



TIMBER TALK

Your Voice for South Carolina Timber Harvesting

4TH QUARTER 2025

AFTER SC BRIDGE COLLAPSED, TICKETS FOR TRUCK DRIVERS ARE SKYROCKETING — AND RAISING MORE CONCERNS

By Seth Taylor and Anna Wilder
Post and Courier
Dec 1, 2025

GREENVILLE — After an overweight truck caused an Upstate bridge to collapse, police are ramping up efforts to keep heavy trucks from damaging the state's bridges — a move that has snared hundreds of drivers in the process.

Tickets given out for driving over roads and bridges with a posted weight limit more than doubled in the first three quarters of 2025, according to data from the S.C. State Transport Police.

The tickets are a sign of how law enforcement is responding to concerns about the safety of the state's bridges. They're also an indication of just how many truckers use load-restricted bridges and roads, sometimes with serious consequences.

A two-lane bridge in Pickens County, off-limits to large loads because of its poor condition, crumbled into **Lake Keowee** in July after a fully-loaded concrete truck drove over. The accident nearly sent another vehicle into the lake.

Now, the trucking industry faces more scrutiny.

"We feel it. We know it," said Rick Todd, president and CEO of the S.C. Trucking Association. "I don't know if



Traffic speeds down Savannah Highway near Hollywood on June 25, 2024, in Charleston County. Grace Beahm Alford/Staff

there wasn't as much attention to it before, but there certainly is now."

Through the beginning of November, State Transport Police issued 876 citations for violating road weight limits and bridge weight limits, which fall under the same statute. That's compared to 387 citations in all of 2024 and 254 in 2023. The data doesn't include interstate citations.

The 126 percent increase is at least in part in response to the bridge collapse, which made headlines across the state.

According to Department of Public Safety Office of Public Affairs Assistant Director Kyle McGahee, the State Transport Police uses citation and collision data to determine where to patrol. Generally, they focus on "high-

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crash corridors” where there are higher rates of commercial traffic, collisions and fatalities.

But after the bridge collapse, the agency began focusing on load-restricted bridges.

“Upon learning about the bridge in Pickens County that collapsed in July, STP began allocating personnel and resources to focus on monitoring traffic on load-restricted bridges in several areas of the state,” McGahee wrote in a statement.

McGahee declined to say where law enforcement are focusing. But a high number of the state’s load-restricted bridges are in the Upstate, according to previous Post and Courier reporting.

The S.C. Department of Transportation, which oversees roughly 89 percent of the state’s bridges, previously told The Post and Courier that bridge collapses are rare — even as an analysis of federal data found more than 2,600 of South Carolina’s bridges received the same safety rating as the Pickens County bridge or lower. Roughly 1,000 of the state’s bridges have weight restrictions.

That data raises concerns that another collapse could be in drivers’ future if overweight trucks travel unperturbed.

It also puts a spotlight on the trucking industry, which touches almost every corner of the state, from logging to construction to emergency services.

Todd said the spotlight is not entirely deserved.

“I think it’s probably fair to say that there was a little bit of an overreaction,” Todd said. “I’m sure the DOT got pressure. Like, ‘what the heck, guys? How many bridges do we have that are in that kind of condition where they might collapse?’”

While Todd said people violating the law should be ticketed, he also said the state could do more to make sure drivers avoid doing something wrong in the first place.

He suggested the Department of Transportation make sure clearly visible signage is installed well in advance of load-restricted bridges and make sure there’s room to turn around once drivers see the signs. Despite DOT efforts, Todd said he’s confident that’s not always the case.

“I think that probably exacerbates the compliance problem,” he said.

David Wofford, general manager at Anderson-based American Concrete & Precast, said he’s noticed increased inspections on the company’s trucks in the past two months. While the company has not been

ticketed, he said, the inspections do take extra time, which can cost the company money.

Navigating the load-restricted bridges can be difficult too. Every extra mile it takes to find a new route costs time, fuel and money.

“It’s a pain in the butt,” Wofford said.

The declining bridges are part of widespread infrastructure issues the DOT is working to address. So far, the state DOT has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on its way to repairing or replacing more than 400 bridges as part of its 10-year plan.

Still, there’s a major shortfall in funding, and lawmakers have been debating how to address it.

The S.C. House of Representatives have held a number of ad hoc committee meetings, where representatives from across the state have met to discuss modernizing the DOT to try to fix problems such as potholes and road restriction.

In August, they held their first meeting, where multiple DOT leaders spoke and gave lawmakers a rundown of where the state stood.

“We have some of the most dangerous roads, especially our rural roads,” said Rep. Shannon Erickson, R-Beaufort, who co-chairs the committee. “We are seeing congestion that we have never seen before.”

State Rep. Robby Robbins, R-Dorchester, who sits on the transportation ad-hoc committee, said he was “delighted” to hear that law enforcement was enforcing the traffic laws when he heard of the ticket surging.

“We have placed a great emphasis in the short time that I’ve been elected to the legislature in trying to beef up law enforcement across the state, so I’m happy to hear they’re citing trucks that should not be in certain areas,” he said.

Seth Taylor

Seth Taylor covers Greenville and the Upstate for The Post and Courier. Born in Iowa, he worked in Wyoming at the Buffalo Bulletin before moving to the Palmetto State.

Anna Wilder

Anna Wilder covers politics for the Post and Courier. She previously worked as a political reporter for The State newspaper. She’s a Florida native and a graduate of the University of Florida. Her work has appeared in outlets like Politico, Miami Herald and the Associated Press.





