

Tree Country

November 2017



the employee
newsletter of the
**South Carolina
Forestry Commission**

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from the desk of
STATE FORESTER
Gene Kodama

Good day,
October was another eventful month. The annual state employee benefit enrollment period was held, and our Human Resources department properly informed us of our options and visited many field locations to ensure that all employees could ask them any questions in person. Thank you again to these fine SCFC team members.

We participated in another semi-annual SC Association of Consulting Foresters meeting at Harbison. This association is a very important component of our state forestry community, as they serve many private landowners and help them reach their forest management goals and enhance the economic and financial health and contribution of the state's forests.

The Commission and ACF have a symbiotic relationship. The Commission helps many landowners get properly started in forestry, and ACF members and other registered foresters help landowners manage their forests over the long term. These actions create more productive and healthy forests and support tens of thousands of SC jobs

and contribute much toward forestry's \$21 billion statewide economic impact.

Our agency also made its fiscal year 2018-2019 executive budget presentation to the Governor's staff. This is the first step in the next year of budget deliberations that will last through May 2018. Recurring funding requests totaling \$5.8 million in this budget proposal include, in order of priority:

1. Replace declining federal funding;
2. Pay for state increases in benefit costs plus increase salaries and their compa-ratios;
3. Add an Information Technology (IT) position, purchase computer software and hardware, and meet



Commissioners following the announcement of the next State Forester. From left to right, Eric Smith, Micky Scott, current State Forester Gene Kodama, incoming State Forester Scott Phillips, Jess Neville, Walt McPhail, Sam Coker, and Stro Morrison.

state IT security requirements;

4. Restore firefighting personnel capacity and operating funds;
5. Restore forester and support positions to better serve landowners and the forest industry; and
6. Replace positions lost on State Forests and improve personnel recruitment capacity.

Non-recurring funding requests include:

1. \$3.5 million for replacing firefighting equipment and
2. \$515,000 for facility improvements and demolitions.

Much time was also spent last month completing the process of determining the next SC State Forester. We set an aggressive schedule after my departure announcement in June in order to confirm the next person by October and provide a transition period prior to my departure on January 2, 2018. The selection timeline was met with assistance from Lynn Rivers and excellent participation and commitment from the Commissioners' state forester selection team. More details appear in another article in this bulletin. We all congratulate Scott Phillips on being named the next State Forester and dedicate ourselves to ensuring that he

and the agency continues its success into the future.

Please enjoy the beautiful fall weather we are having and also the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday season. We all have much to be thankful for!

Best regards,



On the Cover

The cover photo features a young pine stand in Chesterfield County, adjacent to Sand Hills State Forest.

Employee News

New Employees

We would like to welcome a new employee to the Coastal Region.

Justin Cain is the new Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) Forester for the Coastal Region. Justin started Oct. 17 and will work out of the Walterboro office. He lives on James Island and graduated NC State University this year with a bachelor's degree in Forest Management.



Justin Cain

Justin was recently an intern at the Resource Management Service in Wilmington, N.C. and a forest tech at Bridger-Teton National Forest in Big Piney, Wyoming. In his spare time Justin enjoys traveling with his new wife.

Welcome, Justin!

Personnel News

Harbison State Forest Trades Specialist **Philip Palmer** resigned effective Oct. 6. Sand Hills Equipment Operator **Jimmy Smith** retired from the agency Oct. 23. Harbison State Forest Trades Specialist **Mike Wooten** resigned from the agency Oct. 29.

Retiree News

Retired Berkeley County Warden **James Clarke** passed away Oct. 26. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Kodama Honored by ACF



SC Association of Consulting Foresters Chapter Chair Pat Lee presented State Forester Gene Kodama a plaque of appreciation for his service to forestry Oct. 12 at their meeting at Harbison State Forest.

CAUGHT ON CAMERA



Coastal Administrative Assistant Vicki Irick laughs as she notices a camera in the lobby.



Director of Administration Stephanie Meetze and Commissioner Chair Walt McPhail enjoy a laugh Oct. 6 at the Columbia HQ.



Harbison Administrative Assistant Lisa Hart enjoys having Harbison State Forest buzzing with activity during Wood Magic.



Forest Management Administrative Assistant Debbie Kiser and Procurement Manager Victoria O'Cain enjoy serving pizza at Wood Magic.

Phillips Named to Replace Kodama as State Forester

Scott Phillips was named the next State Forester Oct. 6 at a special meeting of the South Carolina Forestry Commission.

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

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

In his current role as the Rural Forestry Programs Manager, Phillips oversees the agency’s cost-share and technical assistance programs offered for private landowners. He received a bachelor’s degree in forest resources from the University of Georgia, where he dual-majored in forestry and wildlife management. He earned a master’s degree in forest resources from Clemson University, where he specialized in forest business.

Scott started with the agency in 1999 as a forester on Manchester State Forest, then served as a BMP Forester in the

Pee Dee region from July 2000 to Nov. 2002. He was the Forest Analyst for the state forest system from Nov. 2002 - Oct. 2007 before moving to the Assistant Forest Director at Manchester for four months. Phillips moved to the HQ in Feb. 2008 to serve as the Rural Forestry Programs Manager . He coordinates the Forest Renewal Program (FRP) and Stewardship program for the Commission. Scott also serves as the Plans Section Chief on the Type 2 Incident Management Team.

At 43 years of age, Scott is believed to be the youngest State Forester in South Carolina history.

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

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

Phillips assumes leadership of the Forestry Commission at an exciting time. In addition to celebrating its 90th anniversary this year, the agency



New State Forester Scott Phillips will take office Jan. 2, 2018.

recently unveiled the results of a widely publicized study that showed forestry contributes \$21 billion to the state’s economy and continues to be one of the largest industries in the state.

***Congratulations,
Scott!***



State Forester Gene Kodama congratulates Phillips after the announcement at the Columbia HQ Oct. 6.



Commission Chair Walt McPhail announced Phillips as the next state forester.

Save the Dates

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2017

SAVE THE
DATE!

