

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43



Fiscal Year FY 2026-2027

Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS <i>(FORM B1)</i>	For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	☒	Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
	☒	Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
	☐	Not requesting any changes.
NON-RECURRING REQUESTS <i>(FORM B2)</i>	For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	☒	Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
	☐	Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
	☐	Not requesting any changes.
CAPITAL REQUESTS <i>(FORM C)</i>	For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	☒	Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
	☐	Not requesting any changes.
PROVISOS <i>(FORM D)</i>	For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	☒	Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
	☐	Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
	☐	Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Scott Phillips	(803) 896-8800	SPhillips@scfc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Cathy Nordeen	(803) 896-8865	CNordeen@scfc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2026-2027 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	<u>Agency Director</u>	<u>Board or Commission Chair</u>
SIGN/DATE:	Scott Phillips 9/26/2025	Walter A. McPhail 9/26/25
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	Scott Phillips	Walter A. McPhail

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission
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BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Strengthening Wildfire Response	420,000	7,000,000	0	0	7,420,000	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Information Technology	260,000	0	0	0	260,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	B1 - Recurring	Bolstering Conservation Education	75,000	0	0	0	75,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	B1 - Recurring	Strengthening Forestland Conservation	370,000	0	0	0	370,000	2.00	0.00	-1.00	0.00	1.00
5	B2 - Non-Recurring	SEAT Contract Additional Funds	2,000,000	0	0	0	2,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6	B2 - Non-Recurring	Contract Wildland Hand Crews	3,500,000	0	0	0	3,500,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
7	B2 - Non-Recurring	Information Technology	560,000	0	0	0	560,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
8	C - Capital	Strengthening Forestland Conservation	20,000,000	0	0	0	20,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
9	B2 - Non-Recurring	BMP Road Mat Cost Share Program	500,000	0	0	0	500,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS			27,685,000	7,000,000	0	0	34,685,000	3.00	0.00	-1.00	0.00	2.00

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	1
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Strengthening Wildfire Response
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$420,000 Federal: \$7,000,000 Other: \$0 Total: \$7,420,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	1.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☒	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☒	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☒	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☐	IT Technology/Security related
	☒	HR/Personnel Related
	☐	Consulted DTO during development
☒	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # 5	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☐	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☒	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☐	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
☐	Government and Citizens	

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports the following objectives: 2.1 – Ensure prompt and effective response to wildfires and other disasters in an increasingly complex environment. 2.2 – Develop and deliver innovative prevention programs that reduce wildfire risks to forests and communities
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

	Funds will go towards the salary and fringe for a qualified candidate to fill one new
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RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	FTE. Operating funds will be used to support the new FTE and to purchase AEDs and PPE by payment to vendors for goods obtained for agency operations following the state procurement code.
	<i>What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?</i>
JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	The SCFC provides wildfire suppression for over 13 million acres of unincorporated land and responds to more than 1,200 wildfires annually. Wildfire activity is highly dependent on weather conditions. Currently the SCFC relies on fire weather forecast products from the NWS (National Weather Service). Current NWS fire weather products are reliable at predicting fire weather on a large scale, but do not generally incorporate fuel conditions. Recent cuts in staffing at NWS have reduced their capacity, and adding in-house expertise will allow for development of fire danger operating plans, predictive services capability, and in-depth analysis of weather and fuel conditions further in advance. A dedicated meteorologist that also has a background in fire behavior and fuels calculations would enable the agency to develop better indicators for increased fire activity, adjust staffing levels appropriately, and combine weather predictions with fuel conditions as necessary. To enhance the SCFC’s ability to proactively anticipate severe wildfire conditions, we are requesting \$140,000 and one FTE to hire a dedicated meteorologist with expertise in fire behavior and fuels analysis. This position will provide earlier warnings of significant fire weather events, improve hazardous weather forecasting, and increase overall situational awareness. To enable the SCFC to be more proactive and foresee the potential for severe wildfire conditions, a full-time, dedicated meteorologist/fire behavior analyst position is needed. The SCFC has relied on a mix of federal grants and state funds to equip wildland firefighters with essential PPE, AEDs, and uniforms. These funds have supported the biennial purchase of Nomex gear, boots, and other protective equipment, and allowed for AED replacement as needed. However, with growing uncertainty in federal funding and fire response now occurring year-round, stable state funding is essential. We are requesting \$200,000 to provide annual Nomex clothing for all agency firefighters and to replace 20% of AEDs each year. Additionally, due to rising costs, the SCFC uniform program—historically state-funded—now requires supplemental funding to remain sustainable. We are requesting \$80,000 in operating funds to supplement our uniform budget. We are also requesting additional federal authority. The Forestry Commission has received \$6.5 million in IIJA grant funds, \$5.5 million in IRA grant funds and \$13.3 million in supplemental disaster grant funds for Hurricane Helene in the past four years. Our existing federal authority only covers our annual grants that are received. It is not enough to allow us to spend down these additional grant funds. We are requesting \$7 million in additional federal authority to allow us to expend these funds. If this request is not funded our fire staff will continue to monitor NWS forecasts to predict extreme fire weather and we will continue to use other funding sources to supplement our PPE and uniform budgets.
	<i>Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.</i>

