



# FLOODING DAMAGE AND RESPONSE

## Possible flood-related assistance for forest landowners

Landowners should know that the most susceptible stands are those that were overtopped by flood waters for several days. Farm Services Agency has indicated we will need to wait to see how much mortality results from the flooding.

If there are significant losses (even for one landowner), a county committee can request EFRP funds for their county.

From the aerial survey SCFC conducted last Wednesday, we do not expect many (if any) counties to request this assistance.

Landowners with significant damage

to their forest roads can sign up for EQIP funds at their local NRCS office to help pay for repairs to infrastructure.

Landowners needing assistance with debris removal, cleanout of ditches and/or pond dam repair can sign up for ECP (Emergency Conservation Program) at their local FSA office.

## SCFC personnel spring into action for emergency response

The South Carolina Forestry Commission was among the many state agencies that responded to the flooding by sending trained emergency professionals to the hardest-hit areas of the state.

In addition to deploying its incident management team, the agency sent chainsaw crews to clear debris, and other employees staffed the SC Emergency Operations Center around the clock for a week.

The SCFC IMT worked with the Columbia Fire Department to manage Richland County search-and-rescue operations, which ended up rescuing 473 citizens and 11 pets, searching 338 square miles, checking 8,000 homes and assisting another 2,000 citizens.



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South Carolina Forestry Commission officials estimate a loss of at least \$65 million in the forest industry's economic impact because of October 2015's historic flooding. The estimate was derived from forest planting and inventory data, aerial surveillance, mill reports and consultations with foresters, loggers and landowners.

The assessment does not include the expected additional millions of dollars in damage and repair to private forest roads, which is currently unknown. "Some mills have reported shortages of wood deliveries and difficulty shipping finished products because of closed roads, bridges and rail lines," said State Forester Gene Kodama. "Many loggers in the flood zone have not been able to operate since the storm because of wet ground and inaccessible roads and bridges." While the economic loss represents a small part of the industry's \$18.6 billion contribution to the state's economy, it has a huge and immediate impact on the forest landowners, loggers, mills and suppliers in the counties affected by heavy rainfall and flooding. The loss of access to roads, bridges and rail lines, higher operating costs for loggers, increased transportation costs for mills, and overall lost productivity account for most of the economic loss. Landowners should continue to monitor all forested areas that have been flooded for tree health issues over the next year and consult a registered

forester if they have questions or concerns.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission has created a special section on the home page of its website at [www.trees.sc.gov](http://www.trees.sc.gov) to both collect and provide information for those affected by the flooding. There are links to information about possible disaster assistance for individuals and businesses, research about the effects of trees submerged in water and details of the assessment the agency is currently conducting.