SC State Forester
Gene Kodama's
retirement event
Thursday, Dec. 7



Please make plans to join us in recognizing and thanking Gene for his 10 years of service to the state and to the SC Forestry Commission at an early evening event **Thursday, Dec. 7** in Columbia.

Gene has asked that there be no gifts and instead to use this time to raise funds for the SC National Guard's support program for deployed soldiers' families called "Family Readiness Groups."

We would love to see you. Please RSVP to Tonya Steadman at tsteadman@scfc.gov or (803) 896-8861.

More details - including location, time, victuals, attire and donation mechanisms - will follow in the next two weeks.

Thank you!

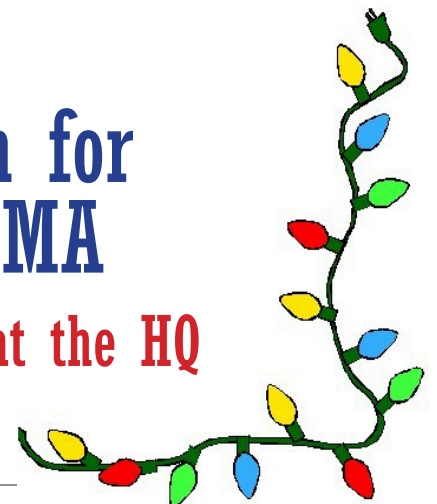
 South Carolina
Forestry Commission

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2017



**Christmas Drop-In
and Retirement Recognition for
State Forester GENE KODAMA**

**2:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Room at the HQ
December 14, 2017**



Programs Programs

Wood Magic Brings Fun to Fifth Graders at HSF

We had yet another successful week of Wood Magic Forest Fair! Wood Magic was held Oct. 16-20 at Harbison State Forest (HSF). This fun-filled forestry festival for fifth-graders reached 573 students and 31 teachers. Eleven public and private schools attended this 4-hour educational program and learned about the importance of sustainable management of our forest resources in South Carolina.

There were 62 volunteers who worked as guides, instructors, and food servers, as well as other behind-the-scenes jobs. Volunteers came from all backgrounds, agencies, organizations, and businesses including: Clemson Extension, Collum's Lumber Products LLC, USFS, Domtar Paper Company LLC, Sonoco Recycling, KapStone, Forestry Association of SC, Foothills Forest Products, Central Carolina Technical College, Palmetto Pride, Sustainable Carolina, and the Forestry Commission. Twenty-one Central Carolina Technical College Natural Resource Management students also volunteered throughout the week, gaining valuable experience in forestry education and outreach.

Thanks goes to all of our wonderful volunteers who helped at Wood Magic! This amazing program would not be possible without you! Our next Wood Magic Forest Fair will be Nov. 14 -17 at Sewee Environmental Education Center.

Education

- Beth Foley



East Unit Forester Roy Boyd shows students a freshly sawn cedar board.



Fairfield/Newberry Supervisor Bruce Ballentine leads his class to the next station.



Lexington/Richland Project Forester Jeff Riggan explains how fire makes a forest healthy.



Forest Management Chief Russell Hubright and Coastal Stewardship Forester Vaughan Spearman take a poll at the magic show.



Commissioner Eric Smith explains how jobs are a gift of the forest.



Public Information Director Doug Wood demonstrates how to make paper.



Students enjoy making paper at Wood Magic.



Accounting Supervisor Jane Leneave assists a student in making paper.



Abbeville/Greenwood/Laurens Supervisor Dale Curry and Assistant Education Coordinator Beth Foley have fun handing out pizza.

Caught ON Camera



Kershaw/Lee Forest Technician Richard Catoe drives his unit in Camden's Firefest parade Sept. 30. On the right, Catoe watches as Bradley Bean (son of former employees Ryan and Becky Bean) enjoys checking out the dozer.



Piedmont Mechanic Kevin Garner attended a fire prevention event at Walmart in Union County Oct. 14. He displayed a unit for the public to see how we fight fires during Fire Prevention Week.



Greenville/Pickens Forest Technician Ronnie Patterson sent in the photo of two units parked in front of Table Rock Mountain at the Pinnacle Mountain Fire.

Programs

Programs

Southern Pine Beetle Spots in Oconee County

I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight some of the excellent work that SPB Coordinator Chisolm Beckham and Forestry Aide Kevin Douglas have done for our agency!

During a 20 percent survey flight conducted Sept. 15, the South Carolina Forestry Commission's Insect and Disease Team found a number of small southern pine beetle spots on U.S. Forest Service land. Chisolm Beckham took the initiative to contact the US Forest Service, including foresters from the Andrew Pickens National Forest and Paul Merton, the USFS entomologist in Asheville, NC. He also contacted the Georgia Forestry Commission since some of the spots were in Georgia. Chisolm arranged for representatives of these agencies to meet Oct. 12 at some of these spots to evaluate the damage and discuss management options.

Forest Health

- David Jenkins

All of the agencies involved expressed gratitude for the information from our aerial survey, were grateful for guidance on management options and for the connections made between the agencies, and were appreciative for insight into southern pine beetle behavior and biology. Especially notable



Chisolm peels back the bark of a tree.



SPB Coordinator Chisolm Beckham and Forestry Aide Kevin Douglas look for damage from the SPB.

was the accuracy of the coordinates of our beetle spots. Many noted that the SPB spots that had been given to them in the past were very difficult to find because the coordinates were estimates. The combination of modern technology (digital sketch mappers) and Chisolm's skill meant that the coordinates of the SPB spots were pinpoint accurate and we were able to locate the spots with ease.

The SC Forestry Commission Insect and Disease Team also met with staff from Oconee State Park where they were concerned about a southern pine beetle outbreak. We evaluated the spot and Chisolm passed on management options, as well as recommending salvage operations... the wood could be used to repair old buildings or in the construction of new ones. They could even commemorate the outbreak: "The wood in this building was salvaged from a southern pine beetle infestation on Oconee State Park". Chisolm looked into local portable sawmill outfits that the State Parks could use to salvage the wood.