SCTPA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and got to spend time with family and a chance to reflect on the things we can be thankful for even when our industry faces difficulties. I have had a busy first 6-months in the role and have spoken with and visited many people and hope to personally meet each of you to spend a little more time in the woods. I have gotten many phone calls about the issues we face and a large majority of the calls I receive each week are from people that aren't members. I am thankful to everyone that supports our association and contributes to our work efforts. We want to make sure that all the people "at our table" are rewarded with any progress made. The association will continue to fight for the entire community we represent but we will make sure that the people that support us are at the forefront of any progress made, which reminds me of the old saying "If you're not at the table you're on the menu". I'm thankful for the founding members that had a vision that would give a voice to the loggers and the board members that have continued to work to make things better now and in the future. I am thankful for the Allied sponsors we have and their contributions that allow us to continue working. When you are looking for sources for your insurance, equipment, trucks, trailers, tires and other business needs please check our website to see who supports us and give them a chance at your business.

The portable bridge program has had a tremendous response and we are close to having enough orders to exhaust the first round of funding. We have had a second round of funding approved for some time now and recently

found out that a 3rd round of funding was approved. When we see the appetite for portable bridges diminish, we will be able to transition the funds to steel mats and portable ditch crossings in the future. The association will continue to look for cost sharing programs to help with expenses.

Our annual meeting is fast approaching and I hope everyone can join us this year. We have a great line up of speakers and plan to have some great auction items available to benefit log-a-load for kids and the Association. This year's theme is a fresh start...rebuilding our industry. We have seen a lot of changes and will continue to see change and our business will have a different look in the future. Change is difficult but sometimes it can be good. The resource we have in South Carolina is far too valuable to not be utilized and we will continue to push for new markets and companies to establish and expand their business in our state. Loggers are independent by nature and South Carolinians are too but it's extremely important now, more than ever, that we work together and support each other while we navigate through industry changes. If I can be of any help please reach out!

Looking forward to continuing to serve you.

Michael J. Campbell

Michael J. Campbell

President/CEO

South Carolina Timber Producers Association

2026 SCTPA ANNUAL MEETING



SCTPA 2026 Annual Meeting will be held February 20 -22, 2026 at The Ellie Beach Resort Myrtle Beach, Tapestry by Hilton, 3200 South Ocean Boulevard, Myrtle Beach, SC. The SCTPA Group Code is 91L for room reservations. The resort has two hotels, the DoubleTree Resort the Tapestry Hotel by Hilton. We have had another challenging year in 2025 for the timber harvesting and timber supply segments with mill closures. As we move into 2026, our meeting theme will be...**A fresh start...rebuilding our industry!**

Friday's schedule will be a board of directors meeting, afternoon registration and evening welcome reception with food and entertainment. There'll be a DJ, dancing and some Karaoke. We'll have our Live Auction at the Friday Evening Reception.

Saturday General Session speakers will be Rick Todd President & CEO South Carolina Trucking Association, Stephen Setliff with Setliff Law, Marissa Jo Daniel Assistant professor of forest operations, Auburn University and Scott Phillips State Forester with the South Carolina Forestry Commission. Saturday's featured luncheon speakers will be Holly Welch Environmental program manager with the South Carolina Forestry Commission and Rick Quagliaroli, Forestry Insurance Company of the Southeast. Saturday's association business session will feature the association's 2025 financials, Board of Directors elections, any bylaws changes, awards and presentations. Drawings will be held for a nice rifle and/or shotgun and a free stay at Ellie Beach Resort Myrtle Beach. Saturday evening is free to enjoy Myrtle Beach.

We'll have the gospel group Port City Quartet for our Sunday Prayer Breakfast to bless us with their Southern Gospel music and faithful testimony.

Our Silent Auction will be available with a variety of nice items for bidding. The prize drawings, live and silent auctions help the association financially and Log A Load for Kids. We encourage everyone to contribute to the Silent Auction and/or Live Auction.

Exhibitors will be inside the conference center with their products and services. Outside exhibits of equipment, trucks, etc. will be in the parking lots.

Our meeting is a casual family atmosphere. We encourage everyone to bring your family and employees. Dress is business casual. We ask for attire suited for a business meeting is worn. Registration, exhibitor and sponsorship meeting information will be available on the SCTPA website... www.scloggers.com.

Go ahead now and block the dates to join us February 20 - 22 for our 2026 Annual membership Meeting.

Michael J. Campbell

Michael J. Campbell
President/CEO

South Carolina Timber Producers Association



Please Note:
Sponsor / Exhibitor Packages have been
mailed separately to Allied Suppliers &
Allied Supporters.



2026 SCTPA Annual Membership Meeting

MEETING AT A GLANCE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

1:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting... Members & Guests Welcome
 3:00 p.m. Registration Desk... Open Until 7:00 p.m.
 7:00 p.m. Welcome Reception... Food/Bar, DJ & Karaoke, Live Auction

Conference Center

1st Floor
 2nd Floor
 3rd Floor

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

6:30 a.m. Member & Guests Breakfast
 6:45 a.m. Registration Desk Opens
 8:00 a.m. General Session Welcome, Invocation, Antitrust Statement & Announcements, SCTPA Chairman's Remarks
 8:15 a.m. Speaker: Rick Todd, President/CEO SC Trucking Association
 8:30 a.m. Ladies Breakfast
 9:00 a.m. Speaker: Marissa Jo Daniel, Auburn University
 9:45 a.m. Speaker: Stephen Setliff, Setliff Law
 10:30 a.m. Speaker: Scott Phillips, South Carolina Forestry Commission
 11:20 a.m. Morning Break to Visit Exhibitors & Silent Auction
 11:50 a.m. Move to Membership Luncheon
 12:00 p.m. Membership Luncheon & Business Meeting
 12:45 p.m. Chairman's Welcome, Board of Directors Introductions & Announcements
 Speakers: Holly Welch, South Carolina Forestry Commission (1:15 – 1:45 p.m.)
 Rick Quagliaroli, Forestry Insurance Company of the Southeast (1:50 – 2:20 p.m.)
 Business Session: President's Report, Financial Report, Bylaws Report, Board Elections, Awards & Special Presentations, Door Prizes & Prize Drawings
 2:50 p.m. Afternoon Break
 3:00 p.m. Workshop: SFI Trained TOP DVD Module for SFI Training
 5:00 p.m. Adjourn
 Saturday Evening On Your Own. Enjoy Your Evening!