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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	2
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Information Technology
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$260,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$260,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:
	☐ Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐ Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐ Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☒ Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☐ Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐ Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐ Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☒ IT Technology/Security related
	☐ HR/Personnel Related
	☒ Consulted DTO during development
	☒ Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # 7

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:
	☐ Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐ Healthy and Safe Families
	☒ Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☐ Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	☐ Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports the following objectives: 5.1 – Prioritize safety across all agency operations. 5.4 – Leverage data and technology to strengthen organizational efficiency, effectiveness, safety and service.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

	Funds will go to the payment of vendors for goods obtained for agency operations
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RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

following the state procurement code.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

To strengthen the South Carolina Forestry Commission for the future we need to make improvements in efficiency and effectiveness while prioritizing safety across all agency operations. By leveraging data and technology we can strengthen organizational efficiency, effectiveness, safety and service.

With the implementation of our new computer-aided dispatch system FIResponse, our dependence on a stable internet connection has increased. We currently rely on MPLS connectivity with Cradlepoints as backup. This setup is costly relative to the speeds we receive and could potentially prevent dispatch centers from receiving 1-800 number calls and accessing FIResponse. It also is not optimized for Software-as-a-Service applications which require reliable bandwidth to perform. We experienced this during the March wildfire outbreak when system performance degraded due to bandwidth issues. After consulting with DTO Network Services, we were advised to transition to SD-WAN (Software-Defined Wide Area Network) and to establish hardware within the state data center. The redundant connections supported by SD-WAN would ensure internet traffic flows seamlessly and by securing a presence in the state data center we can not only enhance reliability but also reduce future hardware costs. We are requesting \$30,000 to pay the recurring licensing expenses of SD-WAN. Due to the complexity of implementing SD-WAN, full funding, recurring and non-recurring, is required to move forward. Without funding and will continue to experience suboptimal software performance during periods of high activity.

The SC Forestry Commission maintains a fleet of over 400 apparatus, including road vehicles and firefighting equipment. When wildfires occur, the closest available resource is dispatched based on the last reported location. To improve response by ensuring the closest unit is dispatched, and to allow dispatch to quickly identify the location of resources in the event of an accident or loss of contact, we propose installing AVL devices on all road vehicles and firefighting equipment. This will improve safety and security for SCFC personnel and equipment by allowing near real-time tracking of agency vehicles and firefighting equipment. This technology will also identify the current location of equipment, increasing the safety of our personnel and security for equipment. We are requesting \$110,000 to install AVL on all vehicles and firefighting equipment and to pay the recurring costs for the service. If this request is not funded SCFC dispatch will continue to send the closest available resource based on the last reported location instead of the actual location based on AVL data.

Managing physical documents is time consuming and requires physical space. Document management systems like OnBase provide easy access to documents to authorized individuals. These systems also provide automatic retention meeting compliance regulations. This request is for \$120,000 recurring funds to use the OnBase system hosted by the Dept. of Administration/Office of Technology and Information Services to enhance agency document management. By leveraging the existing State OnBase infrastructure, this implementation will optimize resources, reducing software and hardware costs through shared services. The initial implementation will provide structured electronic storage for HR documents, organizing them into digital filing cabinets for each employee. This system will also be leveraged as we extend electronic document management capabilities to other divisions in the agency. If this request is not funded, we will have to look to gain efficiency in other ways.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	3
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Bolstering Conservation Education
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$75,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$75,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	X	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports the following objectives: 4.2 – Educate the public on the environmental benefits of working forests and the role of strong markets and family forest owners in keeping our forests healthy. 5.4 – Promote careers in forestry.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	Funds will go to the payment of vendors for goods and services obtained for agency operations following the state procurement code.
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What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

The South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) requests \$75,000 in recurring state appropriations to sustain three critical forestry-based conservation education programs: Project Learning Tree (PLT), the Wood Magic Forest Fair (WMFF), and School-Based Education Programs. These programs serve as the only statewide, forestry-centered educational outreach efforts targeting students and teachers with curriculum-aligned content that promotes forest literacy, sustainable forest management and conservation.

