

AGENCY NAME:

South Carolina Conservation Bank

AGENCY CODE:

P400

SECTION:

53



Fiscal Year 2026-27 Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS (FORM B1)

For FY 2026-27, my agency is (mark "X"):

- ☒ Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
☐ Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
☐ Not requesting any changes.

NON-RECURRING REQUESTS (FORM B2)

For FY 2026-27, my agency is (mark "X"):

- ☒ Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
☐ Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
☐ Not requesting any changes.

CAPITAL REQUESTS (FORM C)

For FY 2026-27, my agency is (mark "X"):

- ☐ Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
☒ Not requesting any changes.

PROVISOS (FORM D)

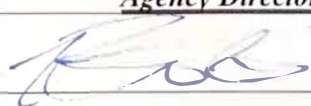
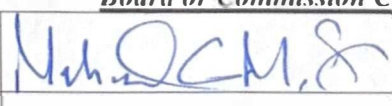
For FY 2026-27, my agency is (mark "X"):

- ☐ 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:	Adair Roark	803-608-7775	Adair.roark@sccbanc.sc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Amber Larck	803-917-1033	Amber.Larck@sccbanc.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2026-27 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:	 9/17/25	 9/17/25
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	J. Raleigh West III	Michael G. McShane

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

Agency Name:	SC Conservation Bank
Agency Code:	P400
Section:	53

BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Conservation Bank Trust	6,000,000	0	0	0	6,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	B2 - Non-Recurring	Conservation Grant Funding	25,000,000	0	0	0	25,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	B1 - Recurring	Working Ag Lands Grant	6,000,000	0	0	0	6,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	B2 - Non-Recurring	Working Ag Lands Grant Funding	10,000,000	0	0	0	10,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	B2 - Non-Recurring	State Resource Agency Strategic Land Acquisition	150,000,000	0	0	0	150,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6	B1 - Recurring	Other Operating Expenses	75,000	0	0	0	75,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS			197,075,000	0	0	0	197,075,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Agency Name:	SC Conservation Bank		
Agency Code:	P400	Section:	53

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

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

TITLE	Conservation Bank Trust
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$6,000,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$6,000,000
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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.

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 #

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 all agency goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan Template of the FY2025 Accountability Report. This funds request advances the agency’s objectives by allowing the Conservation Bank to permanently conserve, preserve and protect significant natural resources, farmlands, forestlands, wetlands, open lands, historic and archaeological sites, and urban parks statewide through conservation easements, low interest loans and purchase of land for the purpose of improving the quality of life in SC for current and future generations.
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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	These funds would be distributed to the qualified entities that have submitted applications to the Conservation Bank seeking funds as established by criteria in the statute and by Board decision. The funds would be allocated only after all required
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FUNDS

due diligence items have been submitted and approved by the Conservation Bank.

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 Conservation Bank's principal purpose and program is to review and award competitive grants to qualified governmental and non-profit entities to purchase interests in land for conservation purposes, which constitutes the vast majority of our expenses. The Bank also incurs expenses associated with routine administrative and operational activities. The Conservation Bank previously only received funds from the Documentary Deed Stamp Tax but, as of FY 17-18, its funding derived from General Fund appropriations.

Historically, third party funding requests to the Bank have greatly exceeded our annual appropriations. We expect that same dynamic to play out in FY26, with several large conservation transactions anticipated to materialize in the coming months. Additionally, numerous federal programs have increased funding for conservation projects, provided they meet certain thresholds for non-federal matching partners. The Conservation Bank is one of the most efficient and reliable sources of non-federal match that can help attract federal dollars to South Carolina. Given recent increases in federal conservation programs, we anticipate corresponding increases to the Bank to support non-federal matching requirements.

Decreases to the Conservation Bank's budget would limit partner organizations' capabilities to protect significant natural resource lands, wetlands, historical and archaeological properties and urban parks throughout the state, and to attract federal dollars that would otherwise dramatically leverage the State's contributions.

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:	SC Conservation Bank		
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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	Working Ag Lands Grant
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$6,000,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$6,000,000
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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.