Conference Center

3rd Floor
 2nd Floor
 2nd Floor
 3rd Floor

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

8:00 a.m. Prayer Breakfast
 9:00 a.m. Special Guest: *Port City Quartet - Gospel Music Group*
 10:05 a.m. Silent Auction Announcements & Final Comments
 10:30 a.m. Adjourn Meeting

Conference Center

3rd Floor

SILENT AUCTION BIDDING HOURS - CONFERENCE CENTER

Friday, 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. Saturday, 7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Sunday, 7:00 – 9:00 a.m.

EXHIBITOR HOURS - CONFERENCE CENTER

Friday, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Saturday, 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Sunday, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

“SCTPA” ...Your voice for South Carolina Timber Harvesting!

PO Box 113 ▪ Pawleys Island, SC 29585 ▪ 843-833-3822 ▪ email ceo.sctpa@gmail.com ▪ www.scloggers.com



2026 SCTPA Annual Meeting Room Reservations

SCTPA 2026 Annual Meeting will be February 20 - 22, 2026 at the Double Tree Resort by Hilton Myrtle Beach Oceanfront, 3200 South Ocean Blvd, Myrtle Beach, SC.

Reservations are to be made directly with **Hilton World Wide Reservations** by calling **1-855-778-1190**. The **SCTPA Annual Meeting Group Code** is **"91L."**

Provide **Group Code 91L** when making room reservations. You can contact the Resort at 1-843-315-7100.

Reservations can be made online by using two booking links. Be sure to use the entire URL for it to work properly. **Use Booking** link as follows:

DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton

<https://group.doubletree.com/h3sf0f>

If you have difficulty in room reservations, contact Melissa Durham, SCTPA Event Manager, at 843-685-2681 or **melissa.durham@hilton.com**.

SCTPA ENCOURAGES EVERYONE TO REGISTER AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO ASSIST THE ASSOCIATION IN THE MEETING PLANS. This is important and will help SCTPA make appropriate arrangements for the meeting. **Please register early.**

SCTPA room block rates cut off is January 23, 2026. Room block number is limited. After January 23, 2026, regular room rates will apply. SCTPA has no flexibility with this cut off. Hilton reservation cancellation policy applies.

There is no reservation form for your use. Make room reservations direct with Hilton.

SCTPA Annual Meeting - Room Rates - DoubleTree by Hilton

Room Type	Single Rate	Double Rate
Deluxe Room - King or Double Queen	\$ 149	\$ 149
King Suites	\$ 149	\$ 149

Please Note: All rooms are subject to applicable state and local taxes and resort fee plus any other applicable fees charged by the DoubleTree Resort per guest room per night. Hilton policies and fees apply for room reservations as well as room cancellations. SCTPA has no control on these charged fees.



2026 ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION

February 20 - 22, 2026

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE. COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION BELOW.

Name _____ Badge Name _____

Business Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contact #: Work _____ Home _____

Fax _____ E-mail _____

Spouse/Guest Name _____ Badge Name _____

Please list any additional badge names and find credit card payment info on the following page.

	Early Registration	After February 5, 2026
	# \$	# \$
Member *	_____ @ \$ 240 = _____	_____ @ \$ 270 = _____
Member Spouse *	_____ @ \$ 135 = _____	_____ @ \$ 170 = _____
Active Member Employee **	_____ @ \$ 130 = _____	_____ @ \$ 140 = _____
Active Member Employee Spouse	_____ @ \$ 105 = _____	_____ @ \$ 120 = _____
SATURDAY, FEB. 21 ONLY	_____ @ \$ 185 = _____	_____ @ \$ 215 = _____
Non-Member	_____ @ \$ 250 = _____	_____ @ \$ 265 = _____
Non-Member Spouse	_____ @ \$ 135 = _____	_____ @ \$ 145 = _____
Children - Per Child – Age 6 – 18 <i>Children Under 6 – No Charge</i>	_____ @ \$ 35 = _____	
TOTAL DUE & PAID \$ _____.		
<i>* Please Refer to Member & Active Member Employee Descriptions Below *</i>		

Members* = Active Members, Allied Supplier Members & Allied Supporting Members with Paid Dues.

Active Member Employee = Active Logger, Wood Dealer or Trucker Member Sponsored Employees Only** not an owner, partner or corporate officer of active member's business. Non-member supervisors & employees are encouraged to attend. **All other NON-logger, dealer or trucker active members use member registration rates per person attending.**

Call SCTPA if you have questions - 843-833-3822.

RESERVE YOUR ROOMS DIRECTLY WITH HILTON WORLD WIDE RESERVATIONS.
HILTON WORLD WIDE RESERVATIONS 1-855-778-1190 ... USE GROUP Code ... 91L
BOOKING LINK ... THE DOUBLETREE HOTEL - [HTTPS://GROUP.DOUBLETREE.COM/h2sf0f](https://group.doubletree.com/h2sf0f)

SCTPA Room Block Rates Cut-Off Is JANUARY 23, 2026
Regular Hotel Room Rates Will Apply After January 23, 2026. Hilton Room Cancellation Policy Applies.

SCTPA Annual Meeting Cancellation Policy: Full refund if written cancellation received by January 1, 2026.
50% refund if written cancellation request received by January 15, 2026. NO REFUND after January 15, 2026.