None of the spots are worrisome in themselves; some are finished, others are slowing down as they run into hardwoods or as the days get shorter. However, they are an indication that southern pine beetle populations are likely to increase in the coming year(s). Many of our foresters don't have experience with southern pine

beetle and even those who have had experience could use a refresher. We recognize this SPB outbreak as an opportunity for our foresters who will have to reach out to landowners and talk about management options. Chisolm is organizing a field training for our foresters so they can see the damage, recognize the symptoms and signs of SPB and distinguish it from Ips damage, and outline management options for landowners.

The initiative Chisolm Beckham took to plan and organize the survey flight, to contact the impacted agencies and arrange a meeting at the spots, including the possibility of boarding US Forest Service and/or Georgia Forestry Commission employees, and to anticipate the benefit our own agency's foresters would get from visiting the site, is commendable. Everyone who met at the spot expressed appreciation at the open communication between agencies, the expertise brought by Chisolm Beckham, and the accuracy of his coordinates.

Chisolm Beckham and Kevin Douglas made our agency look very good and I want to recognize their hard work! I am very proud to work with Chisolm and Kevin and thankful for their strong work ethic and professional bearing. They are an asset to the South Carolina Forestry Commission and to our State!

Alla Boy

S-390 Course Held at HQ

The S-390 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations course was taught to 19 students at the Columbia HQ Oct. 2-6.

The course is designed to introduce fire behavior calculations by manual methods, using nomograms and the Fire Behavior Handbook. Students gain an understanding of the determinants of fire behavior through studying inputs (weather, slope, fuels, and fuel moisture). Students also learn how to interpret fire behavior outputs, documentation processes, and fire behavior briefing components.



A group shares their solution to a scenario with the class.



Spartanburg/Union Supervisor Jon Barker and Coastal BMP Forester Michael Broom calculate the rate of spread.



Horry/Marion Project Forester GraceAnna Schilz performs calculations to determine a fire's behavior.



Clarendon/Sumter Project Forester Jacob Schimpf reads the details of a fire scenario.



Manchester State Forest Assistant Director Ben Kendall, Dillon/Florence Supervisor Anthony Eaddy, a Fort Jackson employee (in white shirt), Williamsburg Supervisor Terry Cook, and Kershaw/Lee Supervisor Cody Watts work as a group to solve a problem.

Fall Tree Farm Field Tour Held at McKinney's

The annual Tree Farm Field Tour was held Sept. 28 at the Charles McKinney family Tree Farm near Clinton. Approximately 85 people attended this event during which District Tree Farmers of the Year were recognized and an update on the Tree Farm program in South Carolina was provided.

Two of the District winners were nominated by Forestry Commission employees – Piedmont East Unit Forester Roy Boyd nominated Michael Johnson of York County and Horry/Marion Project Forester GraceAnna Schilz nominated John Richardson of Horry County.

During the field tour, participants learned about the use of drones in forestry, saw the results of different methods of understory vegetation control, and observed the results of a wetland restoration project.”



Tom Fernandez of SkyView Aerial Solutions demonstrates the use of his unmanned aircraft (drone) as Tree Farm Tour participants watch.

(More photos on next page)



Charles McKinney holds a cutting from one of the types of trees planted by his ancestors on the property he currently owns. Katherine McKinney catches her breath after playing the role of her great-great-great grandmother during one of the stops of the 2017 Tree Farm Tour.



Tarri McKinney describes the process of wetland restoration to Tree Farm Tour participants.

No Pun Intended...

Statistically, six out of seven dwarfs are not Happy.





Forestry Commission Chair and board member of the SC Tree Farm Committee Walt McPhail and Senator Danny Verdin serve ice cream to Tree Farm Tour participants



Randell Ewing displays a plaque that recognized him as the 2017 Master Tree Farmer Volunteer of the Year.



Pat Dorn, District 6 Tree Farmer of the Year with his nominator Milliken Forestry Co., Inc. forester John Hane and Recognition Chair Russell Hubright.



Hubright with Horry/Marion Project Forester GraceAnna Schilz who nominated District 8 Tree Farmer of the Year John Richardson.



Wade Fletcher is recognized as District 7 Tree Farmer of the Year as his nominators SC Tree Farm Advisory Committee members Eddie Drayton (back) and Randell Ewing (right), and Tree Farm Recognition Chair Russell Hubright (left) look on.



Charles McKinney describes one of the door prizes that an attendee at the Field Tour would receive.

Caught ON Camera



This Eastern Gray Squirrel was seen clinging to a tree at the SC Botanical Gardens in Clemson in September.



Construction & Property Manager David Owen starts so early in the morning with the leaf blower that he has to use a flashlight.



Assistant Education Coordinator Beth Foley aged at Wood Magic as she performed her role during the magic show.



Public Information Coordinator Justin Holt helps with pizza delivery at Wood Magic.



Fire Staff Forester Brad Bramlett, Benefits Administrator Kris Anderson, and Protection Administrative Assistant Susan Brogdon enjoy the fall weather on Harbison State Forest while seeing what goes on at Wood Magic.

COOL CRITTERS



Tersa Sphinx: Interesting Caterpillar

Protection Chief Darryl Jones found this sphinx moth caterpillar, at left, in his yard. His daughter Shiloh screamed because she thought it was a snake.

Tersa Sphinx caterpillars are found in the southeastern U.S.. The adults have a range from Massachusetts south to Florida; west to Nebraska, New Mexico, and southern Arizona; south through Mexico, the West Indies, and Central America to Argentina. It has one large eyespot and six smaller ones progressing down the body on each side, and a light stripe roughly bisecting the eyespots. It also has a black “horn” on its rear end. This caterpillar is found in both green and brown colors.

You usually see them from June to October but they can be found year-round in Florida. They take nectar from deep-throated flowers like honeysuckle and also feed on tropical or subtropical tree species.



When it transforms into a moth, it appears to have a wood grain look to it.



Tersa Sphinx are the Peacocks of caterpillars; they have lots of eyespots. Speaking of eyes, take a look at this caterpillar's head. It has huge eyespots and a very big front, but look just above those tiny feet and you'll see how very small its face is.