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 #	

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 all agency goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan Template of the FY2025 Accountability Report. This funds request advances the agency’s objectives by allowing the Conservation Bank to permanently conserve, preserve and protect working farmland properties.
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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	These funds would be distributed to the qualified entities that have submitted applications to the Conservation Bank seeking funds as established by criteria in the statute and by Board decision. The funds would be allocated only after all required
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FUNDS	due diligence items have been submitted and approved by the Conservation Bank.
	<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	H3951, an Act amending the South Carolina Code of Laws to add Section 48-59-150, established the Working Farmland Protection Fund to permanently protect working farmland critical to the long-term viability of South Carolina’s agricultural economy. Working farmland is a cornerstone of the state’s food security, rural heritage, and economic resilience—supporting jobs, sustaining local communities, and preserving open space. As development pressures intensify and land prices rise, safeguarding these productive landscapes ensures that agriculture remains a viable industry for future generations. The Fund is designated solely for awarding grants to eligible trust fund recipients for acquiring interests in farmland where the landowner earns at least fifty percent of their income. The South Carolina Conservation Bank Board evaluates applications based on the criteria outlined in Section 48-59-70(D), excluding items (9) and (13), and incorporating additional criteria from Section 48-59-150. Fund balances are retained and carried forward annually, with earned interest credited back to the fund. Due to overwhelming demand, the Conservation Bank exhausted the fund before the end of the third quarter of FY25, having received nearly \$4 million in grant applications. During FY25, the Working Ag Fund successfully protected 1,767 acres across six counties.
	<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>

Agency Name:	SC Conservation Bank		
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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

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

TITLE	Other Operating Expenses
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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
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	X	IT Technology/Security related
	X	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
	X	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request supports all agency goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan Template of the FY2025 Accountability Report. While the Bank’s principal function remains the review and award of competitive grants to qualified governmental and non-profit entities for the acquisition of conservation interests in land, the administrative infrastructure that supports this work must evolve to meet growing demands.
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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?

	The requested funds would be directed to staff via payroll, the Department of
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RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Administration (as a technology service provider), and vendors supplying operational goods and services such as signage and technology. Allocation would be based on predetermined operational needs and a competitive bid process as needed.
	<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 Conservation Bank respectfully requests an additional \$75,000 in General Fund appropriations for FY26 to address critical operational needs that directly support the Bank’s mission and ensure continued programmatic success. The requested funds will be allocated across five key areas: • Salary Adjustments for Retention: Retaining experienced staff is essential to maintaining the Bank’s efficiency and institutional knowledge. Modest salary adjustments will ensure the Bank remains a stable and attractive employer, reducing turnover and preserving continuity in grant administration and partner engagement. • Technology Contract Increase with the Department of Administration: For nearly 20 years, Admin maintained stable rates while absorbing rising IT service costs. Though technology expenses grew, economies of scale and broader adoption helped offset some increases. To support the Bank’s secure, compliant, and efficient digital infrastructure, a contract adjustment is now essential to sustain expanded services and system reliability. • Inflationary Pressures on Operational Expenses: Like many state agencies, the Bank has experienced a rise in routine costs due to inflation. From office supplies to professional services. • Signage for Protected Properties: As the number of protected properties grows, so does the need for clear, durable signage that communicates conservation status and educates the public. • Technology Updates: The Bank must invest in updated software and digital tools that enhance grant tracking, partner communication, and public reporting. By investing in the infrastructure that supports our grantmaking, the State ensures that the Conservation Bank remains a reliable and effective partner in leveraging federal dollars and protecting South Carolina’s most treasured natural and cultural resources.
	<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>

Agency Name:	SC Conservation Bank		
Agency Code:	P400	Section:	53

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

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

TITLE	Conservation Grant Funding
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$25,000,000
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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 #	

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 all agency goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan Template of the FY2025 Accountability Report. This funds request advances the agency’s objectives by allowing the Conservation Bank to permanently conserve, preserve and protect significant natural resources, farmlands, forestlands, wetlands, open lands, historic and archaeological sites, and urban parks statewide through conservation easements, low interest loans and purchase of land for the purpose of improving the quality of life in SC for current and future generations.
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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	These funds would be distributed to the qualified entities that have submitted applications to the Conservation Bank seeking funds as established by criteria in the statute and by Board decision. The funds would be allocated only after all required due diligence items have been submitted and approved by the Conservation Bank.
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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 Conservation Bank's principal purpose and program is to review and award competitive grants to qualified governmental and non-profit entities to purchase interests in land for conservation purposes, which constitutes the vast majority of our expenses. The Bank also incurs expenses associated with routine administrative and operational activities. The Conservation Bank previously only received funds from the Documentary Deed Stamp Tax but, as of FY 17-18, its funding derived from General Fund appropriations.

Historically, third party funding requests to the Bank have exceeded our annual appropriations. We expect that same dynamic to play out in FY26, with several large conservation transactions anticipated to materialize in the coming months. Additionally, numerous federal programs have increased funding for conservation projects, provided they meet certain thresholds for non-federal matching partners. The Conservation Bank is one of the most efficient and reliable sources of non-federal match that can help attract federal dollars to South Carolina. Given recent increases in federal conservation programs, we anticipate corresponding increases to the Bank to support non-federal matching requirements.

