



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences



USDA NRCS
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

WORKING THROUGH THE

SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTRY COMMISSION

AND THE

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

AND THE

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM

AND THE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WORKING THROUGH THE

FOREST SERVICE, SOUTHERN REGION, FRANCIS MARION AND SUMTER NATIONAL FORESTS and SAVANNAH RIVER

AND THE

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE – SOUTH CAROLINA

AND THE

FARM SERVICE AGENCY – SOUTH CAROLINA

AND THE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, SOUTHEAST REGION

AND THE

SOUTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD

AND

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Shared Stewardship is hereby made and entered into by and between the State of South Carolina for the South Carolina Forestry Commission; the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources; the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism; the South Carolina National Guard; and Clemson University Cooperative Extension and the United States Department of Agriculture for the Forest Service; Natural Resources Conservation Service; and Farm Service Agency and the Department of Interior for the Fish and Wildlife Service, hereinafter referred to as "the Parties."

1. BACKGROUND

The South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) is responsible for protecting, promoting, enhancing, and nurturing the forest lands of South Carolina in a manner consistent with achieving the greatest good for its citizens. The Commission's responsibilities extend to all forest lands, both rural and urban, and to all associated forest values and amenities including, but not limited to, timber, wildlife, water quality, air quality, soil protection, recreation, and aesthetics.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SC DNR) serves as the principal advocate for and steward of South Carolina's natural resources. SC DNR envisions a state with an enhanced quality of life for present and future generations through improved understanding, wise use, and safe enjoyment of healthy, diverse, sustainable and accessible natural resources.

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SC PRT) is responsible for growing South Carolina's economy by fostering sustainable tourism, economic development and effectively marketing the state to increase visitation and improve the quality of life for all South Carolinians. SC PRT exists to help foster and promote the state's emerging tourism industry, to protect and promote South Carolina state parks, and to help communities plan and develop recreational opportunities for local residents.

Clemson University Cooperative Extension (CU) fulfills one-third of Clemson's land-grant mission of research, training and extension by serving as the primary public service outreach arm of the University. Clemson Extension improves the economy, environment, and well-being of South Carolinians through the delivery of unbiased, research-based information and education.

The South Carolina Army National Guard is committed to maintaining the highest level of mission-readiness to achieve both federal and state objectives. As responsible environmental stewards, South Carolina Army National Guard will strive to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and statutes, as well as other requirements to which we subscribe. The South Carolina Army National Guard will accomplish this through the establishment of a framework for setting and reviewing environmental objectives and targets with the intent of preventing pollution, protecting the environment and continually improving environmental performance for present and future generations.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on public policy, the best available science, and effective management. The USDA has a vision to provide economic opportunity through innovation, helping rural America to thrive; to promote agriculture production that better nourishes Americans while also helping feed others throughout the world; and to preserve our Nation's natural resources through conservation, restored forests, improved watersheds, and healthy private working lands.

The mission of the Forest Service (an agency within the Department of Agriculture) is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The Forest Service manages 193 million acres of National Forest System lands with tribal governments, state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forest research organization in the world. Being a good steward is an essential component of the Agency's work.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (an agency within the Department of Agriculture) is an agency committed to "helping people help the land." NRCS provides resources to farmers and landowners to aid them with conservation and ensure that productive lands are in harmony with a healthy environment.

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is an agency equitably serving all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans.

The United State Department of the Interior (USDOI) conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) (an agency of the USDOI) works with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. FWS is the oldest federal conservation agency, tracing its lineage back to 1871, and the only agency in the federal government

whose primary responsibility is management of fish and wildlife for the American public. FWS helps ensure a healthy environment for people by providing opportunities for Americans to enjoy the outdoors and their shared natural heritage.

Forested lands in SC provide abundant clean water for communities and agriculture and are a renewable source of wood fiber which sustains the state's \$21.2 billion forest industry, support a thriving outdoor recreation and tourism economy, and provide outstanding fish and wildlife habitat, including rare species and rare communities. SC forests also provide managed forested buffers around military installations to ensure continuity of operations and organizational readiness.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this MOU is to establish a framework for the parties to work collaboratively on accomplishing mutual goals, to further common interests and effectively respond to the increasing ecological challenges and natural resource concerns in South Carolina, whether aquatic or terrestrial.

A key component of the shared stewardship strategy is to prioritize forest treatment investment decisions in direct coordination with state and other federal agencies. An additional key component is the use of best-available science to increase the scope and scale of critical forest treatments that protect communities, provide opportunities for community prosperity through job creation and retention, and create resilient forests and landscapes.