For decades, these nationally recognized programs have been supported exclusively through private and federal grants. However, those funding sources have now almost entirely disappeared due to:

- The closure of primary wood products mills in South Carolina, reducing industry philanthropic capacity;
- The loss of federal pass-through funds from the Environmental Protection Agency that have historically been passed through Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI);
- Sharp reductions or eliminations in annual donations from forestry-related NGOs and corporate partners.

Without state investment, these flagship programs face an existential threat, eliminating the only direct avenue through which thousands of South Carolina students and teachers receive structured, grade-level forestry education.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

Program Impact

Project Learning Tree: Since 1980, SCFC has trained more than 24,000 educators statewide in this nationally recognized curriculum. Those educators have gone on to teach forestry-centered environmental concepts to countless students. South Carolina's PLT program has received national accolades, including hosting the 2025 national PLT meeting.

Wood Magic Forest Fair: This traveling program has served over 44,000 fourth-grade students since 1999, with a proven track record of success—students show a greater than 50% gain in knowledge after participating. Events are fully aligned with academic standards.

School Programs: SCFC staff provide classroom visits, virtual field trips, forest hikes, and manage signage and infrastructure at Harbison State Forest to support hands-on forest education.

Requested Funding Breakdown:

Program Annual Amount
 Project Learning Tree \$25,000
 Wood Magic Forest Fair \$25,000
 School Programs and Materials \$25,000
 Total (recurring request) \$75,000

Funds would be used immediately to cover core operating costs: educational materials, event logistics, facilitator stipends, printing, signage, and travel support.

This modest investment of \$75,000 will sustain South Carolina's only dedicated, forestry-based environmental education programs. These initiatives are proven, impactful, and widely recognized, yet they now exist at a funding cliff. By bridging this gap, the State will ensure that current and future generations of students, teachers,

	and citizens understand the economic, environmental, and social value of forestry in South Carolina.
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	Without this funding, SCFC will be forced to reduce or eliminate these efforts, severing outreach to thousands of students and hundreds of teachers annually.
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Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	4
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Strengthening Forestland Conservation
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$370,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$370,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	1.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☐	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☒	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☐	IT Technology/Security related
	☐	HR/Personnel Related
	☐	Consulted DTO during development
☐	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☐	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☐	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☒	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
☐	Government and Citizens	

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports the following objectives: 3.1 – Support landowners with programs and services that promote active forest management and help them meet their goals. 3.3 – Demonstrate practices for the active, sustainable, multiple-use management of State Forests, and engage other public landowners to do the same. 3.4 – Actively seek opportunities to acquire land to grow the State Forest system.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

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RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

Funds will go towards the salary and fringe for one current Forestry Commission position, one FTE will be shifted from other to state funds, and candidates qualified to fill one new FTE. Operating funds will be used to pay for professional services related to due diligence costs for land conservation projects and to cover equipment, supplies and travel costs for the new FTE following the state procurement code.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

The state lands coordinator position is currently funded from State Forests revenue but only a portion of the responsibilities are concentrated on SCFC State Forest lands. This position is responsible for directing the forest management efforts on South Carolina's State Forests; coordinating the statewide forest management on other SCFC lands; and collaborating with federal agencies, municipal and county governments, and other state agencies on the management of forestlands held by these organizations within our state.

We are requesting \$155,000 to shift 1 FTE from other funds to state funds for the State Lands Coordinator in our Forest Management division. The salary and fringe of this position is currently being covered by revenue from the sale of forest products from SCFC State Forests. Covering the salary and fringe of the State Lands Coordinator with State Forests revenue is burdensome to the state forests system and limits value added projects that could be done on the ground to benefit citizens that use those forests. Covering these costs with state funds will allow more of the State Forests revenue to be retained within the state forests system and used to better manage these properties to create more value for the citizens of SC.

