



**NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

# South Carolina Communities Making Firewise Successful

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Experiences and Lessons Learned from 3  
Communities and Their Residents

24 October 2015



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# Speakers

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Dick Hiss

Keowee Key Firewise Community, Salem

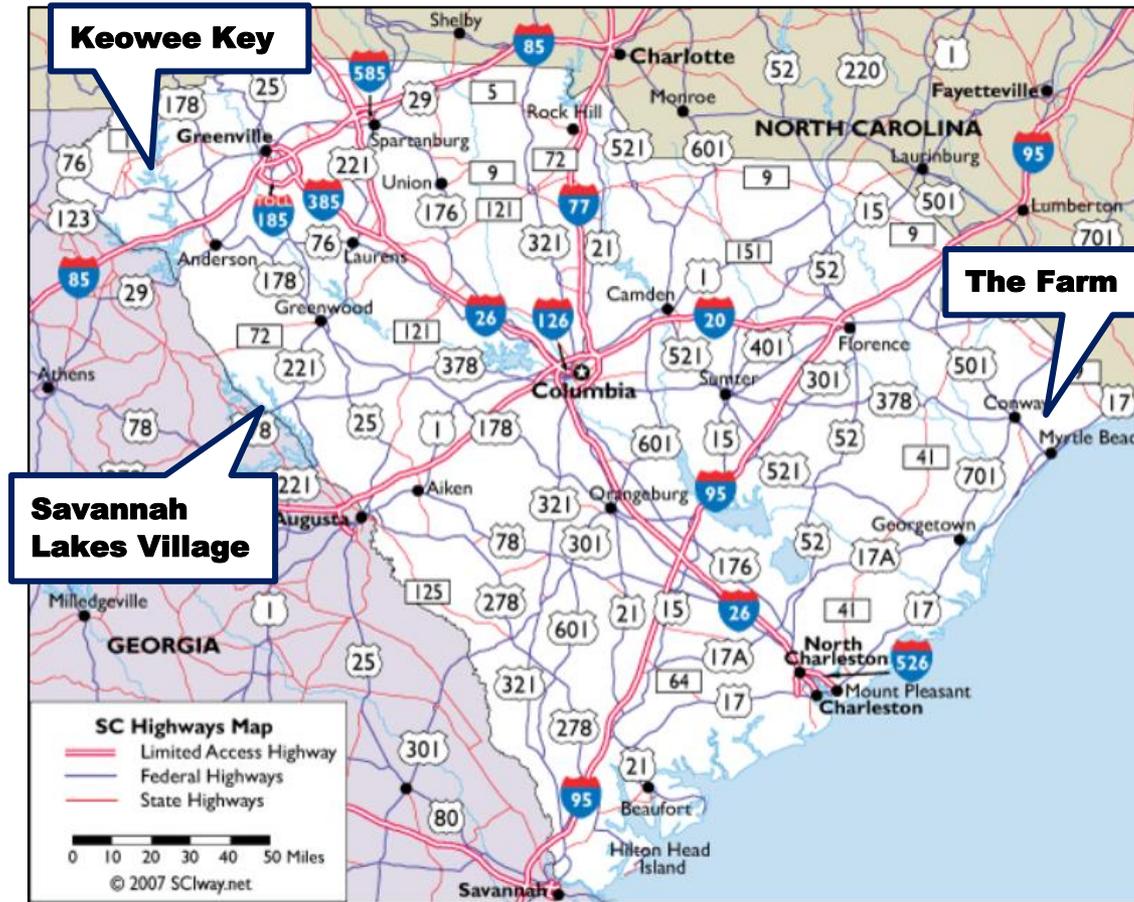
Phil Gates

Savannah Lakes Village, Lake Thurmond

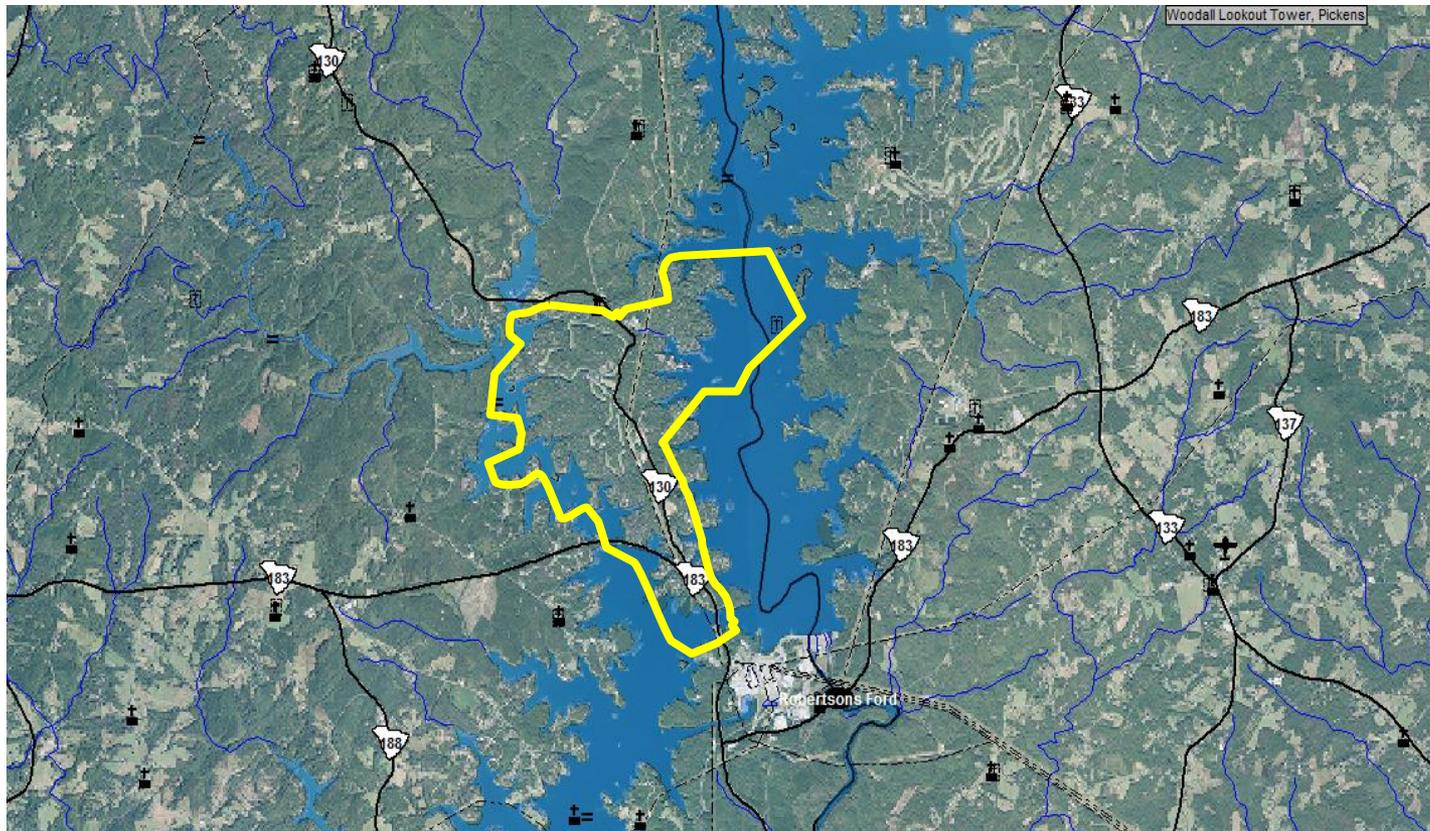
Paul Hoppes

The Farm at Carolina Forest Village, Myrtle Beach

# Presenting Communities



# Keowee Key Firewise Community



# Keowee Key Firewise Community



- Overview of Community
- Firewise since 2006
- Firewise Community organization



# Keowee Key Firewise Community



- Keys to Success at Keowee Key
  - Core of dedicated residents and support
  - SCFC Firewise Community Assessment

**“A Wake Up Call to Action”**



# Keowee Key Firewise Community



- Executing Programs of Interest
  - Chipping Days – 4 times a year
  - Built and equipped new leaf dump / recycling center in community
  - Common grounds remediation
  - Built emergency route/exit infrastructure



# Keowee Key Firewise Community



- Resident “earned income program”



# Keowee Key Firewise Community

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- Electronic survey developed to:
  - Research resident fire danger awareness
  - Used survey to develop additional educational programs
    - 1) Educational programs – forums
    - 2) Action/solutions programs
    - 3) Develop “what if” issues