**Additional Names for Annual Meeting Registration
& Name Badges:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2026 ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION PAYMENT

Total Registration Fees Enclosed \$ _____

****CREDIT CARD PAYMENT****

**A 4% credit card processing fee applies to amount charged. SCTPA does not receive this processing fee.*

Total Registration Fees \$ _____

+ 4% Credit Card Fee (if applicable) \$ _____

Total Amount Charged \$ _____

Credit Card Payment*: ☐ VISA ☐ DISCOVER ☐ MASTERCARD

Card #: _____

CVV/CVC _____ Expiration Date: _____

Cardholder's Name (Print): _____

I Agree To Pay According To Credit Card Terms & Conditions:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE AND MAIL OR EMAIL THIS FORM TO:

**SC Timber Producers Association
PO Box 113
Pawleys Island, SC 29585
ceo.sctpa@gmail.com
843-833-3822**

2026 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Auction Item Donation

Our Silent and Live Auctions have been successful because of the participation of our Allied Supplier, Allied Supporting and Individual Members. Our 2026 Annual Membership Meeting, February 20 - 22, at the **Ellie Beach Resort Myrtle Beach, Tapestry by Hilton** will again feature our Silent Auction and a Live Auction at the Friday Evening Welcome Reception. The auction proceeds are used to help support the association financially and a portion donated to **Log a Load for Kids**.

Would you and/or your company like to donate an item or contribute financially towards the purchase of an Auction item? This is voluntary. Even if you are not attending the meeting, but would simply like to participate, we would certainly appreciate your contribution and involvement.

If you are interested, please return this form to the SCTPA office. You may contact the SCTPA office at 843-833-3822 or email ceo.sctpa@gmail.com for more information. Your company will be recognized at the meeting as a Silent or Live Auction Donor.

Thanks for your support in our efforts to continue representing professional loggers and timber producers here in South Carolina. Your auction donation is greatly appreciated. Your contribution may be tax deductible as a contribution to this association.



AUCTION ITEM

Please choose which auction is most appropriate for your item: ☐ SILENT AUCTION ☐ LIVE AUCTION

Donated Item Description _____

_____ Item Value \$ _____

Donated By _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contact Name _____ Telephone (____) _____

Silent Auction Financial Donation

** Financial Donation Toward Purchase of Silent Auction Item: \$ _____. **

** SCTPA will purchase Silent Auction items. Financial contributor will be designated for the item. **

Please mail or email this form to: SC Timber Producers Association, PO Box 113, Pawleys Island, SC 29585

Shipping Address: Michael Campbell, 1109 Beaumont Drive, Pawleys Island, SC 29585



2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS NEEDED

Six Board of Directors Seats will need to be elected at our February 21, 2026 Annual Membership Meeting at the Ellie Beach Resort, Tapestry by Hilton, Myrtle Beach, Myrtle Beach, SC.

The board terms for Seat 1 served by Griff Wilson, WilRidge Forestry, Seat 2 served by Bob Lussier, Great Woods Companies, Seat 3 served by Colby Crosby, Crosby Logging Timber, and Seat 8 served by Joseph “BoBo” Seckinger, Seckinger Forest Products will expire December 31, 2025. These board members with expiring terms have indicated they will run for re-election unless SCTPA is notified otherwise. There will be two seats vacated by long-serving board members that will be retiring from the board after many years of service. The seats that will be vacated are Seat 6 served by Tommy Barnes, Ideal Logging and Seat 9 by Carey “Buster” Harrison, Harrison Forest Products.

Board member elections will be conducted during the Member Business Session of the Membership Meeting convening at noon on Saturday, February 21, 2026.

Board members serve four-year terms. Board responsibilities are to establish policies, direct legislative advocacy, guide programs and efforts to improve and benefit the timber harvesting industry, oversee association fiscal responsibilities and charge association staff to fulfill the association’s duties and daily functions.

Board members are responsible for attending board meetings and local district meetings. One board meeting is conducted at the annual meeting with bimonthly meetings held in Columbia beginning at the end of February or early March.

Additionally, each board member is expected to promote professional timber harvesting in SC, seek SCTPA members, represent the association at events where needed and promote the association.

Any member solely and directly engaged in the logging business and in good standing with paid dues as of December 31, 2025, may be nominated for any of the upcoming seats regardless of if any current board member has indicated running for re-election.

Any member regardless of location is eligible for nomination. Logger members are encouraged to enter your name or the name of another logger member as an eligible candidate.

To enter your name for nomination or to nominate someone else, please contact the Nominations Committee or SCTPA office no later than January 19, 2026.

Thanks for your assistance in this important association process.

Nominations Committee

Chairman, Griff Wilson, WilRidge Forestry, LLC, Chester
Office/Cell 803-209-3053 ■ wilridgeforestry@gmail.com

Bob Lussier, Great Woods Companies, LLC, Bennettsville
Office 843-454-2090 ■ Cell 843-377-5318 ■ BobL@greatwoodscos.com

John Rice, Rice Land & Timber, LLC, Allendale
Office/Cell 803-259-6202 ■ rice.john@yahoo.com



Timber Talk

*Your Voice
for South Carolina
Timber Harvesting*



Contact Michael Campbell at
843-833-3822 or
ceo.sctpa@gmail.com

*The South Carolina
Timber Producers
Association
wishes you all a
very safe and
blessed
Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!*



Merry
christmas

Wishing you a blessed
Christmas and a new year
filled with love, hope, and
faith.