The SCFC has recently expanded program efforts to identify and evaluate potential forestland conservation opportunities and coordinate with agency personnel and conservation partners to acquire conservation easements and/or fee simple title on working forest lands for sustainable multiple-use management. The agency currently manages over 100,000 acres and is looking to strategically expand its conservation footprint across the state to provide benefits for the citizens of SC in alignment with Governor McMaster's conservation goals and to protect the timberland base that supports SC's \$23 billion forest industry. With rapid population growth in SC and the accompanying development pressure it is critical that conservation efforts to sustain SC's working forests be expanded. Unfortunately, the current agency staffing levels are inadequate to support this expansion.

In FY25 the SCFC evaluated 16 land conservation projects encompassing more than 41,000 acres. Over the last 5 fiscal years the agency has added over 6,673 acres to the state forest system in two counties. SCFC is looking to close on 5 projects in FY 26 that will add 61,340 acres of conservation easement and 9,258 acres of fee simple. The workload associated with these projects has stretched staff capacity to its limit and this understaffing severely limits the agency's ability to capitalize on strategic conservation opportunities in a very competitive real estate market. Without strong support from partnering conservation agencies and non-profit partners the agency would not have been able to achieve the work that has been accomplished to date.

We are requesting \$112,000 and 1 new FTE for a full-time, permanent Conservation Coordinator who will promote the conservation of forestland through fee simple acquisition and/or conservation easements for its many benefits and serve as the project coordinator for all SCFC land conservation projects. This position will also serve as the Good Neighbor Authority contact for the Sumter National Forest. We are also requesting \$103,000 in operating funds to support this position and due diligence efforts related to agency land conservation projects.

If not funded the State Lands Coordinator position will continue to be covered by state forest revenue and there could be missed opportunities for land protection which may result in the conversion of these lands to other uses.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	5
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	SEAT Contract Additional Funds
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$2,000,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☐	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☐	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☐	IT Technology/Security related
	☐	Consulted DTO during development
	☐	HR/Personnel Related
	☒	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
	☐	Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
	☒	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority # Strengthening Wildfire Response

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☐	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☒	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☐	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	☐	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports the following objective:
	2.1 – Ensure prompt and effective response to wildfires and other disasters in an increasingly complex environment.
	2.2 – Develop and deliver innovative prevention programs that reduce wildfire risks to forests and communities.
	5.1 – Prioritize safety across all agency operations.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Single Engine Air Tanker contract vendor.
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What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

**JUSTIFICATION
OF REQUEST**

The SCFC received funding to initiate an exclusive use contract for single engine air tankers (SEATs) in FY2024. A contract was awarded and went live in the Spring of FY2024. During FY2025, the agency used the SEATs on multiple wildfires during the spring peak of fire activity, including the Covington Drive Fire, Table Rock Complex, and other initial attack fires with great success. Due to building drought conditions, high temperatures, and dry cold fronts that persisted this spring, the aircraft were utilized to deliver over 300,000 gallons of water and flew more than 150 flight hours increasing the safety of firefighters on the ground and protecting numerous houses.

This fire season was very active and exceeded the 10-year average number of fires and acres burned. These conditions led to the expenditure of 54% of the funds allocated to the 5-year contract in a single fire season. To ensure that this valuable resource is available for the duration of the 5-year contract, additional funding is needed. We are requesting \$2 million to add to our existing contract with Dauntless Air to ensure that we have access to this valuable firefighting asset for the life of the contract.

If this request is not funded SCFC firefighters will have no aerial wildfire suppression capability available for initial attack fires once the original contract amount is exhausted. Wildfires may impact homes before ground resources can install firebreaks and take suppression action.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	6
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Contract Wildland Hand Crews
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$3,500,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☐	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☐	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☐	IT Technology/Security related
	☐	Consulted DTO during development
	☐	HR/Personnel Related
	☒	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
	☐	Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
	☒	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority # Strengthening Wildfire Response

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☐	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☒	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☐	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	☐	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports the following objective: 2.1 – Ensure prompt and effective response to wildfires and other disasters in an increasingly complex environment.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Established contract hand crews procured through the state procurement bid process.
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What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

In FY 25, South Carolina experienced a significant spring wildfire season, including the Table Rock Complex, Covington Drive Fire and many initial attack fires that stretched agency resources across all regions of the state during a short period of time. Several wildfires occurred in the NC and SC mountains simultaneously that required hand crews and created a high demand for these resources and qualified overhead personnel to ensure adequate span of control and the safety of firefighters across the geographic area. High demand across the Southern Area during this critical timeframe limited access to critical resources like hand crews and delayed deployment of these critical resources in SC.