Golden Rules (Part 4 of 9)

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

Principles from How to Stop Worrying and Start Living

Fundamental Principles for Overcoming Worry

1. Live in “day-tight compartments.”
2. How to face trouble:
 - Ask yourself, “What is the worst that can possibly happen?”
 - Prepare to accept the worst.
 - Try to improve on the worst.
3. Remind yourself of the exorbitant price you can pay for worry in terms of your health.

Programs

Programs

Portable Radio Use and Care

Your portable radio is one of the single-most versatile pieces of equipment that a firefighter can carry. Why do I believe that? Because portable radios are the primary means for:

- On-scene personnel to become informed and educated about the incident conditions when units arrive on the location of a dispatched call.
- The incident commander uses the radio to execute command and control activities;
- Personnel that are assigned duties in the hazard area can communicate their observations/progress to the IC and others. They also can receive information from others and get aerial observations.
- Personnel can alert everyone should there be an emergency situation.

For all of the above types of communication to work, however, it is imperative that all portable radios on the scene are in good working order and that all personnel are skilled and practiced in their operation.

Know your Radio-

Technology

- Lloyd Mitchell

Your life may one day depend upon knowing which button or knob on your portable radio to use — and you might only have one chance to get it right. Using the incredible capabilities of today's portable radios is a critical skill, and like any other skill, if you don't use it, you lose it.

- Practice often using your radio's different features while wearing firefighting gloves, especially with those features that you don't routinely use. If that day comes when you really need a particular feature of your radio, chances are you'll be in a firefight, so prepare.
- Take the time to explore your radio and ensure you understand

your radio. Become familiar with the channels programmed in your radio and how to change to them. You may not use them on a day-to-day basis, but one day you may and if so, time may be critical. Your life or your co-workers life may depend on it.

Battery Care-

Label the batteries and track each battery's life cycle. When it no longer holds a charge or the ability to hold a charge is short, let your Communication Manager know. There may be a problem. SCFC has the ability to check them for capacity.

- **Never leave your radio or battery on charge for longer than 3 hrs after the LED turns green.** If the radio is left on for long periods of time, this may lead to overcharging the battery and to the battery failing.
- **The radio should always be off when charging.**
- If you need to monitor a channel, charge the spare battery in the charger without the radio attached.

Keep it Clean

Carbon particles from smoke, dirt, dust, grease and other fireground goo can quickly compromise radio functions. Gentle compressed air cleaners, like those used to clean computer keyboards and other electronic equipment, are great for keeping microphone and speaker ports clear of debris.

If you have a remote speaker mike, be sure to pay particular attention to contact points for remote microphones and clean them with an ordinary pencil



Black River Unit Forester Ron Holt communicates on a radio on a fire in Williamsburg County.

eraser to keep those contacts shiny for maximum performance.

Basic Radio Practices

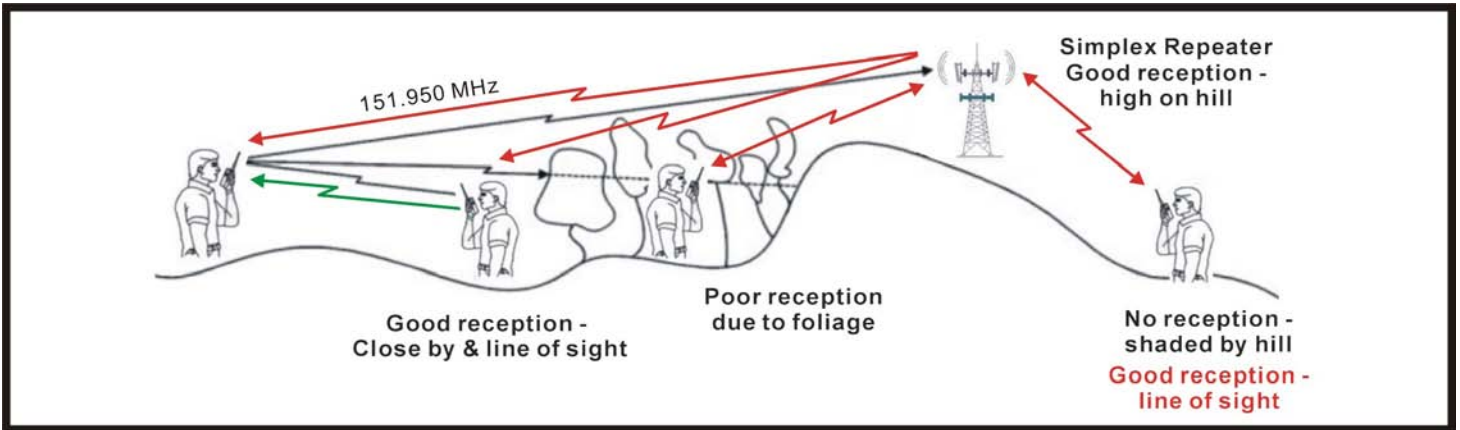
Learn and master the following components of radio communication under non-stressful conditions. Doing so will greatly enhance your portable radio communication, especially when the heat is on.

Emergency scenes are heavy with noise pollution from heavy equipment, fire pumps and portable equipment. Your radio might also be exposed to noise from firefighting operations.

- Minimize microphone exposure by practicing shield, move and talk
- Shield the microphone using your hand,
- Move away from the source of exposure, even if you can only turn your back to the source
- Talk directly into the microphone as much as possible, and keep the microphone 1 to 2 inches away from your mouth

When speaking into a microphone use a loud, clear and controlled voice — avoid shouting. When excited, our speech is often both louder

Portable Radio Use (continued)



and faster. When this happens, our radio transmissions can be difficult or impossible to understand, which may require receiving party to ask for a repeat, and thus more radio traffic on the channel. If you are asked to repeat radio communication, you probably need to adjust your voice level or physical location.

Radio Position

The optimal position for a portable radio transmission is at head height with the antenna in a vertical position. Not exactly the position you may find your radio when involved in fire operations, right? It may be on your side, or in a chest pack. The result of both locations could be poor antenna reception and a reduction in range of the radio.