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MARCINAK
LAW GROUP

Robert D. Moseley, Jr.
Direct Dial: 864.248.6026
Email: Rob.Moseley@momarlaw.com

A QUICK REVIEW OF LOG HAULER REGULATIONS AND STATUTES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

A review of South Carolina's laws on hauling timber would be useful for timber producers. To start with, log trucks are governed by the same equipment laws as normal commercial vehicles. There are also some additional rules for hauling logs.

Lengths of Logs

Long wood has a state limit of 80 feet for the log itself. SC Code Ann. 56-5-40 90 (E). The logs cannot obscure the taillights and cannot drag the ground. If the logs overhang more than 4 feet, the logs must have a flag. At night there must be strobe light. Any other loads for the length of loads does not apply to log trailers. SC Code Ann. 56-5-4090

Double stacked wood (short wood) is governed by section 393.116 of the federal regulations and requires two ties per stack. Short wood can only overhang 6 feet.

Weight

The state and federal weight limit is 80,000 pounds. For loads moving from the forest to the mill, there is a 15% tolerance, which would allow a legal load of 84,272 pounds on 5 axles. Unlike regular CMVs, there is a weight limit of 23,000 per axle. There are no tolerances for transportation on the interstates.

The South Carolina DOT allows free overweight permits of up to 90,000 pounds.

Pole trailer is defined under section 40 CFR 390.05T.

Miscellaneous Rules

A flag must be 18 inches by 18 inches according to 49 CFR § 393.87. The flag should be on the log that hangs over the most. The strobe definition is 49 CFR § 393.11.

Robert D. Moseley, Jr. - *Rob's entire practice has been focused on the transportation and logistics industry. He has tried more than 80 cases to jury verdict in federal and state courts and has decades of experience representing trucking companies, brokers, logistics companies and their insurance carriers in disputes*

HAMPTON LUMBER REPRESENTS \$225 MILLION INVESTMENT, CREATES AT LEAST 125 NEW JOBS

Michael M. DeWitt, Jr.
Bluffton Today

Nov. 18, 2025, 5:03 a.m. ET

South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster visited the Lowcountry last week to participate in a ceremonial groundbreaking for a project that developers say will bring at least 125 new jobs to one of the most poor and rural areas of the state.

On Nov. 5, Gov. McMaster, representatives of the SouthernCarolina Alliance (SCA), and other state and local partners joined Hampton Lumber officials as they broke ground on a 375,000-square-foot lumber mill in Fairfax, which is located in Allendale County, not far from Hampton County.

"Congratulations to Allendale County and the wonderful Hampton Lumber team!" announced SCA officials in the economic development alliance's monthly newsletter.

Hampton Lumber, a producer of sustainable building materials, announced June 24 that had selected Allendale County to establish the company's first sawmill on the East Coast.

"Hampton Lumber's new operation in Allendale County will be a notable addition to our state's forestry industry, while also providing opportunities for our people and contributing to the local economy," said Gov. McMaster in a statement. "We are proud the company recognized South Carolina as the ideal home for its first East Coast mill and look forward to supporting its success in our state."

The company's \$225 million investment is expected to create at least 125 jobs, officials said in a release at the time, in a S.C. Lowcountry county that is among the lowest-income areas of the state but is one of the richest in terms of timber and agricultural resources.

"The enthusiastic, heartfelt support from the state and local community helped us come to the conclusion that this is the right location for us," said Hampton Lumber CEO Randy Schillinger. "We're happy to join the healthy wood products industry already present in the region, and we look forward to building partnerships in the area and supporting the communi-



Photo SouthCarolina Alliance

ties in and around Allendale County. We are extremely grateful to the state of South Carolina, and the county and community partners who helped make this project possible."

Headquartered in Oregon, Hampton Lumber is a fourth-generation, family-owned producer of high-quality wood products sourced from sustainably managed forest resources, states the company release.

Operating nine sawmills in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, Canada, the company markets and sells building materials worldwide.

Hampton Lumber officials say the company will construct a "state-of-the-art," 375,000-square-foot lumber mill located at Highway 321 and Barker Mill Pond Road in Fairfax. The new operation will specialize in producing quality Southern Yellow Pine framing lumber.

"Allendale County is proud to welcome Hampton Lumber, and we appreciate their investment in our community," said Allendale County Council Chairman Bill Robinson "Each of the 125 jobs created will provide a brighter future for families in our area, and Allendale County looks forward to supporting Hampton Lumber for years to come."

"SouthernCarolina Alliance salutes Hampton Lumber for choosing Allendale County to establish their first East Coast operation, which will be a great addition to the growing forest product industry in the region," echoed SouthernCarolina Alliance Chairman Marty Sauls. "We appreciate the 125 jobs and investment this operation will bring to the region, as well as the opportunities it will provide in fueling our area's economy."

The SCA is the leading economic development agency for several Lowcountry counties, including Allen-

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

dale County, and works closely with local government officials and industry leaders to attract new companies to our area. Learn more about the SCA on its webpage, <https://southerncarolina.org/>

Operations are expected to be online in 2027. Individuals interested in joining the Hampton Lumber team can learn more about employment opportunities on the company's [careers page](#).

The Coordinating Council for Economic Development approved job development credits related to the project, say officials.



Carolina Renewable Products
Local, Clean, Better

CAROLINA RENEWABLE PRODUCTS ESTABLISHING OPERATIONS IN ORANGEBURG COUNTY

October 7, 2025

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Carolina Renewable Products (CRP), a clean energy company, today announced it is establishing operations in Orangeburg County. The company's \$280 million investment will create 155 new jobs.

CRP converts sustainable wood biomass into renewable diesel, biochar and wood vinegar. The company offers a modular and cost-effective design, delivering low-carbon fuel solutions while supporting local agriculture and forestry.

CRP recently purchased its inaugural site, located at 546 Prosperity Drive in Orangeburg, which will be a next-generation biomass-to-renewable diesel facility and serve as the company's headquarters and training hub.