As we have seen in previous years (2016), the seasonal factors, drought, and changes in weather patterns can lead to significant increases in the number and severity of wildfires. Firefighting dozers are the primary tool used to suppress wildfires in SC, and work well in most areas. When fires occur in mountainous areas, the use of dozers is limited due to terrain and hand crews are often necessary. This is especially true post Hurricane Helene, which felled many large trees in the mountains and will significantly impact the way we fight wildfires in the upstate over the next decade.

Implementing a contract to make Type 2 Initial Attack hand crews, composed of fully qualified wildland firefighters, available during periods of high wildfire activity will provide the agency with a rapidly deployable hand crew resource for wildfire suppression, which will be critical in the mountainous areas impacted by Hurricane Helene. The crews will come equipped with transportation, hand tools, and other required equipment. Hand crews are typically configured with 20-firefighters and are available to deploy for up to 14 days. A Type 2 Initial Attack crew can function as a normal single large hand crew but also have the additional capability of being broken into three or four separate squads of four to six people, capable of initial attack separately with each squad having a qualified incident commander.

This request would allow the agency to implement an exclusive use contract to make 2 qualified hand crews available to stage in areas of increased fire activity for up to 2 weeks each year, per crew, with the goal of responding rapidly with hand crews to keep wildfires small and contain them quickly. If the crews are not needed for fire response during the two weeks they are staged, we will be able to use them for prescribed fires, firebreak installation, or other fuels work as needed. The contract will also include "call when needed" language that will allow the agency to bring these resources into SC if needed outside the exclusive use period. We are requesting \$3.5 million to establish a multi-year contract for fully qualified wildland hand crews.

If this request is not funded the SCFC will form hand crews from within existing personnel when needed. FMOs, Foresters, and other personnel provide overhead as needed and request additional hand crews from nearby states or from federal agencies, which may have limited availability as seen during the Table Rock Complex in 2025.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	7
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Information Technology
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$560,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☐	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☒	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☒	IT Technology/Security related
	☒	Consulted DTO during development
	☐	HR/Personnel Related
	☒	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
	☐	Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
	☒	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority # Information Technology

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☐	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☒	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☐	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	☐	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports the following objectives: 5.1 – Prioritize safety across all agency operations. 5.4 – Leverage data and technology to strengthen organizational efficiency, effectiveness, safety and service.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Funds will go to the payment of vendors for goods obtained for agency operations following the state procurement code.
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What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	This request is a companion to Priority #2. SD-WAN \$195,000 OnBase \$95,000 Dispatch Recording System \$270,000 \$560,000 We are requesting \$195,000 to implement SD-WAN and upgrade our core network by securing a presence in the state data center. This will cover the cost of network switches, routers and installation. If this is not funded due to the complexity of implementing SD-WAN, we would not be able to move in that direction until full funding was available. We are also requesting \$95,000 for the initial implementation and technical services for the first year of service of OnBase. If this request is not funded, we will have to look to gain efficiency in other ways. SCFC dispatch receives over 350,000 notifications and requests for service every year. Telephone and radio transmissions on designated frequencies are recorded to document requests, support investigations, and for training purposes. The current recording system was installed in 2019 and is at the end of its serviceable life and cannot be upgraded to work with the latest versions of the necessary software. Upgrading to a new recording system will ensure continuity of recordings and documentation of telephone and radio communications. We are requesting \$270,000 which would cover the installation of a new recording system and our three dispatch centers and five years of annual maintenance. If this request is not funded the current recording system will not function in the new Windows operating system so recording capability will deteriorate as the system ages and becomes non-functional.
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Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	9
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	BMP Road Mat Cost Share Program
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$500,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☐	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☒	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☐	IT Technology/Security related
	☐	Consulted DTO during development
	☐	HR/Personnel Related
	☒	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
	☐	Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
	☐	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☐	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☐	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☒	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	☐	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports the following objective: 1.1 – Promote programs and practices that safeguard South Carolina’s water, air, soil, wildlife habitat, recreation and natural beauty. 1.2 - Deliver programs and services that retain, develop and expand sustainable timber and non-timber markets
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Timber operations professionals, which are private contractors, would receive the funds to help off-set a portion of the costs associated with the purchase of steel road mats. This cost-share program would provide 75% of the actual cost of a set of 4 road mats up to \$14,000 per participant/year on a first come/first served basis.
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What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon

**JUSTIFICATION
OF REQUEST**

The SC Forestry Commission is requesting \$500,000 to implement a steel road mat cost-share program to address the public safety issue of mud on the road related to logging road entrances onto public roadways, reduce road work costs for loggers and protect landowner's roads from rutting.