Two concepts important to radio use are “line of sight” and “range”. Our radios operate using FM (Frequency Modulation) in the VHF (Very High Frequency) band. This type of radio transmission has good range and clarity but is, for the most part, line of sight. That is, the transmitter and receiver must not be blocked from one another by mountains, buildings, or dense metallic objects. Hills and valleys, heavy vegetation and dense carbon filled smoke can also influence the range of your radio.

The radio waves will penetrate light vegetation and small wooden structures. It is necessary to virtually “see” the other party with which you want to communicate. Our mountainous terrain is our biggest radio communications problem.

Range is influenced by the antenna system, battery condition, and power.

The best antenna is a permanently mounted mobile antenna because it is the best radiator and receptor of radio waves, and uses the vehicle chassis as a ground plane for the antenna. The typical handheld antenna is a very poor antenna system and explains the difference between the quality of communications between a mobile and handheld radio.

- The key point is that the antenna system is much more critical than the power output. **Never use a radio without an antenna attached.**
- Antenna location is also important. If you have the radio on your belt or in a chest pack, your body will absorb much of the signal. While harmless, this will limit the radio’s effectiveness.
- Take the radio out of the chest harness and try holding the radio up and away from your body.
- If your handheld radios has a remote speaker/microphone you could even hold the radio above your head to ensure the ability of the radio to be in the clear of your body.
- If you have the radio in a chest pack when receiving a noisy signal, try turning around toward the position of the person talking, it may help you to receive them better.
- Remember to take the radio out of the chest pack when you talk back to them, bending over to shout in the microphone will not help with

getting the best signal out to them. Your body absorbs the signal.

Technical issues can arise. Carefully review and practice the troubleshooting guidance provided here. Your ability to work through a radio malfunction on scene may be critical to your safety and that of others.

You need to recognize technical problems and take corrective action to improve communications. Do not tolerate an inoperable radio when you are in the hazard area.

Remember Murphy’s Law. If something can go wrong, it will go wrong and usually at the most inopportune time.

If you cannot communicate, it’s an accountability and safety issue. Get it fixed or get out.

Remember...SAFETY FIRST!!



Take the radio out of the chest harness before talking.

Employee Service Awards



SERVICE AWARDS FOR NOVEMBER

Employee's Name	Position	Location	State Service
Ron Clark	Forest Technician	Santee Unit	20 years
Debbie Kiser	Forest Management Admin.	Columbia	20 years
Randy Lyles	Forest Technician	Piedmont West Unit	20 years
Scotty Scott	Forest Technician	Black River Unit	20 years
Jay Woodard	Forest Warden	Black River Unit	20 years
Lamar Batchelor	Forest Technician	Piedmont East Unit	10 years
John Scott Cloninger	Forest Technician	Piedmont East Unit	10 years
Daniel Speares	Forest Technician	Piedmont East Unit	10 years

SAF & PABC Cosign TNC Editorial on Wildfire Funding

The Nature Conservancy drafted and distributed an editorial that was picked up by the Greenville News addressing the USFS' wildfire funding issues and how they affect forestry programs here in our state. The editorial was cosigned by the Society of American Foresters (SAF) and the Palmetto Agri Business Council (PABC). Piedmont Regional Forester Mike Bozzo was one of the co-signers of the editorial, as he is the SC Division Chair of the Society of American Foresters. Here's a link to the article and a few of the highlights: <http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/opinion/2017/10/26/california-wildfires-have-impact-south-carolina/791198001/>

- Wildfires have burned through more than 8 million acres of American land so far this year. Catastrophic fires are happening more and more often as increasingly extreme weather leads to bigger and bigger fires.
- While earthquakes and other disasters have access to emergency funds for damages and recovery, wildfire disasters are paid for directly from U.S Forest Service and Department of the Interior funds. It doesn't make sense to have firefighting come at the expense of projects that would make our lands more productive, healthier and less fire-prone in the first place. We need to break out of this cycle, and Congress holds the keys to a solution.
- Lawmakers are currently considering how to fix this problem so we can pay for firefighting, reduce the risk of future mega fires and still benefit from conservation and other programs here in South Carolina. The House of Representatives and Senate have introduced the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (WDFDA). And the Senate recently added a comprehensive fire-funding solution to a flood insurance bill. As partners focused on the quality of life and prosperity of rural South Carolina, where forestry drives local economies, we think both approaches are a great idea, and they can't be enacted soon enough.
- You can help too, by letting your members of Congress know a wildfire funding fix is important to you.
- We need not only to fight wildfires, but also to keep our forests healthy to prevent those fires to begin with — and protect South Carolina land, property and citizens at the same time.

Common American Customs Considered Offensive in Other Countries (Part 21)

MSN Business Insider

There are a number of customs and gestures that Americans use without thinking twice. But when traveling abroad, they will not only out you as a tourist, but could get you in hot water in other countries. Here are some of the most common American customs that are seen as offensive elsewhere.

21. Finishing a Meal

To Americans, finishing a meal shows the host how much they enjoyed the meal. In other countries, like China, the Philippines, Thailand and Russia, it signifies that you're still hungry and that they failed to provide you with enough food.



In an email dated Oct. 18 from Sylvia Hudson to Forester **Bob Ford** regarding his landowner assistance.

Dear Mr. Ford,

I have been so very tardy in getting back to you. Has it really been over a year since you, my sister, my husband and I tromped through the woods on my mother's property in Kershaw, SC? Believe me, so very much has happened since that day.

I contacted a consulting firm as you suggested. We opted to use the services of Land Management, Inc. located in Camden, SC. Coy Myers was the agent who helped us get the timber ultimately cut. In the final count, there was just over 50 acres as I recall. The good news is that Mr. Myers was willing to work with us so that 1/2 of the funds were paid to my mother in December 2016 and the balance in January 2017.

You may recall the reason we needed to have the timber cut was so that my mother, who was living in a facility in Rock Hill, had her heart set on returning to Morningside of Lancaster Assisted Living where she had resided previously. She (nor we) simply could not afford the costs at Morningside and had to settle for a facility in Rock Hill that was less expensive. Unfortunately, my mother was never happy there.

