



SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

13 million acres of forests in South Carolina protect and provide for over 5 million residents.

These forests provide critical ecosystem services like cleaning our drinking water, providing habitat for rare species, and protecting our communities from dangerous floods. Yet, these forests are under threat from climate change and from poor industrial forestry practices.



We are clearcutting away one of our best solutions to climate change.

Over 150,000 acres of SC forests are clear cut every year—that's over 300 football fields per day. This leaves a black hole on the landscape that can take decades to regenerate.

According to the Forest Service, South Carolina lost around 260,000 acres of forest between 2011 and 2018.

Logging releases more carbon emissions than either the electricity or transportation sectors in South Carolina in 2014. South Carolina does not regularly publish an emissions report, so the full greenhouse gas picture is unclear.

KEEPING OUR FORESTS STANDING WILL HELP ALL SOUTH CAROLINIANS THRIVE

- Protecting and restoring natural forests—not plantations—is an important step in mitigating climate change.
- Natural forests provide flood protection and water filtration for much lower cost than man-made solutions - critical in low-lying, low-income rural areas.
- Natural forests promote health, protect cultural identity, and store more carbon than other landscape types, including industrial pine plantations.

Industrial forest practices are part of the problem.

High concentrations of extractive logging are correlated with poorer outcomes in income, education and poverty rates.

The wood products industry in South Carolina has an effective tax rate of just 1.6%. The average middle-class taxpayer pays an effective tax rate of about 11%, 7x more than the wood products industry.

Every single SC biomass facility is in an Environmental Justice community.

Wood products facilities are a major source of pollution; they decrease the quality of life for residents with constant noise, dust, and road traffic.

Most bioenergy facilities are propped up by state and federal subsidies, furthering their burden and impact on local communities. The Enviva facility in Greenwood, SC has qualified for a substantial property tax reduction of up to 40%.



OUR FORESTS. OUR STRENGTH.

TOP PREDICTOR OF A STRONG RURAL ECONOMY? THE PRESENCE OF NATURAL AMENITIES

- There are attractive and growing job markets in outdoor recreation, clean-tech, and small business—which all thrive in a healthy natural environment
- Recreation in South Carolina generates 1.9 times more value than forest products, has created over 125,000 more jobs, and contributes nearly a billion (0.95B) more dollars in annual tax revenue.
- Forests provide more to local government through reducing infrastructure needs (e.g., natural water filtration, no need for road maintenance) than they require in services.
- Wetland forests in SC are worth \$40 billion in ecosystem services, including natural flood protection. Investing in wetland forests could increase value by \$5 billion.