Mud on roads has long been a recurring challenge for the logging community, and its impact is growing as formerly rural areas become more populated. Properly installing road entrances is expensive, and even when built to SCDOT standards, they may still allow mud to reach public roads during wet weather. This is especially true when the haul distance from the logging deck is long, since entrance rock alone often can't clean truck tires effectively.

Road mats can be used to help the trucks stand up when the roads get wet. If used correctly, these can significantly reduce rock costs, allow loggers to work in wet conditions and prevent mud on the road by keeping truck tires out of muddy areas. Because steel road mats are long-lasting and can be moved from one tract to another, their benefits compound over time—providing an exponential return through repeated use across numerous tracts.

If funded this program has the potential to reduce the issue of mud on public roadways, decrease road work costs and minimize costly weather-related downtime for loggers and protect the condition of landowners' roads.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	8
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Strengthening Forestland Conservation
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$20,000,000
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How much is requested for this project in FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

CPIP PRIORITY	FY 2026 Priority 1, 3 and 4. FY 2026 was the first year this project was included in the CPIP.
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Identify the project’s CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency’s CPIP. If not included in the agency’s CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency’s contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.

OTHER APPROVALS	The SCFC works to obtain all the necessary approvals in acquiring properties, some of which include: the SCFC Board of Commissioners, SFAA, JBRC, County School Districts and County Council.
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What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY	The funds requested will be used for due diligence on land acquisition projects and for fee simple purchase of land acquisition. We intend to leverage these funds with other agency funds, grants, federal funds, and private funds to secure land to be added to our state forests system. All land acquired will be managed for multiple use, meaning we will manage the asset for the greatest good of South Carolina and its citizens through sustainable timber management, wildlife management, recreational use, and ecosystem benefits such as clean water, clean air, carbon storage, and much more. The SCFC manages its state forests without recurring state funding, operating almost entirely off the receipts from forest product sales. In addition, 25% of the gross revenue from these sales is provided to the county where the property is located to support the school system.
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What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency’s expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?

	The agency currently manages over 100,000 acres of forestland and safeguards another 61,000 acres through conservation easements, with plans to strategically expand these benefits for South Carolinians. Agency staff work collaboratively with a wide range of conservation partners to identify strategic tracts that will be a good fit for our state forest system. Partners include state agencies such as SC Conservation Bank, SC Department of Natural Resources, SC Office of Resilience, SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism, etc. and non-profit partners like Open Space Institute, The Conservation Fund and The Nature Conservancy. Collaboration with a large group of partners enables the SCFC to leverage state funds against federal and private funding to achieve maximum impact.
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SUMMARY

This request will provide the funds necessary for due diligence and land acquisitions and would allow the SCFC to act quickly in a very competitive real estate market. Having a dedicated source of funds for SCFC land conservation would enable the agency to:

1. React quicker in the current real estate market.
2. Purchase strategic properties in areas of the state where forestland conservation is needed most in the face of increasing development pressures.
3. Bring additional dollars to further leverage federal and private funding.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission is actively pursuing multiple high-priority conservation projects that are critical to protecting working forests across our state. The funding requested represents 25% of the fair market value of projects we anticipate could be closed in FY2027, contingent upon timely support. These funds are essential to securing forestland under threat from development, and they provide the leverage necessary for SCFC to act decisively.

Investing in forestland conservation strengthens South Carolina's long-term resilience. It ensures sustainable timber production, protects vital wildlife habitat, and expands outdoor recreation opportunities for our citizens. As development pressures intensify, SCFC must be equipped to compete effectively and move swiftly to acquire strategic properties. Legislative support for this funding will directly advance the Commission's ability to safeguard South Carolina's natural heritage and deliver lasting economic, ecological, and recreational benefits.

Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	43.1
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Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark “NEW”).

TITLE	Grant Funds Carry Forward
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Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Forest Protection and Development
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Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A
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Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Codify
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Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
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Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Codify Proviso 43.1 – Grant Funds Carry Forward The Forestry Commission is authorized to use unexpended federal grant funds in the current year to pay for expenditures incurred in the prior year.
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Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	N/A
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Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	The Forestry Commission is authorized to use unexpended federal grant funds in the current year to pay for expenditures incurred in the prior year.
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Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	43.2
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Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark “NEW”).