Operations are expected to be online in late 2026. Individuals interested in joining the CRP team should contact jobs@carolinarenewableproducts.com.

The Coordinating Council for Economic Development approved job development credits related to the project. The council also awarded a \$750,000 Closing Fund grant to Orangeburg County to assist with the costs of site preparation and building construction.

QUOTES

"South Carolina has a rich forestry and agricultural tradition, and we are proud to harness that strength to fuel a cleaner, more resilient future. Our facility will not only provide a reliable outlet for local forestry but also create products that aid South Carolina's energy independence and help farmers, growers and businesses thrive while advancing the state's leadership in renewable energy." **-Carolina Renewable Products CEO Robert Bryan**

"In South Carolina, agribusiness is a major economic driver, and today's announcement from Carolina Renewable Products is further proof of the industry's strength. This \$280 million investment, creating 155

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

new jobs, will greatly impact Orangeburg County, and we look forward to seeing the company succeed in the years ahead.” -**Gov. Henry McMaster**

“Today, we celebrate Carolina Renewable Products’ decision to invest \$280 million in the Orangeburg County community. This project underscores South Carolina’s commitment to innovation and sustainability, as well as the strength of our state’s agribusiness industry.” -**Secretary of Commerce Harry M. Lightsey III**

“Carolina Renewable Products is making a major investment in our state and our agribusiness industry, and it couldn’t come at a better time. This new facility and training hub will support South Carolina timber growers and local farms while protecting natural resources.” -**Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers**

“We’re very excited to welcome Carolina Renewable Products to the Palmetto State’s forestry community. The need to diversify markets for sustainable forest products has never been greater in South Carolina, and this announcement fills a unique niche that will also generate a sizable economic impact. CRP’s decision to establish operations is a testament to the strength and resilience of our state’s forest resource and the many private landowners who sustainably manage their woodlands.” -**State Forester Scott Phillips**

“Today’s announcement is a testimony to the strength of our people in Orangeburg County — their talent, their work ethic and their determination. A \$280 million investment creating 155 quality jobs shows the confidence that businesses have in our county’s workforce, our infrastructure and our shared future. We welcome Carolina Renewable Products and look forward to the positive impact it will have on our community for years to come.” -**Orangeburg County Council Chairman Johnnie Wright**

FIVE FAST FACTS

- **Carolina Renewable Products (CRP) is establishing operations in Orangeburg County.**
- **The company’s \$280 million investment will create 155 new jobs.**
- **CRP is a clean energy company.**
- **The company will be located at 546 Prosperity Drive in Orangeburg, S.C.**

Individuals interested in joining the CRP team should contact jobs@carolinarenewableproducts.com.



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REBUILDING OUR INDUSTRY:

HOW RISK MANAGEMENT, TORT REFORM & ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF FORESTRY



Rebuilding an industry isn't just about new equipment or innovative technology, it's about strengthening the systems, protections, and leadership that allow every logger, trucker, and mill partner to operate with confidence. As South Carolina's forestry community continues to adapt to new economic pressures, legal challenges, and workforce shifts, one truth has become clear: **our future will be defined by how well we manage risk, advocate for fair legislation, and show up for one another through strong association involvement.**

For years, our industry has shouldered the unintended consequences of rising litigation, increasing insurance costs, and a regulatory environment that often feels stacked against small business owners. The result is a marketplace where even the best operators face uncertainty. That's why the theme of "rebuilding" is so important. We are not rebuilding because we are broken, we are rebuilding because we are committed to creating a stronger, smarter, and more resilient forestry industry for the next generation.

Risk Management: The New Cornerstone of Success

In today's environment, risk management isn't optional, it's the most valuable tool a business owner can have. It determines your insurance costs, your ability to attract drivers, and your long-term sustainability. Risk management today goes well beyond safety logs and annual safety meetings. It includes technology-driven solutions like telematics, dash cameras, driver scoring, equipment maintenance tracking, and consistent safety documentation. Technology showcased at the Loggers Technology Summit provides a vivid example of how this is evolving. At the event, participants experienced autonomous vehicles, crash-mitigation systems and hands-on telematics demos, seeing first-hand how safety and efficiency converge.

These tools do more than reduce claims, they reduce the severity of claims. They help defend your business when an accident occurs, provide the documentation needed to protect your reputation, and give your insurer a clearer picture of how responsibly you operate. In a world where nuclear verdicts and inflated settlements are becoming more common, risk management is no longer a defensive strategy, it's a competitive advantage.

Tort Reform: Protecting the Industry from the Outside In

Even the safest operators are vulnerable to a legal system where claim severity continues to climb. That's why tort reform is not a political issue, it's a survival issue. Excessive litigation has contributed directly to rising insurance premiums and shrinking carrier appetites for forestry and logging risks. Without meaningful legislative reform, businesses are left exposed to legal outcomes that are disproportionate to actual damages.

Engaging in tort reform efforts is one of the most valuable contributions any industry can make to its future. These efforts help ensure fairness, reduce frivolous lawsuits, and stabilize the marketplace so insurers can remain competitive and sustainable. Every logger benefits when the legal system supports accountability, not exploitation.

Association Leadership: Stronger Together

None of this rebuilding happens in isolation. Associations like the South Carolina Timber Producers Association provide the platform, the voice, and the influence needed to shape meaningful change. **When we participate by attending meetings, supporting legislative efforts, and sharing our challenges, we amplify the voice of every logger in the state.**

Association leadership is where ideas become advocacy, where challenges become solutions, and where a shared commitment becomes a unified force.

The Path Forward

Rebuilding our industry will take time, collaboration, and continued innovation. But by prioritizing risk management, supporting tort reform, and staying actively involved in our associations, together, these efforts help ensure that our businesses can operate safely, competitively and with confidence in the years ahead.