So, thanks to the sell of timber, we were finally able to get her transferred back to Morningside in May 2017. With the 60-day notice required to vacate the Rock Hill facility PLUS the pain-staking effort we had to go through with Morningside to have a room that was within our budget, it took far longer than we thought to actually get her moved back to the facility in Lancaster.

Now, for the not-so-good news. My mother died August 30. Although she was 92 years old, we were still surprised by her death, especially the suddenness of it. It was only 12 hours from the time she was admitted to the emergency room until she died. We were grateful that she did not suffer nor lingered unnecessarily while incapacitated. It has been difficult as might be expected with the passing of ones mother. However, my sister and I have found a great deal of comfort from knowing that we were able to help grant her wish to return to Morningside. And, that was only because of your time and your guidance as to what direction we might consider in having the timber cut. I don't think we could have proceeded if we had not had help in finding the best quote for the task at hand.

I want you to please, PLEASE pass this email along to your supervisor so that he/she will know just how deeply we appreciate your services and that of your local office. As I recall, you had retired and had been brought back in to help during a period of time when the office was short-handed. Lucky for them....lucky for us!

Thank you again. I hope this brief period of Fall weather finds you in good health and good spirit. Please remember to share this email.

Sincerely,

Sylvia C. Hudson



CURRENT JOB OPENINGS

Job Title: Administrative Specialist II

Agency Hiring Range: Min: \$ 22,182.00

Job Type: FTE - Full-Time

Closing Date/Time: 11/15/17 11:59 PM

Max: \$27,727.00

Location: Darlington County, South Carolina

Normal Work Schedule: Monday - Friday (8:30 - 5:00)

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: Performs routine and non-routine administrative duties to include responding to routine inquires, handling correspondence, generating reports, filing, assembling and mailing requested materials. Maintains administrative and other files following agency's retention records schedule. Assists in the acquisition of goods and services by solicitation of bids according to state and agency polices. Performs monthly reporting and documentation for all region personnel and equipment. Assists landowners, consulting forester and vendors with non-technical information. Assists the Administrative Assistant in implementing the daily operational activities of the Pee Dee Regional Office. Serves as the human resources (HR) liaison for the central HR office and serves as the SCEIS time administrator for the office. Responsible for entering attendance and absences for employees without ESS Time access. Reviews missing time reports. Enters/edit/corrects time and cost distribution information in the timesheet (CATS). Assists new, current and separating employees with required personnel paperwork. Distributes benefits materials/information.

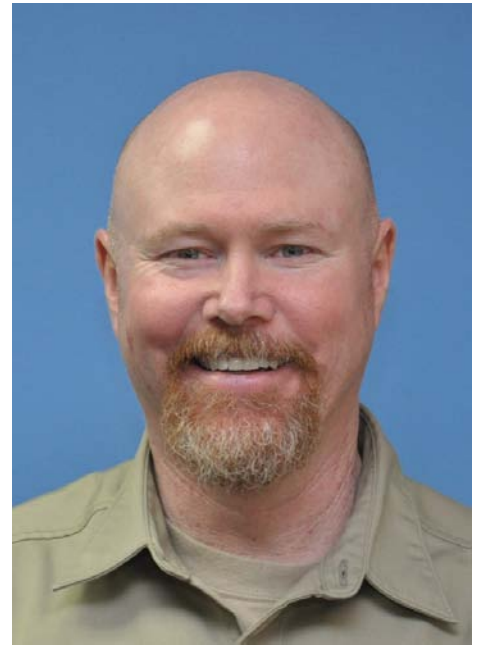
MINIMUM AND ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: A high school diploma and two (2) years work experience that is directly related to the area of employment.



Employee Spotlight

on

Russell Hale



Russell Hale: From Hobbyist and Dare Devil to Family Man

When you take one look around Aiken/ Barnwell Sector Forest Technician Russell Hale's machine shop, Gentry Instruments, you see just about everything you would expect.

Milling machines, lathes, grinding machines and much more are scattered throughout the shop in Aiken, but one room will catch your eye. Hanging from the ceiling are airplanes of all shapes, colors and sizes. However, these aren't your normal model airplanes.

"They are real airplanes. They are just small," Hale explained.



Hale and Black River Forest Technician Brad Jones determine the best placement of resources during training in 2014.

They are radio controlled (RC) planes to be exact. RC airplanes are controlled by an operator on the ground using a radio transmitter that communicates with a receiver on the aircraft. The receiver sends signals to servomechanisms which move the different control surfaces on the plane.

Hale fell in love with RC planes after flying his first one when he was 14. He built his first plane, a glider, in the early 1980s and flew it until 1989. After taking a 23-year break, he rekindled his interest in RC planes in 2012 and has enjoyed learning about all the changes in technology.

"I love it. It's a lot of fun and keeps me out of trouble," Hale quipped. "The manual is like a bible. I still haven't figured it all out."

One week each year in May Hale joins thousands of RC airplane enthusiasts in Woodruff for the Joe Nall, the world's largest RC event. He spends the entire week at the event watching pilots fly different styles of planes, and his family will join him for several days as well.

"They'll have 1,500 registered pilots there," Hale said. "I've met people there from Germany, England and Australia. It's amazing how many

people come together. It's at a 400-acre private airport. The planes I have are nothing compared to what you see there."

As much as he loves spending time working on and flying RC planes, Hale stays busy running his late father Bob's machine shop and fulfilling his duties for the Forestry Commission.

Hale does mostly welding and precision sheet metal fabrication at the shop. He's currently working on fabricating a race car for a friend but is very selective in the type of jobs he chooses.

"I open and close when I want to," Hale said with a smile as he glanced toward a sign on the door with those words on it. "I pick and choose the jobs now."



Russell Hale with some of his remote aircraft in his shop.

(SPOTLIGHT, cont.)

With the Forestry Commission, Hale's duties include wildfire suppression, landowner assistance and helping with reforestation programs.