TITLE	Retention of Emergency Expenditure Refunds
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Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Forest Protection and Development
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Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A
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Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Codify
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Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
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Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Codify Proviso 43.2 – Retention of Emergency Expenditure Refunds The Forestry Commission is authorized to retain all funds received as reimbursement of expenditures from other state or federal agencies when personnel and equipment are mobilized due to an emergency.
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Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	N/A
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Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	The Forestry Commission is authorized to retain all funds received as reimbursement of expenditures from other state or federal agencies when personnel and equipment are mobilized due to an emergency.
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Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	43.3
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Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark “NEW”).

TITLE	Commissioned Officers' Physicals
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Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Administration, Forest Protection and Development & Education
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Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A
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Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Codify
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Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
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Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Codify Proviso 43.3 – Commission Officers’ Physicals The Forestry Commission is authorized to pay the cost of physical examinations for agency personnel who are required to receive such physical examinations prior to receiving a law enforcement commission.
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Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	N/A
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Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	The Forestry Commission is authorized to pay the cost of physical examinations for agency personnel who are required to receive such physical examinations prior to receiving a law enforcement commission.
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Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	43.4
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Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark “NEW”).

TITLE	Compensatory Payment
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Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Administration, Forest Protection and Development, State Forests & Education
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Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A
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Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Codify
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Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
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Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Codify Proviso 43.4 – Compensatory Payment In the event a State of Emergency is declared by the Governor, exempt employees of the Forestry Commission may be paid for actual hours worked in lieu of accruing compensatory time, at the discretion of the agency director, and providing funds are available.
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Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	N/A
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Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	In the event a State of Emergency is declared by the Governor, exempt employees of the Forestry Commission may be paid for actual hours worked in lieu of accruing compensatory time, at the discretion of the agency director, and providing funds are available.
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Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	43.5
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Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark “NEW”).

TITLE	Sale of Promotional Items
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Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Education
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Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A
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Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Codify
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Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
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Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Codify Proviso 43.5 – Sale of Promotional Items The Forestry Commission may sell promotional items that advocate for the forestry and forest culture, including items featuring the South Carolina Forestry Commission Forest Life brand logo, for the purposes of generating funds for the agency operations. Unexpended funds may be carried forward from the prior fiscal year into the current fiscal year and used for the same purpose.
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Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	N/A
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Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	The Forestry Commission may sell promotional items that advocate for the forestry and forest culture, including items featuring the South Carolina Forestry Commission Forest Life brand logo, for the purposes of generating funds for the agency operations. Unexpended funds may be carried forward from the prior fiscal year into the current fiscal year and used for the same purpose.
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Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	43.6
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Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark “NEW”).

TITLE	Firefighting Equipment and Response Carry Forward
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Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Forest Protection and Development
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Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A
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Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Codify
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Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
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Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Codify Proviso 43.6 – Firefighting Equipment and Response Carry Forward The Forestry Commission is authorized to carry forward any unspent funds appropriated for firefighting equipment into the current fiscal year to be expended for the same purpose.
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Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	N/A
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Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	The Forestry Commission is authorized to carry forward any unspent funds appropriated for firefighting equipment into the current fiscal year to be expended for the same purpose.
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Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	43.7
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Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark “NEW”).

TITLE	Response to Declared Emergencies
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Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Forest Protection and Development
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Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A
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Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Amend
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Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
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Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Amend Proviso 43.7 – Response to Declared Emergencies The agency requests to increase the authorized amount to \$5,000,000, from \$3,000,000, due to increasing costs of wildfire suppression on large complex wildfires, like those experienced in FY25, and the potential impacts to future agency budgets. In the event of a declared emergency pursuant to Section 25-1-440 requiring the response of the South Carolina Forestry Commission, the State Treasurer and the Comptroller General are hereby authorized and directed to pay from the Disaster Trust Fund of the State such funds as necessary to cover the costs incurred, if available. In the event the Disaster Trust Fund is exhausted or does not have a balance sufficient to cover the incurred costs, the General Fund of the State may be utilized. The total amount transferred to the South Carolina Forestry Commission shall not exceed \$5,000,000. Upon any transfer of funds, the State Treasurer and the Comptroller General shall notify the Governor, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and the Chairman of the House Ways & Means Committee. Any funds reimbursed to the State shall be deposited in the respective fund from which it was transferred, up to the amount of funds advanced to the South Carolina Forestry Commission for these activities.
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Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT

