthen communities through the sustainable production of timber and other forest products.*

*Good forest management like that practiced under certification to the SFI standard allows forest land owners to maintain and enhance the biodiversity and beauty of their forests while also producing timber and other forest products sustainably and supporting the livelihoods of tens of thousands of families throughout our great state of South Carolina.*

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**I’ve Learned...**

The following comes from the book, *You Are the Best* by the late Andy Rooney. If you will take the time to read these, you’ll come away with an enlightened perspective.

I’ve learned.... That opportunities are never lost; someone will take the ones you miss.

I’ve learned.... That when you harbour bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere.

I’ve learned.... That I wish I could have told my Mom that I love her one more time before she passed away.

I’ve learned.... That one should keep his words both soft and tender, because tomorrow he may have to eat them.

I’ve learned.... That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

I’ve learned.... That when your newly born grandchild holds your little finger in his little fist, that you’re hooked for life.
In an email to Berkely/Upper Charleston Supervisor Gray Vallentine from landowner Tom Pinckney dated Feb. 17 regarding Forest Technician Jordan Jackson’s assistance with firebreaks:

Gray,

Just wanted to thank you for your help in getting our lines cut. Give Jordan a big pat on the back for being so conscientious and thorough. He is excellent. My son really enjoyed meeting him.

Thank you both.

Tom Pinckney
Owner, Fairfield Plantation, McClellanville, SC

CURRENT JOB OPENINGS

Job Title: Communication Specialist II (Dispatcher I) 2 positions  
Closing Date/Time: 3/7/2018
Agency Hiring Range: Min: $22,182.00 Max: $22,182.00  
Job Type: FTE - Full-Time
Location: Darlington County, South Carolina
Normal Work Schedule: This position works 39 hours per week, 13 hours a day (7:00 AM to 9:00 PM), on a rotating work schedule to include weekends and holidays.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: Receives reports of fires, law enforcement needs, storm damage and other emergency incidents from the public, local fire departments, 911 systems, forestry pilots and other safety officers. Processes, records and disseminates this information. Operates computer aided dispatch system and dispatches personnel to fire location. Maintains accurate records of all dispatched personnel and their locations. Uses computer aided dispatch system and takes smoke management information. Ensures burner is within smoke management guidelines and processes and records this information. Provides two-way radio contact between firefighters, field personnel, and the Dispatch Center. Performs daily dispatch and other related duties as assigned in support of the agency's mission and initiatives.

MINIMUM AND ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: A high school diploma and experience in one of the following areas: communications, switchboard exchange operations, clerical accounting, billing or working with the general public. Must be able to type 35 WPM. Completion of IS-700 within the first year of employment. This is an entry level position.

Job Title: Forester I - Forest Inventory and Analysis  
Closing Date/Time: Continuous
Agency Hiring Range: Min: $33,853.00 Max: $36,222.00  
Job Type: FTE - Full-Time
Location: Florence County, South Carolina  
Normal Work Schedule: Monday - Friday (8:30 - 5:00)

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: Records forest inventory and health monitoring data on forest inventory plots with a degree of accuracy as required by the U.S. Forest Service. Works on a two-person forestry-crew locating forest inventory plots and recording inventory and health monitoring data. Assists in determining ownership and obtaining permission from the owner to enter property where plots are located.

MINIMUM AND ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: A bachelor's degree in forestry from a college or university accredited by the Society of American Foresters (SAF). Must successfully pass the U.S. Forest Service Forest, Forest Inventory and Analysis certification field exam within the first year of employment. Applicants are required to attach a college/university transcript.

Job Title: RE-ADVERTISEMENT Forestry Technician I  
Closing Date/Time: Continuous
Agency Hiring Range: Min: $22,182.00 Max: $23,291.00  
Job Type: FTE - Full-Time
Location: Colleton County, South Carolina  
Normal Work Schedule: This position works a 28-day/8-hour rotating schedule.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: THIS IS A RE-ADVERTISEMENT; PREVIOUS APPLICANTS NEED NOT RE-APPLY. YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR THIS POSTING.

Responds to forest fire calls as required by the readiness plan. Performs forest fire duties with bulldozer tractor, hand tools and water handling equipment. Investigates fires to determine cause and gathers pertinent information to complete fire reports. Performs operator preventive maintenance on all assigned equipment and maintains equipment in a state of readiness; provides forestry services, such as firebreak plowing to landowners; assists with reforestation programs and other forestry operations.

MINIMUM AND ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: A high school diploma and experience in forest fire protection duties, forestry management, operation of heavy mechanized equipment, or relevant work experience. Position requires a commercial driver's license (CDL). Candidate must pass the written CDL exam prior to employment. Must pass the agency's physical fitness test that requires a two (2) mile walk carrying a 25 lb. pack in 30 minutes. Firefighter registration with the State Fire Marshal's Office, criminal records check and drug test are required.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS: Associate Degree in forestry, natural resources or other related discipline.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: This position covers a multi-county work zone (Colleton County/Surrounding Area).
Reddick: Lifetime Firefighter and Outdoorsman

For 19 years, Fairfield/Newberry Sector Forest Technician Phillip Reddick’s professional life revolved around structural firefighting.