Rick Quagliaroli
Swamp Fox Agency &
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REGENERATION

Part 1: "End of a Dream"

By Bob Lussier

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bob Lussier is the owner of Great Woods Companies in Bennettsville, SC. A respected leader in and vocal activist/advocate for the logging industry, Lussier announced his retirement earlier in 2025. *SLT* editor David Abbott asked Bob if he would be willing to do a kind of "exit interview" article for us; not surprisingly, Bob delivered above and beyond expectations. "Regeneration" is intended to become an ongoing quarterly editorial series by Lussier exploring the sustainability of the logging industry; looking back and ahead, will the next generation of loggers naturally regenerate from the seeds planted by loggers of past and present? Read on; you may find that his experience mirrors yours.

I started my logging career in 1981 doing four-ft. pulp and firewood in southern New England. Back then we never heard anything about sustainability. Labor was plentiful as that generation of people were not afraid to work. I was born of French Canadian and Polish immigrants from the "Silent Generation." As a member of "Gen X," I believe the Silent Generation did a great job of instilling a good work ethic in their children. So, what has happened to the next generation? Sadly, it seems the "Millennial Generation" feels entitled. I myself am as guilty as anyone else in trying to give my children the things I didn't have growing up.

Logging was a great career choice in the 1980s. I continued to build my business in the '90s and went mechanized in 1994. This was when we started hearing about sustainability, which the mills called the "Sustainable Forest Initiative" (SFI). An organization called the American Forest & Paper Assn., comprised of many of the major mills in the U.S., developed SFI as a set of guidelines that loggers had to "voluntarily" follow in order to sell their products to these mills. The problem then, and still today, is they did all of this with little or no input from the loggers. They enforce SFI by making loggers pay for training every year in order to keep our credentials current for compliance with their standard.

In 2001, a 15-member committee was formed to oversee SFI. It is made up of 1/3 preservationist and environmental members, 1/3 professional and academic experts, and the last third is forest industry lead-

ers. The loggers, who in my mind are the true conservationists, were once again left out. In 2024, in an effort to bring some logger representation to the SFI Board, Scott Dane (Executive Director of the American Loggers Council), who has been a leading representative of the logging industry in all 50 states, applied, but was not selected.

In 2017 the Forest Resources Assn. (FRA) conducted a study that showed 5,500 loggers completed initial training qualification at \$200 each, or \$1.1 million in fees. And 21,500 loggers also took a re-qualification course at \$100 each, totaling \$2.15 million. Combined, loggers spent \$3.25 million in fees to simply comply with SFI's "voluntary" requirements solely to sell SFI products to mills. This voluntary compliance also cost the industry 260,000 employee hours spent in class and not in the woods producing. Multiply \$3.25 million times a factor of 2.15 to quantify the true cost of attendance; it equals a cost of \$6.98 million to the logging community (including wages and lost production) in order to train their employees for the privilege to deliver to the SFI compliant mills. Loggers don't get reimbursed by the mills for all of this training, and have to absorb it as a "cost of doing business with them."

As my business grew, along came the great recession in 2007. I had been buying forestry equipment in the southeast since 1994 and had developed some great friendships in South Carolina. In 2009 I decided to continue chasing my dream and moved to the logging friendly state of South Carolina. The south has been good to me and my wife. I can never thank her enough as she gave up her career and supported me in chasing my dream. I had two employees move south with me and was able to put together the rest of a great team for the first 10-12 years. In 2019-2020 truck insurance rates were climbing, and good labor was getting hard to find. Looking back, I realize this was the first sign of unsustainability.

Along came COVID in 2020 and the cost of everything skyrocketed.

As logging was considered "essential," we continued working. Prices on all of our supplies were not sustainable at the rates we were being paid. I met with several mills and showed them what my cost per ton was; not one acknowledged it or said they would try to help. Instead, they all said thanks for the information. As a buyer of my own timber I kept trying to adjust my stumpage rates to try to offset my costs, which included trying to give my employees raises and paying higher benefit costs as competition for labor became more expensive.

In 2023 the mill closures started. First, a local mill stopped taking virgin fiber. In 2024 and 2025 closures

for them, how is it sustainable for me?

In 2022 my wife Cindy and I looked at our personal finances and felt comfortable with considering retirement, but because we had long time employees who were a great asset, we decided to keep going. We were still struggling to attract new employees and always had trucks and equipment sitting idle.

2025 got off to a very rough start as we had to let a long time driver go because of his age. We lost another to a battle with cancer, and a third who went through a divorce and his wife moved their kids to another state. He didn't want to leave South Carolina but if he didn't, he

wouldn't be able to see his kids. All of this happened in the first four months of the year. On top of that, the mills had us on tight or no quotas because the remaining mills were trying to absorb all of the production that would have gone to the mills that closed. The struggle to attract good employees continued, but we couldn't pass our excess costs on to anyone, as we are price takers, not price setters. We simply couldn't compete for labor.

The second quarter of 2025 was when it really hit me that we were no longer sustainable—dwindling markets, an inability to compete for labor, and out of control costs. I had a meeting with the other three employees we had at the time and explained to them that this would be the last tract we would cut and I asked them to stay until it was completed. They agreed and on May 4, 2025, we finished the job. They all received a severance for their years of loyalty to us.

Today, as I write this article, it is October 2025 and I am in the Dakota pheasant and waterfowl hunting. I have had a lot of time to reflect on my life and my career, and I have realized my dream career may have ended, but now I'm learning to live the next chapter of my life. I miss buying and harvesting timber every day but we have to remember not to live to work, but to work to live. I have now found the true meaning of sustainability: it is not taking a training class as a condition of work, but to ensure that I live beyond logging and sustain my family for the next generation. *SLT*



Bob Lussier with grandson Vincent Rano

were getting out of control in South Carolina. Unsustainability was and still is growing. One big thing that bothers me personally is when I see our elected officials all present and smiling when a new mill opens, but when one closes, it's crickets.