Federal, state, and private land managers in South Carolina face a range of urgent challenges, including, but not limited to, catastrophic storms, wildfires, droughts, flooding, insect and disease outbreaks, invasive species, rapid population growth and development, and maintaining adequate markets to help drive investments in sustainable forest management. The Parties recognize that these challenges must be met with proactive measures across all lands including:

- Restoring fire-adapted communities and reducing the risk of wildfire;
- Identifying, managing, and reducing threats to forest and ecosystem health;
- Conserving working forestland;
- Increasing public knowledge of the benefits of forests and forest management through outreach and education;
- Enhancing the full range of public benefits from South Carolina's forests to meet present and future demands – including clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, recreation, natural beauty, healthy markets which provide jobs and others;
- Fostering economic development strategies that keep working forests productive and support conservation and restoration efforts.

The Parties involved will work together with using all available authorities and resources to:

- Identify land management priorities and priority natural resource concerns;
- Prevent, mitigate, and/or co-manage ecological health risks and natural catastrophes;
- Protect and enhance water quality and quantity;
- Improve air quality and conserve energy, as appropriate;
- Assist communities in planning for and reducing wildfire risks, including reducing available fuels through the use of prescribed burning and other fuels reduction methods;
- Maintain and enhance the economic benefits and values of forests and other natural resources;
- Protect, conserve, and enhance critical habitat for wildlife and fish, including rare species and rare communities;
- Connect people to trees, forests, and other natural resources through outreach and education and engage them in stewardship activities;
- Advance the natural resource strategies set forth in the South Carolina Forest Action Plan and Wildlife Action Plan;

- Develop and foster recreational use of forests while seeking out opportunities to connect people and their recreational use with the importance of forest conservation;
- Actively and sustainably manage forests, conserve high priority forest ecosystems and landscapes, and enhance the potential for safe public recreation across landscapes;
- Maintain critical, managed forested areas within the boundaries of and around military installations to ensure continuity of operations and organizational readiness to sustain the military mission.

3. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT AND INTERESTS:

The Parties will collaborate to carry out projects as identified and prioritized in Section I, above. The parties will take a more integrated approach to prioritize investments and projects where they will have the greatest impact and address ecological risks across broad landscapes. A collaborative approach that addresses ecological risks across different ownership boundaries and habitat types will have direct and positive effects on land management practices, rural economies, and the people in South Carolina.

4. THE INTENT OF THE PARTIES:

The Parties agree to:

- Collaborate on mutually agreed-upon projects in pursuit of the overarching goals of this MOU, sharing decision space to identify priorities which are consistent with plans and strategies such as the State Forest Action Plan, State Wildlife Action Plan, NRCS State Technical Committee recommendations, and the Forest Plan for the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests.
- Collectively evaluate and examine options for managing ecological risks and natural resource concerns. Realistically prioritize actions in order to focus and direct concerted investments for achieving landscape-scale improvements.
- Make reasonable efforts to achieve consistency and avoid conflicts between federal, state, tribal, and private objectives, plans, policies, and programs; and address and resolve all issues and concerns raised by any Party consistent with applicable law.
- Encourage the use of available and applicable state and federal programs and authorities to carry out actions.
- Share, consider and incorporate state and local expertise and data, including socioeconomic data, in the development and analysis of actions.
- Agree upon mechanisms to ensure substantial participation from other state partners, policy makers, agencies, organizations, and other partners through the development of effective communication and outreach plans to gauge interest, determine desired levels and methods of engagement, and seek input on the prioritization of processes; and
- Create an outcome-based investment strategy that prioritizes shared goals and accomplishes work through partnership.

5. MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES:

- The Parties are bound by all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations. If conflicts arise, the Parties will evaluate authorities on how to best achieve the goals of a project.
- The Parties will protect sacred sites, preserve cultural resources and take all actions necessary to protect data collected from Native American tribes in accordance with applicable law.
- The Parties will communicate on a regular basis to enhance and develop the institutional arrangements necessary to facilitate the purposes of this MOU.
- The Parties will conduct business pertaining to this MOU through in-person meetings, conference calls, and/or other means provided, however, that the parties will meet in person, at least once during each calendar year that this MOU is in effect to evaluate progress made under the MOU.

6. PRINCIPAL CONTACTS:

Individuals listed below may act for their respective Parties in matters related to this MOU.