He had never been exposed to prescribed fire before joining the Commission. Not long after he began working with the agency, then-project forester Anneta Pritchard called him to help her with a prescribed burn.

"I thought Anneta was going to burn everything up, including the truck," said Hale, who will begin his fourth year with the Commission in February. "I kept saying, 'We are going to burn the truck.' She said, 'It'll be fine.' That was my first time being exposed to a controlled burn and seeing fire everywhere like that and thinking it was out of control."

When he was growing up, Hale had dreams of being a race car driver. His father took him to his first race at a dirt track when he was four, and he immediately fell in love with the



Russell Hale got to see Mt. Rushmore on his way home from a western fire detail.

sport. He has fond memories attending races at Darlington Raceway in the 1960s.

"As kids back then, you could go in the pits, and the race car drivers would talk to you," Hale recalled. "You could go up to the cars and touch them and climb inside of them. It was totally different than it is now. After the race was over, we would peel stickers off of the crashed cars."

Hale has been married to his wife, Alice, for 19 years. She is a dentist and owns Hale Dentistry in Aiken. The couple has two children, Paul, 9, and Anna, 7. Paul is a karate fanatic, while Anna has artistic talent.

Prior to having children, Hale and his wife mountain biked all over the Southeast. They've also gone mountain



The Hale family bicycles together.



Russell with wife Alice, daughter Anna, and son Paul standing on the corner in Winslow Arizona.

biking in Moab, Utah, Fruita, Colo., and the Grand Canyon.

As a family, they love going on vacations together. They have been to the Grand Canyon, the famous meteor crater near Winslow, Ariz., and have a trip to Walt Disney World planned this Thanksgiving.

In his spare time, Hale enjoys hunting and fishing. He also has a passion for skydiving and has made 260 jumps, but that hobby is history.

"There's not a beautiful day that goes by that I don't think about it," Hale said. "I loved it and miss it, but kids and a wife are more fun."



Russell Hale with a race car that he is working on for a friend.

Did You Know?

The San Francisco Cable cars are the only mobile National Monuments.

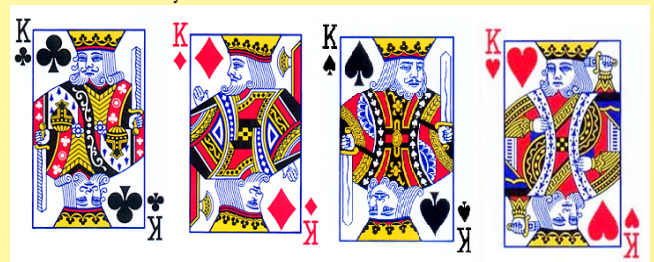
Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king or emperor from history:

Spades - King David

Hearts - Charlemagne

Clubs - Alexander, the Great

Diamonds - Julius Caesar



Persimmon Seed Winter Weather Forecast

When I was about 10 years old, I remember my Granddad pointing out persimmon trees when we were walking in to a deer stand. He pulled a few ripe persimmons from the tree, dug out the seeds, and used his pocketknife to split the seeds open. After looking at them for a few minutes, he told me it was going to be a cold winter, and he showed me the knife-shaped pattern inside of the seeds.



Ripe persimmon fruit.

Years later, I decided to start reading the persimmon trees myself, just to see how well the predictions worked out. The Old Farmer's Almanac (<https://www.almanac.com/content/predicting-weather-using-persimmon-seed>) includes information about the persimmon seed forecast every year.

According to folklore (and my granddad!), the shape of the kernel inside of the seed can predict the overall pattern for winter weather:

- A fork-shaped kernel indicates a mild winter
- A knife-shaped kernel indicates a cold winter (with winds that cut like a knife!)
- A spoon-shaped kernel indicates that you will need a shovel to dig out from the snow (for us, I think that means a wet winter)

I've picked a few persimmons from the same three trees for the last eight or nine years, and thought I would share photos from the seeds this year. Based on the counts I did, 13 were spoon shaped and five were knife shaped. So the prediction from my three trees is that we will have a wet winter, and maybe a chance of some snow.

If you cut open your own seeds, let me know what they tell you!

Fire

- Darryl Jones



Top persimmon seed is knife-shaped, bottom is spoon-shaped.



After cutting persimmons this year, there were 13 spoon shapes and five knife ones.

Beckham Presents at Clemson Pest Management Class



Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) Coordinator Chisolm Beckham addresses students in the Clemson Forestry Department Integrated Pest Management class Oct. 26. He discussed SPB biology, management and risk, and hazard assessment. After class Chisolm and Forest Health Coordinator David Jenkins visited an active southern pine beetle spot and addressed symptoms, evaluated the site for risk of infestation and potential damage, and discussed actions to be taken to manage the population.

Human Resources

MetLife Life Insurance Conversion and Continuation Process Changes

Effective Jan. 1, 2018, MetLife will administer the life insurance benefits for state employees. The process for converting or continuing coverage will change. When an employee terminates or retires from the agency, MetLife is responsible for mailing a conversion packet to terminated employees or a conversion/continuation packet to retirees. Terminated employees/retirees will only receive the continuation and/or conversion forms directly from MetLife. These forms will not be available on PEBA's website or included in PEBA's retiree packet or the Exit Packet mailed from the Human Resources Office to separating employees.

Terminated employees have 31 days from their last day of coverage to convert life insurance. Retirees have 30 days from their last day of coverage to continue coverage or 31 days to convert coverage.

It is important for agency employees to keep their mailing addresses current. Regional administrative liaisons or this office can assist employees with updating their mailing addresses.



Human Resources

- Lynn Rivers

Unstress for success:

How health coaching can help

You know certain life events are stressful — money troubles, losing a loved one, coping with illness. But did you know positive events can be stressful, too?

Things like starting a new job or becoming a parent can also be stressful because they involve major life changes. And stress brings potential health problems.

The stress management program can help, at no cost to you. State Health Plan primary members can connect with a health coach who'll help assess their stress level and come up with a plan to cope with it more successfully.

Connect today!

To enroll, call 855.838.5897.