I can remember a discouraging conversation I had with a representative of a mill to which we provided softwood chips. I had a 200,000-ton package that I bought from a large Timberland Investment Management Organization (TIMO) in 2020. In early 2021 we were still working on the tract and I contacted the mill rep to request a three-cent per ton increase in the chip rate in order to give my employees a cost of living raise. Instead, I was lectured for two hours on how much three cents per ton would cost the mill and that it wasn't sustainable for them. So, if it's not sustainable



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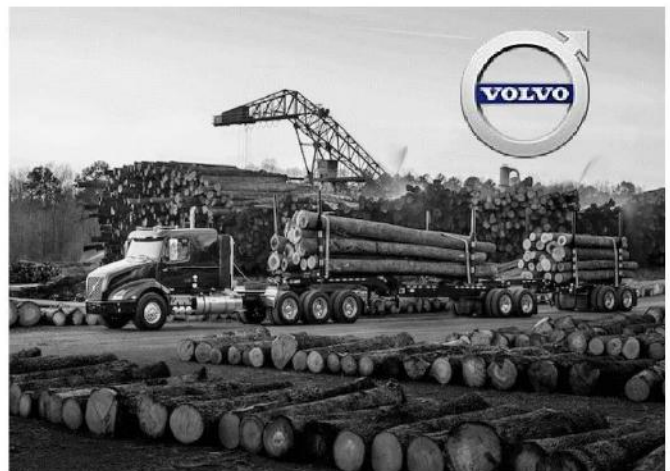


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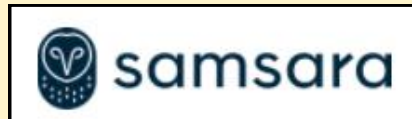
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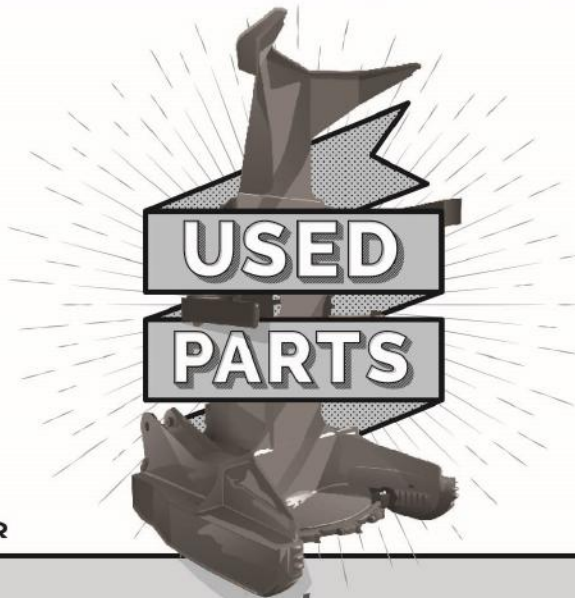
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SC Timber Producers Association
Michael Campbell, SCTPA President & CEO
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Timber Talk

Your Voice for South Carolina
Timber Harvesting

Contact Michael Campbell at
843-833-3822 or ceo.sctpa@gmail.com



Mark Your Calendar

December 2025

16 First Recovery Task Force meeting, SC Forestry Commission

January 2026

20 Wood Magic committee meeting, SC Forestry Commission

February 2026

20 SCTPA Board Meeting, Ellie Beach Resort, Myrtle Beach

20-22 SCTPA Annual Meeting, Ellie Beach Resort, Myrtle Beach

March 2026

TBA SCTPA Board of Directors Meeting, Hampton Inn Columbia

SCTPA is available to those needing to view the 2025 SFI Timber Operations Professional (TOP) Update Video to continue to be SC SFI Trained for the July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 period. Contact SCTPA, and a group live class or individual live class can be arranged.

District Meeting dates are subject to change. Meeting notices will be mailed, posted on SCTPA Facebook page and listed on the website www.scloggers.com prior to scheduled meeting. Members & Non-Members are encouraged to attend our district meetings to know what the issues are affecting the industry.

Need SFI Trained DVD Class or other training?

SCTPA can provide the New DVD Training Module for SFI Trained status. SCTPA is an approved DVD training class facilitator and will be scheduling classes during the year. Other training programs are available for safety, driver training, equipment lockout & tagout, hazardous materials spill control on logging sites and forestry aesthetics.

Truck Driver Training Workshops will be scheduled. Watch the Mark Your Calendar section of this newsletter for dates.

Notices for SCTPA workshops & events will be forwarded.

Michael Campbell
President & CEO
SCTPA

PO Box 113, Pawleys Island, SC 29585
843-833-3822
ceo.sctpa@gmail.com

Kathy Fudge
Communications & Admin Director
SCTPA

Lexington, South Carolina
803-608-3357
khfudge@gmail.com

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Cell 860-377-5318

John Rice
Rice Land & Timber, LLC
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Michael Campbell
President & CEO



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Pawleys Island, SC 29585

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Our Mission

The Mission of the South Carolina Timber Producers Association is to serve as the voice for timber harvesting and allied timber businesses to advance the ability of its members to professionally, ethically, efficiently, safely, environmentally and profitably harvest, produce and transport timber to meet the timber supply demands of our state by providing continuing educational and training opportunities, distributing timber harvesting, hauling, manufacturing and selling information, representing our members in national and statewide legislative activities, and aggressively promoting, supporting and conducting programs of state, regional and national advocacy.