PRINCIPAL SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTRY COMMISSION CONTACTS:

SCFC PROGRAM CONTACT	SCFC ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
Name: Scott Phillips Title: State Forester Address: PO Box 21707 Columbia, SC 29221 Telephone: 803.896.8801 Email: sphillips@scfc.gov	Name: Russell Hubright Title: Forest Management Chief Address: PO Box 21707 Columbia, SC 29221 Telephone: 803.896.8823 Email: rhubright@scfc.gov

PRINCIPAL SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES CONTACTS:

SC DNR PROGRAM CONTACT	SC DNR ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
Name: Robert Boyles, Jr. Title: Director Address: PO Box 167 Columbia, SC 29202 Telephone: 803.764.4007 Email: BoylesR@dnr.sc.gov	Name: Emily Cope Title: Deputy Director Address: PO Box 167 Columbia, SC 29202 Telephone: 803.734.3937 Email: CopeE@dnr.sc.gov

PRINCIPAL SC DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM CONTACTS:

SC PRT PROGRAM CONTACT	SC PRT ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
Name: Paul McCormack Title: Director State Park Service Address: 1025 Pendleton Street Columbia, SC 29201 Telephone: 803.734.0965 Email: pmccormack@scpr.com	Name: Terry Hurley Title: Chief of Resource Management Address: 1025 Pendleton Street Columbia, SC 29201 Telephone: 803.734.0517 Email: thurley@scprt.com

PRINCIPAL CLEMSON UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION CONTACTS:

CU COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM CONTACT	CU COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
<p>Name: Thomas R. Dobbins Title: Associate Dean/Director-Extension Address: 103 Barre Hall Clemson, SC 29689 Telephone: 803.656.3382 Email: tdbbns@clemson.edu</p>	<p>Name: Derrick Phinney Title: Program Team Leader – Forestry/Natural Resources Address: 201 Johnston Street George, SC 29477 Telephone: 803.560.0609 Email: dphinne@clemson.edu</p>

PRINCIPAL SOUTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD CONTACTS:

SC NATIONAL GUARD PROGRAM CONTACT	SC NATIONAL GUARD ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
<p>Name: R. Van McCarty Title: The Adjutant General of SC Address: 1 National Guard Road Columbia, SC 29201 Telephone: 803.299.2965 Email: roy.v.mccarty.mil@mail.mil</p>	<p>Name: Bryan Hall Title: Conservation Manager Address: 5411 Leesburg Road, Bldg 3924 Eastover, SC 29033 Telephone: 803.299.2349 Email: hallcb@tag.scmd.state.sc.us</p>

PRINCIPAL FOREST SERVICE CONTACTS:

FRANCIS MARION AND SUMTER NF PROGRAM CONTACT	FRANCIS MARION AND SUMTER NF ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
<p>Name: JaSal Morris Title: Forest Supervisor Address: 4931 Broad River Road Columbia, SC 29212 Telephone: 803.561.4081 Email: derrick.morris@usda.gov</p>	<p>Name: Larry Westcott Title: Natural Res. Staff Officer Address: 4931 Broad River Road Columbia, SC 29212 Telephone: 803.561.4083 Email: larry.westcott@usda.gov</p>

PRINCIPAL NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE CONTACTS:

SC NRCS STATE OFFICE PROGRAM CONTACT	SC NRCS STATE OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
<p>Name: Ann English Title: State Conservationist Address: 1835 Assembly Street, Suite 950 Columbia, SC 29201 Telephone: 803.253.3935 Email: ann.english@usda.gov</p>	<p>Name: Terence Kelly Title: State Resource Conservationist Address: 1835 Assembly Street, Suite 950 Columbia, SC 29201 Telephone: 803.253.5685 Email: terry.kelly@usda.gov</p>

PRINCIPAL FARM SERVICE AGENCY CONTACTS:

SC FARM SERVICE AGENCY STATE OFFICE PROGRAM CONTACT	SC FARM SERVICE AGENCY STATE OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
<p>Name: Laurie Funderburk Title: State Executive Director Address: 1927 Thurmond Mall, Suite 100 Columbia, SC 29201 Telephone: 803.806.3830 Email: laurie.funderburk@usda.gov</p>	<p>Name: Sabrenna Bryant Title: State Outreach Coordinator Address: 1927 Thurmond Mall, Suite 100 Columbia, SC 29201 Telephone: 803.806.3820 Email: Sabrenna.bryant@usda.gov</p>

PRINCIPAL U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE CONTACTS:

FWS PROGRAM CONTACT	FWS ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT
<p>Name: Tom McCoy Title: Field Supervisor for Ecological Services Address: 176 Croghan Spur Rd. Suite 200 Charleston, SC 29407 Telephone: 843.300.0431 Email: thomas_mccoy@fws.gov</p>	<p>Name: Mark Caldwell Title: Deputy Field Supervisor for Ecological Services Address: 176 Croghan Spur Rd. Suite 200 Charleston, SC 29407 Telephone: 843.300.0426 Email: mark_caldwell@fws.gov</p>

