

Release

from the South Carolina Forestry Commission



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SC Forestry Commission selects next State Forester

New agency head to assume office upon Gene Kodama's departure in January

COLUMBIA—Scott Phillips was named the next State Forester today at a special meeting of the South Carolina Forestry Commission.

Phillips, the Rural Forestry Programs Manager with the Commission, will take office when current State Forester Gene Kodama, who has the third-longest tenure of his predecessors, steps down Jan. 2, 2018.

“We had an excellent and far-reaching pool of candidates, internal and external,” said Commission Chair Walt McPhail. “Scott is a top-notch forester who has both the technical knowledge and people skills to work with the diverse coalition of stakeholders we serve, the landowners growing our forests, the General Assembly, our natural resource partners and of course our statewide Forestry Commission team.”

In his current role, Phillips oversees the agency's cost-share and technical assistance programs offered for private landowners. He received a bachelor's degree in forest resources from the University of Georgia, where he dual-majored in forestry and wildlife management. He earned a master's degree in forest resources from Clemson University, where he specialized in forest business. Phillips has served as the forest renewal program manager for the Commission since 2008.

The announcement concludes the recruitment and selection process that began in late June when Kodama announced his plans to depart the agency. A six-person selection subcommittee composed of four sitting commissioners, Kodama and former commissioner Ed Muckenfuss, updated the Commission on the selection process during today's meeting. The commissioners completed the process during the open portion of the meeting by voting for their candidate of choice.

Kodama said, “I'm confident that he will do a fine job as State Forester, and I look forward to helping him transition into the position.”

Phillips assumes leadership of the Forestry Commission at an exciting time. In addition to celebrating its 90th anniversary this year, the agency recently unveiled the results of a widely publicized study that showed forestry contributes \$21 billion to the state's economy and continues to be one of the largest industries in the state.

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The mission of the South Carolina Forestry Commission is to protect, promote, enhance and nurture the forest lands of South Carolina in a manner consistent with achieving the greatest good for its citizens.



Newly selected State Forester
Scott Phillips