In the event of a declared emergency pursuant to Section 25-1-440 requiring the response of the South Carolina Forestry Commission, the State Treasurer and the Comptroller General are hereby authorized and directed to pay from the Disaster Trust Fund of the State such funds as necessary to cover the costs incurred, if available. In the event the Disaster Trust Fund is exhausted or does not have a balance sufficient to cover the incurred costs, the General Fund of the State may be utilized. The total amount transferred to the South Carolina Forestry Commission shall not exceed **\$5,000,000.** Upon any transfer of funds, the State Treasurer and the Comptroller General shall notify the Governor, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and the Chairman of the House Ways & Means Committee. Any funds reimbursed to the State shall be deposited in the respective fund from which it was transferred, up to the amount of funds advanced to the South Carolina Forestry Commission for these activities.

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

**FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION
CONTINGENCY PLAN**

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan
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AMOUNT	\$1,065,238
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What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.

ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	16 FTEs
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How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	I. Administration II. Forest Protection and Development
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What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

SUMMARY	The Forestry Commission’s mission is protecting, promoting, and enhancing the state’s forests for the benefit of all. To achieve this mission, agency employees provide numerous services to the citizens of South Carolina and to forested lands themselves. Forestry Commission personnel not only protect the forest lands and surrounding communities from wildfires, but they also provide outreach services to landowners who enable forestry to be a top industry and economic driver in South Carolina. In order to accommodate a 3% budget reduction, the Forestry Commission will have to eliminate 16 FTEs. These FTEs directly serve the citizens of South Carolina. By eliminating these positions, services that are currently provided will be significantly reduced. This will be a negative effect on the economic value that the forest industry provides to the state and will further reduce the Commission’s ability to protect the forest resource, homes, other structures and lives. The agency will use vacant positions if available at the time of the cut. However, if positions are not vacant, the agency will use other methods to reduce state operating funds. Such methods will include a combination of elimination of at-will employees, temporary employees, furlough of current employees and/or a reduction in operating expenditures.
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Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS	The agency evaluates operations throughout the year to ensure we are operating efficiently and effectively. In FY2018 the agency entered into a 10-year public-private partnership with Arborgen. The partnership allows the agency to continue to provide state-of-the-art seedlings to forest landowners for tree planting in the future while mitigating agency budget shortfalls associated with the operation of the nursery. As a result of this agreement, we continue to see savings of approximately \$200,000 annually in salary/fringe and operating costs associated with nursery operations. The agency has repurposed the salary and fringe funds to assist with our recruitment and retention efforts. The operating funds saved are being used to bolster our Tree Improvement program to ensure SC landowners have access to the best available genetics that will be critical to maintaining and improving the productivity and health of our forests in the future.
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What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than \$50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

Agency Name:	Forestry Commission		
Agency Code:	P120	Section:	43

FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	Use of warning tickets for documenting violations of SC Code Title 48.
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	\$156,285.00 in fines, court costs, personnel hours and 75.5 hours of court time saved
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What is the expected savings to South Carolina’s businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☐	Repeal or revision of regulations.
	☒	Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.
	☐	Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.
	☐	Other

METHOD OF CALCULATION	151 warning tickets were issued, which are multiplied by the maximum fine of \$440 plus court costs of \$587.50 for most violations of SC Code Title 48. Case prosecution would take approximately 15 minutes per case multiplied by 151 violations. Officer’s average hourly rate of approximately \$30.00 per hour multiplied by 37.75 hours of court time. The defendants’ time added to the court staff’s time would determine the total hours of 75.5 saved by citizens and businesses.
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Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	Fines for violations of SC Code Title 48. Enabling authority is derived from SC Code 48-23-96.
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Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION	This action would not require any amendments or deletions of current regulations.
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Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?

	During FY 2024-2025 a total of 151 warning tickets were issued. Through the use of warning tickets versus courtesy summons for documented violations the expected saving in fines and court costs is \$155,152. This is based on the maximum fine of \$440 plus included court assessments. Case prosecution would take approximately 15 minutes per case multiplied by 151 violations, which saved 37.75 hours of officer court time. Based on the average hourly rate of \$30.00 per hour this provided an additional savings of \$1133 This saved the public 37.75 hours of personal or employer time due to not being required to attend court. Court personnel also saved 37.75 hours due to not hearing these cases.
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SUMMARY

Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?