7. PROVISIONS

- A. **NOTICE.** Any communications affecting the operations covered by this MOU is sufficient only if in writing and delivered to the other Parties in person, by mail, or transmitted electronically via e-mail or facsimile, to the contact of each organization, as identified in Section V above. Notice shall be deemed effective on the date of receipt when delivered in accordance with this provision, or on the effective date of the notice, whichever is later.
- B. **PARTICIPATION IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES.** This MOU in no way restricts a Party from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.
- C. **ENDORSEMENT.** Any contributions made by a Party under this MOU do not by direct reference or implication convey endorsement of any other party's products or activities.
- D. **NONBINDING AGREEMENT.** This MOU creates no right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity. The Parties shall manage their respective resources and activities in a separate, coordinated and mutually beneficial manner to meet the purpose(s) of this MOU. Nothing in this MOU authorizes any Party to obligate or transfer anything of value.

Specific, prospective projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, property, and/or anything of value to a Party requires the execution of separate agreements and are contingent upon numerous factors, including, as applicable, but not limited to: federal agency availability of appropriated funds and other resources; state agency availability of funds and other resources; and, federal and state agency administrative and legal requirements (including agency authorization by statute and regulation). This MOU neither provides, nor requires that a Party meets these criteria. If a Party elects to participate in a prospective project or activity that involves the transfer of funds, services, property, and/or anything of value the requirements set forth herein must be met.

Additionally, if a Party enters into a separate agreement involving the transfer of funds, services, property and/or anything of value, the Party must do so in accordance with the laws, regulations, and/or policies to which it is subject, and any such obligation would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds and other resources. The negotiation, execution, and administration of separate agreements must comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Nothing in this MOU is intended to alter, limit, or expand a Party's statutory and regulatory authority. **PUBLICATIONS, AUDIOVISUALS AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA.** Each Party shall acknowledge any partner support, if provided, in any publications, audiovisuals, and electronic media developed in association with this MOU as well as the purpose. An acknowledgement by a Party shall not constitute an endorsement of the products, services, or views by the other Parties.

- E. **TERMINATION.** Any Party may terminate its participation in this MOU in whole, or in part, at any time prior to expiration of this MOU provided, however, that such termination shall be in writing and provided to each of the other Parties as set forth in subpart "A" of this section.
- F. **MODIFICATIONS.** To be effective, modifications to this MOU must be made with the mutual consent of the Parties and shall be in writing as well as signed and dated by each Party. Requests for modification should be made in writing, and provided to each of the Parties, as set forth in subpart "A" of this section, at least thirty (30) days prior to the intended date for implementation of the requested modification.
- G. **COMMENCEMENT/ EXPIRATION DATE.** This MOU shall take effect upon the last signature of all Parties and shall remain in effect until the date on which terminated by the Parties, or 10 years from the effective date, whichever occurs first.
- H. **AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES:**
By signature below, each Party certifies that the individuals listed in this document as representatives of the individual parties are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to this MOU and address ecological risks across broad landscapes. A collaborative approach that addresses ecological risks across different ownership boundaries and habitat types will have direct and positive effects on land management practices, rural economies, and the people in South Carolina.

In witness whereof, the parties hereto have executed this MOU as of the last date written below.

SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTRY COMMISSION

Date: 12/9/2022 By: Scott Phillips
Scott Phillips
State Forester

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOREST SERVICE

Date: 12/9/2022 By: Ken Arney
Ken Arney
Region Forester, Forest Service Southern Region

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE

Date: 12/9/2022 By: Ann English
Ann English
State Conservationist, South Carolina

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Date: 12/9/2022 By: Laurie Funderburk
Laurie Funderburk
State Executive Director, South Carolina

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Date: 12/9/22 By: Leopoldo Miranda Castro
Leopoldo Miranda Castro
Regional Director, Southeast Region

SOUTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD

Date: 12/9/2022

By: 
Major General Van McCarty
Adjutant General of South Carolina

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

Date: 12/9/2022

By: 
George Askew
Vice President, Public Service and Agriculture

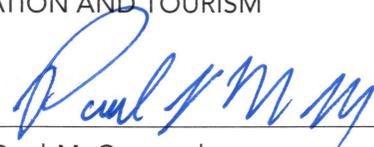
SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Date: 12/9/22

By: 
Robert Boyles
Director

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM

Date: 12-9-22

By: 
Paul McCormack
Director of State Parks