Through hard work and determination, he worked his way up to senior engineer with the City of West Columbia Fire Department and also served part time as an arson investigator with the Lexington County Fire Marshal’s office.

Despite his career success and experience on the structural firefighting side, Reddick was ready for a new challenge but wanted to continue fighting fire. In January 2016, he decided to make the move to wildland firefighting, and it’s a decision he says he will never regret.

“I’ve always been around fire. I guess once you are in it so long you generally have to stick with it,” said Reddick, who still works part time as an arson investigator on his days off. “I had always wanted to (be a forest technician). It’s probably the best firefighting job in the state, hands down.”

Reddick’s favorite part of the job is being able to conduct prescribed burns. Even though he had prior experience with prescribed burning, he’s learned plenty about the practice since he joined the Forestry Commission, especially from Fairfield/Newberry Sector Supervisor Bruce Ballentine.

“Probably everything that I’ve learned about prescribed burning or this job is from my supervisor, Bruce Ballentine,” Reddick said. “Bruce is probably the smartest person that I’ve ever met when it comes to fire. There were a lot of things that I didn’t know, and he shows you, but he gives the reasoning behind why he wants you to do it that way. I like a good supervisor who is hands-on and teaches you the importance of what we are doing, how to do it right and the benefits of doing it.”

Everything he learned about wildland firefighting from Ballentine and others with the Forestry Commission was put to use after just a few months on the job. Reddick was one of 167 Commission personnel who saw direct action on the Pinnacle Mountain Fire in November and December 2016. The fire burned 10,623 acres, making it the
largest mountain fire on record in South Carolina.

“You go from fighting fire in Newberry, Lexington and Fairfield counties to fighting fire in the mountains. That’s a totally different ball game,” Reddick said. “One of the things that I was really awed by was the way our guys operated dozers in the mountains. Those guys really know what they are doing. It’s just so much different up there. I learned a lot while I was up there.”

Reddick was born in Tallahassee, Fla., and moved to Lexington, S.C., at a young age. He graduated from Lexington High School in 1988 and went into the fire service shortly after graduation. When he was in his 20s, he began working on plantations in south Georgia and met a lot of famous people along the way.

“I went and just had a great time in south Georgia. I really met cool people,” Reddick recalled. “They’d have that big celebrity quail hunt every year in Albany. I met Norman Schwarzkopf, the Mandrell Sisters, Mary Ann Mobley and Tennessee Ernie Ford. A lot of cool people came to that. I loved it and am glad I got to do it.”

Reddick stays plenty busy during his spare time, working on his farm, breeding bird dogs and doing wood reclamation projects.

He bred English pointers and Brittany spaniels for years but is now breeding German shorthaired pointers after falling in love with the breed on a hunting trip in South Dakota. A lot of work goes into the process, and it doesn’t help when there is extremely cold weather like there was during a stretch this winter. His dog Ruby had a litter of eight puppies this year that required special attention during the cold stretch.

“You have to have a good kennel setup and a good whelping house and all that,” Reddick explained. “This year it was horrible because it was so cold. I didn’t keep them in the whelping house. I brought them in my home because I was scared they were going to freeze to death.”

When he’s not working on various projects, Reddick loves spending time with his family. He and his wife, Leigh, have been married 16 years.

“I tell people to this day the best thing that ever happened to me was marrying her,” said Reddick, who first met Leigh at the Peak Christmas parade. “She has been very supportive of my endeavors.”

The couple lives in Little Mountain and has two sons, Hunter, 14, and Nick, 12, and a daughter, Taylor, 12.

Reddick, who is an avid quail hunter and fly fisherman, enjoys taking his sons fly fishing to several of his favorite spots, including near Banner Elk, and Asheville, N.C.

As a family, one of their favorite places to go is Lake Rabun in north Georgia.

“They love Lake Rabun,” Reddick said. “Hopefully, if I hit retirement one day, we talked about moving to that area. I just like the mountains in general.”
Get Back to Basics

Our backs do a lot more work than we might imagine, but we rarely think about our backs until they hurt. You can reduce or eliminate many of the causes of back pain with a few simple steps. Maintaining good posture while sitting and standing is important to overall back health. And we all know we should lift objects properly by using our legs and not just our backs. Strengthen your core muscles, practice yoga and other stretching exercises, and maintain a healthy weight; your back will thank you.

But no matter how well we take care of our backs, most of us will experience back pain or injury at some point. Heat or ice can help relieve minor pain, but for ongoing pain, pain accompanied by nausea or fever, or pain with numbness in your leg or foot, see a doctor.

