



## S. C. Property and Firefighter Protection Bill

A Southern Success Story

*The Property and Firefighter Protection Bill was passed by the SC General Assembly in July of 2012. The efforts began in order to locate or create a recurring source of funding for firefighting equipment replacement about the first of the year in 2009. Multiple funding options were investigated prior to the development of the H. 4082 concept of accessing taxes which were already being paid on insurance premiums. This idea originated from conversations with Texas State Forester, Tom Boggus, whose agency was receiving similar funding and with former South Carolina Senator and Insurance Commissioner, Scott Richardson, Sr. who pointed out that these taxes should be used for insurance related purposes such as risk reduction and premium stability and availability.*

*The Bill was introduced in the SC House near the end of the legislative session in 2011 by Representatives Ted Vick, Tracy Edge, and Davey Hiott. The SC forestry community worked throughout the rest of 2011 to generate support for the Bill by partners and legislators and began in earnest in January of 2012 when the second year of the two-year session started. Gaining adequate support in the General Assembly and meeting deadlines for movement were extremely difficult, and we were told several times that passage during the session was unlikely and that we should be proud of the progress we had made and to start again next year. However, we never gave up and continued to work to gain support and were successful with the help of many partners, the Governor's office, many legislators, and many prayers from many sources. The bill is estimated to generate about \$3 million per year or about \$15 million over the next five years for the Forestry Commission. This is approximately the amount needed for annual equipment replacement, and a portion of the funds can be used for firefighter staffing if needed. The Senate voted in late June to override the governor's veto in effect making the legislation become law.*





# Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy

## National Goals; Collective Solutions

*Response to Wildfire*  
*Fire Adapted Communities*  
*Resilient Landscapes*  
*Supported by Science*

### South Carolina Property and Firefighter Protection Bill – A Southern Success Story



*The SC Forestry Commission and the entire forestry community in SC worked diligently to make 2011 and 2012 an outstanding legislative session for forestry. Because of these successes, the Commission will be better able to meet its mission of protecting and developing the state's forest resources in a safer manner. In addition, South Carolina's forest resource and its economic, environmental, and societal benefits will be greatly enhanced because of these successes.*

*Special thanks for Gene Kodama, SC State Forester, for allowing us to use much of a letter he wrote in the SCFC monthly newsletter on this topic.*

For additional information please contact Scott Hawkins, SCFC Public Affairs:  
[shawkins@forestry.state.sc.us](mailto:shawkins@forestry.state.sc.us)

#### **SRSC Lead Contact:**

Mike Zupko  
Southern Governors' Assoc.  
[mike@zup-co-inc.com](mailto:mike@zup-co-inc.com)  
(770) 267-9630

#### **Working Group Lead Contact:**

David Frederick  
Southern Group of State Foresters  
[firerepsgf@charter.net](mailto:firerepsgf@charter.net)  
(334) 590-6711

#### **Cohesive Strategy**

#### **Southern Update**

The Wildland Fire Executive Council concurred with the final draft of the Regional Risk Analysis Report as submitted, on November 16, 2012. Copies of the executive summary and a link to the full report were distributed to an extensive list of stakeholders and partners soon after. If you did not see a copy of the report, you can download it at the following link:

<http://forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy/rsc.shtml#riskanalysis>

We have begun working on a Southeastern Regional Action Plan focused on capturing implementation tasks to address each of the five actions per value we established as key to moving our activity further. Partners across the region have collectively agreed to these priorities over the next five years. The action plan will develop a program of work and identify which stakeholders will be responsible for accomplishing specific plan elements along with a timeline for completion.

Between December 17 – January 7, we will have an open comment period on the draft action plan and welcome input, by value, on how best to address these priorities. Partners and stakeholders should look for opportunities to leverage one another, continue to learn from one another with success stories and identify barriers that need to be addressed to be as successful as we collectively can.

More information available:

<http://sites.nemac.org/southeastcohesivefire>