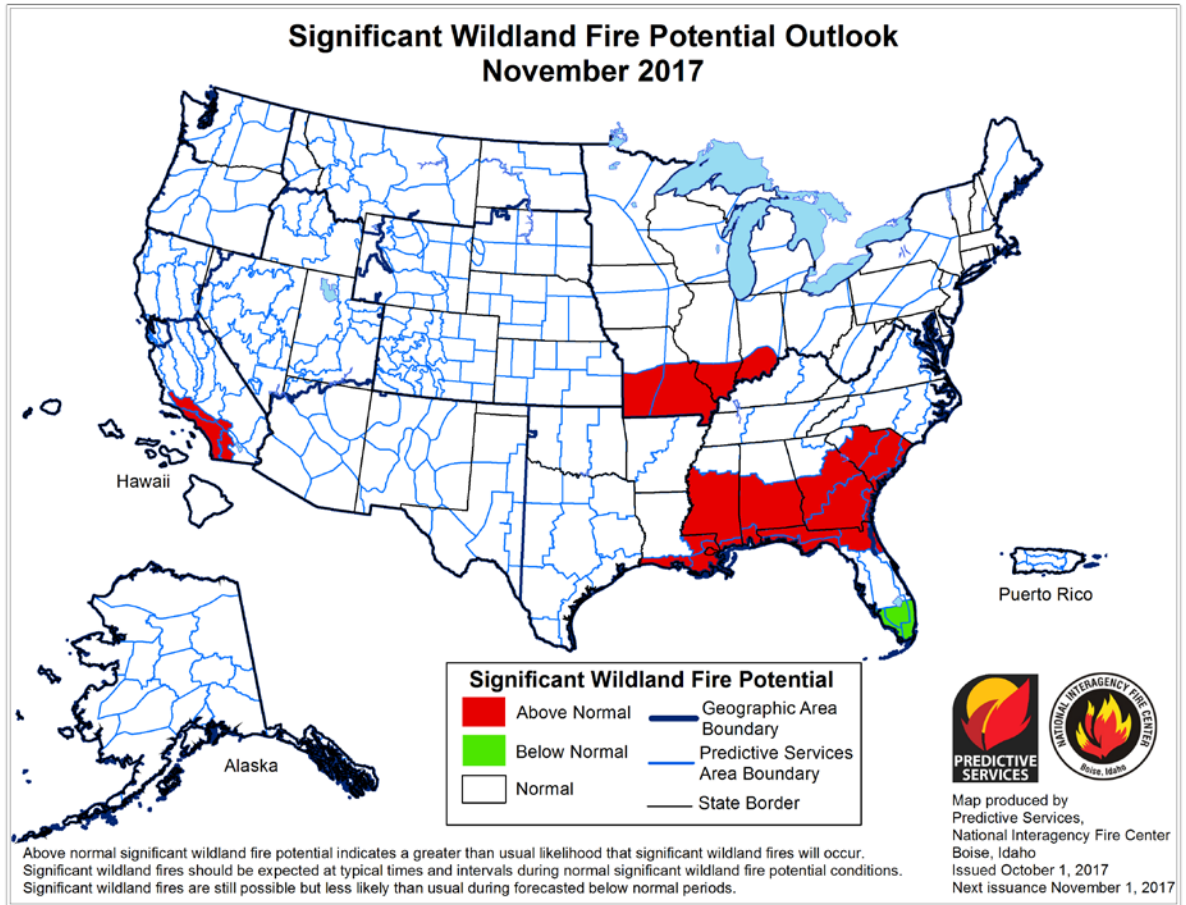
Get on-the-go health information sent to your mobile phone by dialing 844.284.5417.



Fire Weather Outlook

Southern Area:

Above Normal significant fire potential is expected across the Deep South from Mississippi east through Georgia and into South Carolina in November. Above Normal significant large fire potential is also expected across most of Oklahoma and north central Texas in December and January. Below Normal significant large fire potential is expected across southern Florida in October and November and across Puerto Rico in October. Below Normal significant fire potential is also expected across Virginia, Kentucky, the Tennessee River Valley, and the southern Appalachians in December and January. Elsewhere, expect Normal significant large fire potential for the outlook period.



Drought conditions have decreased across most of the region over the past several months. In September, precipitation was average to above average in most areas except along the Texas and Florida Gulf Coasts where hurricanes produced extremely high rainfall amounts. Precipitation deficits across central Texas early in the month were mitigated at month's end by a stalled frontal boundary that produced significant rainfall. Temperatures were generally below average for the month.

Developing La Niña conditions in the Pacific Ocean are expected to lead to the development of overall warmer and drier conditions in most areas through November. Exceptions to this will be along coastal areas of the Gulf and across southern Florida where tropical activity will remain possible into November. Large fire potential may be elevated across north central Texas and most of Oklahoma in December and January as mounting precipitation deficits allow for fine fuels to become very dry. Fire activity during this period will largely be event-driven. Data suggests that much of Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee could receive above normal precipitation in December and January.

Current Fire Numbers for South Carolina

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

Time Period	OCTOBER		JULY-OCT		FISCAL YEAR	
	FIRES	ACRES	FIRES	ACRES	FIRES	ACRES
5 Year Average	80	236	296	1,237	1,646	9,744
10 Year Average	90	236	435	1,935	2,162	14,889
Current FY ¹	98	270	221	635	221	635

¹To date for current fiscal year



*Yes the cold was splitting timber
 With a crack like a 44
 And the wind was whistling through the lonesome pines
 It bit right through my parka
 And froze me to the core
 As the wolves were howling on the timberline*

Song: "Henry Walker"
 Artist: Del McCourya
 Released: 1996
 Listen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFcHkqSKvsc>

Coastal Stewardship Forester Vaughan Spearman sent in the song for this issue.

Can you think of a song with tree- or forestry-related lyrics? Let us know, and we'll share it with everyone.

Quote of the Month

"Even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise.

Victor Hugo

Photo of the Month



State Forester Gene Kodama sent in this photo of dolphins swimming in the Cooper River at sunset.

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