Health Coaching for Back Health

As a South Carolina Forestry State Health Plan member, employees can also take advantage of telephonic health coaching for back health. Your health coach can help you create an action plan that’s right for you and support you through each step. To arrange for health coaching services, call (855) 838-5897. For details on health coaching options, visit the www.peba.sc.gov, select “Insurance Benefits,” then select “Health and wellness.”

For general details on back health and other health topics, check out the Live Healthy page under the Health & Wellness tab at www.StateSC.SouthCarolinaBlues.com. Employees can also get on-the-go health information sent to your mobile phone by dialing (844) 284-5417.

New Features Available in MyBenefits for Employees

South Carolina Forestry employees can now make changes to their insurance coverage using MyBenefits, if they have a special eligibility situation such as:

• Marriage;
• Divorce; and
• Adoption.

Employees can also add a newborn to their coverage using MyBenefits. The system will not accept any dates over 30 days. MyBenefits will display the documentation required for each change.

Important - MoneyPlus Medical Spending Account Reminder

Employees who have monies remaining in their 2017 MoneyPlus Medical Spending account have until March 15, 2018, to use these contributions. All receipts/documentation for 2017 and through the 2018 grace period are due to Wage Works no later than March 31, 2018.
Wildfire activity is likely to increase as is observed most years. During the early portions of the year it is typical for significant fires to begin to occur across the southern tier of the nation. Currently, the highest likelihood for above normal significant wildland fire potential is expected to be across portions of the central and southern Great Plains from Kansas south through Texas and west through southeastern Colorado and eastern New Mexico. Prolonged periods of dry conditions leading to drought intensification and expansion are expected to continue and lead to elevated large fire potential in these areas prior to spring greenup. Periods of special concern will be highlighted by passing weather systems that create periodic strong, westerly, downsloping winds. During such events, ignitions will be able to quickly become significant fires.

While most other regions of the country can expect Normal large fire potential, portions of the East from the Ohio River Valley south to the gulf coasts of Mississippi and Louisiana can expect Below Normal significant large fire potential through the outlook period.

**Southern Area:** Above Normal significant wildland fire potential is expected across the southern Great Plains of Oklahoma and Texas February through May. Below Normal significant wildland fire potential will continue across western Kentucky and Tennessee in February and are expected to expand south and east into southern Alabama and Mississippi as well as east into the Appalachians in March. Elsewhere, expect Normal significant wildland fire potential.

A persisting cool ENSO episode from 2017 combined with northern hemispheric patterns should produce a resurgence of colder winter weather for most of the month. This will lead to additional snow and rain events that will continue to mute wildfire risks for most of the region. For our further western states, pre and post cold frontal lower humidity and wind patterns should produce periods of continuing elevated to high fire danger as fuels/loadings are likely to remain overly dry/high with the drought situation worsening due to expected below average precipitation and above average temperatures.

March is looking to be the “wetter” of the four month outlook period. Because of this, the pattern should see a broadening of rain (yet still some snow) activity resulting in a peaking period of fire danger limiting weather and lower initial attack levels. Out in the western states of Oklahoma and Texas, expect continued warmer and drier than average weather conditions which should produce Above Normal significant fire potential in place during the month and into April. With the cool phase of this year’s ENSO pattern, there could be emerging dryness in areas along the Gulf Coast and particularly in Florida which could produce periods of higher initial attack. Will need to be monitored as the pattern evolves.

April and May will likely see a change from the much colder previous winter months where warmer than average temperatures will be more common region-wide. The cool water ENSO episode will likely begin to fade but should still allow rain activity east of the Mississippi Valley with above average rain fall being centered from the Appalachian Mountains west into eastern Kentucky and Tennessee with this area retreating northeast into Virginia May. The driest, warmest, and continued higher fire threat should remain anchored in areas of Oklahoma and Tennessee.

### Current Fire Numbers for South Carolina

**MONTH-AND YEAR-TO-DATE COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS 5- AND 10-YEAR AVERAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>FEBRUARY</th>
<th>JULY-FEBRUARY</th>
<th>FISCAL YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FIRES</td>
<td>ACRES</td>
<td>FIRES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Year Average</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-Year Average</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>2,373</td>
<td>1,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current FY¹</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>743</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹To date for current fiscal year
Plant a Tree
Plant a willow by the brook,
Poplars by the garden wall,
Apples in some orchard nook,
Maples for a gorgeous fall.

Set an oak for pasture shade,
Slender pines to climb a hill,
Elms upon a velvet lawn,
Set a tree with thought and skill.

Breathe a little loving thought
For all trees this glad spring day.
Birds and squirrels plant their trees.
Don’t you care as much as they?

Frances Crosby Hamlet

Quote of the Month
“Open your arms to change but don’t let go of your values.”

Dalai Lama

Photo of the Month

This photo was taken above a prescribed fire in Darlington County Feb. 1 with the SCFC drone.

Please send in your photos or news to Michelle Johnson at mjohnson@scfc.gov.