Decreases to the Conservation Bank's budget would limit partner organizations' capabilities to protect significant natural resource lands, wetlands, historical and archaeological properties and urban parks throughout the state, and to attract federal dollars that would otherwise dramatically leverage the State's contributions.

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:	SC Conservation Bank		
Agency Code:	P400	Section:	53

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

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

TITLE	Working Ag Lands Grant Funding
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$10,000,000
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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 #

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 all agency goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan Template of the FY2025 Accountability Report. This funds request advances the agency’s objectives by allowing the Conservation Bank to permanently conserve, preserve and protect working farmland properties.
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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	These funds would be distributed to the qualified entities that have submitted applications to the Conservation Bank seeking funds as established by criteria in the statute and by Board decision. The funds would be allocated only after all required due diligence items have been submitted and approved by the Conservation Bank.
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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	H3951, an Act amending the South Carolina Code of Laws to add Section 48-59-150, established the Working Farmland Protection Fund to permanently protect working farmland critical to the long-term viability of South Carolina’s agricultural economy. Working farmland is a cornerstone of the state’s food security, rural heritage, and economic resilience—supporting jobs, sustaining local communities, and preserving open space. As development pressures intensify and land prices rise, safeguarding these productive landscapes ensures that agriculture remains a viable industry for future generations. The Fund is designated solely for awarding grants to eligible trust fund recipients for acquiring interests in farmland where the landowner earns at least fifty percent of their income. The South Carolina Conservation Bank Board evaluates applications based on the criteria outlined in Section 48-59-70(D), excluding items (9) and (13), and incorporating additional criteria from Section 48-59-150. Fund balances are retained and carried forward annually, with earned interest credited back to the fund. Due to overwhelming demand, the Conservation Bank exhausted the fund before the end of the third quarter of FY25, having received nearly \$4 million in grant applications. During FY25, the Working Ag Fund successfully protected 1,767 acres across six counties.
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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:	SC Conservation Bank		
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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	State Resource Agency Strategic Land Acquisition
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$150,000,000
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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 #	

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 advances the agency’s mission by enabling the Conservation Bank and partnering Resource Agencies—including the SC Department of Natural Resources, SC Forestry Commission, SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and the SC Office of Resilience—to acquire properties for the benefit and enjoyment of South Carolina’s citizens, while conserving and protecting the natural resources of those properties. This initiative ultimately enhances the quality of life for current and future generations. While this fund is reserved only for state acquisitions, the SC Conservation Bank can utilize its Conservation Bank Trust and Conservation Grant Funding to fund state acquisitions in addition to this fund.
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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	These funds would be distributed to the qualified entities that have submitted applications to the Conservation Bank seeking funds as established by criteria in the statute and by Board decision. The funds would be allocated only after all required due diligence items have been submitted and approved by the Conservation Bank.
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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

South Carolina’s natural landscapes are vital to our communities, economy, and way of life. To protect these resources, five key agencies—the “Resource Agencies”—meet on a quarterly basis to coordinate land conservation efforts across the state.

Together, they strategize funding scenarios to maximize State dollars while advancing:

- Flood mitigation and resilience;
- Outdoor recreation, including hunting, fishing, boating, paddling, camping and wildlife watching;
- Preservation of working forestland and farms; and
- Protection of culturally and ecologically significant places.

Conserving South Carolina’s land and water is a constitutional responsibility vital to the health, welfare, and safety of its citizens. These natural resources are the backbone of key industries—agriculture, tourism, and forestry—that drive billions in economic activity and support hundreds of thousands of jobs. By protecting iconic landscapes and essential ecosystems, the state not only strengthens its economy but also preserves its unique way of life for future generations to enjoy.

South Carolina faces urgent threats to its natural heritage as rapid population growth and development accelerate the loss of forests, farmlands, and ecosystems. With land costs rising sharply, delays in conservation efforts mean fewer opportunities to protect vital landscapes—putting the state at risk of losing its most treasured places forever.

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 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	\$713,057
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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	None
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How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	The General Fund appropriations allocated to the South Carolina Conservation Bank support a wide range of essential activities, including core operational expenses and the funding of competitive grants approved by the Bank’s Board. These grants enable the protection of critical natural, cultural, and historical resources across the state, while the operational support ensures the Bank can continue to administer its programs efficiently and transparently.
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What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

SUMMARY	General Fund appropriations empower the Conservation Bank to efficiently administer its programs and award strategic grants that safeguard South Carolina’s vital natural, cultural, and historical assets; any reduction in funding would directly impair the Bank’s grant-making capacity and ultimately result in fewer lands being conserved across the state.
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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 SC Conservation Bank does not have any recurring costs or operating expenses that exceed \$50,000.
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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?