# Keowee Key Firewise Community

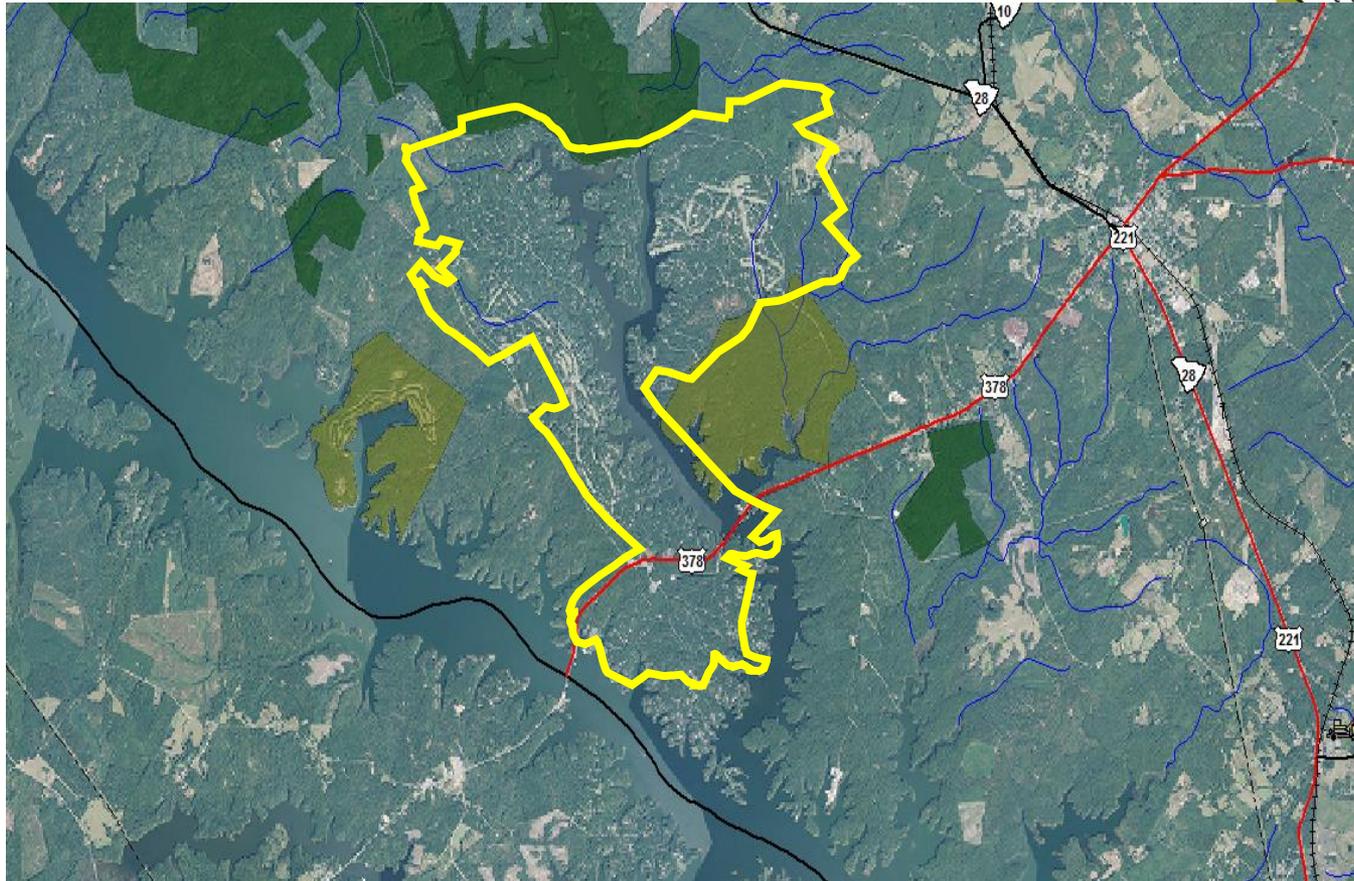
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- Make Firewise activities fun
- Promote your program
- Continue to seek new and challenging programs

**Remember, being Firewise is up to us!  
And there is a You in Us!**

# Savannah Lakes Village Firewise Community





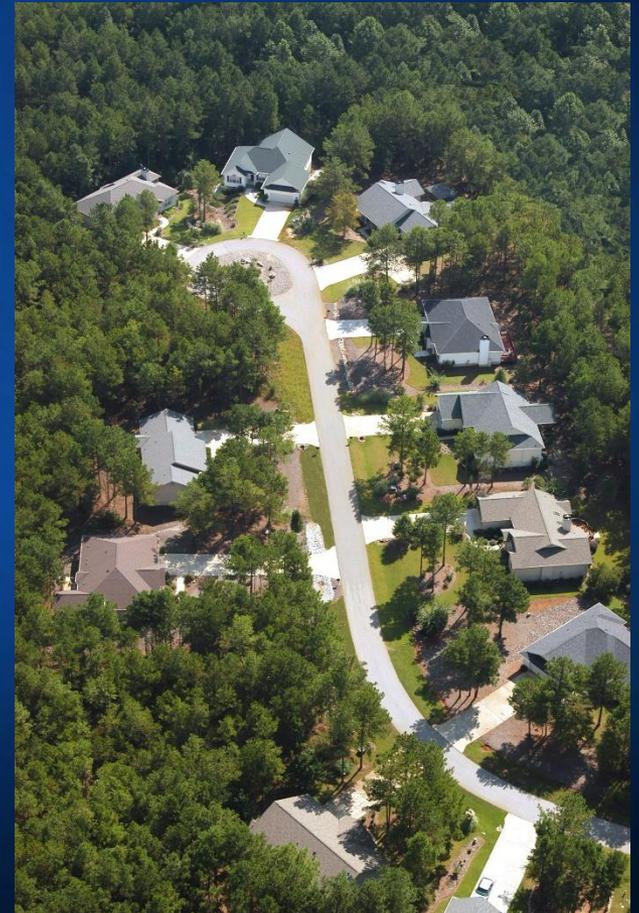
# SAVANNAH LAKES VILLAGE

# AERIAL VIEW OF TARA GOLF COURSE & CLUBHOUSE



# ABOUT SLV.....

- Located in McCormick, South Carolina
- Population: 2,000+ and growing
- Over 1050 Homes



- 2 Championship Lakefront Golf Courses
- Recreation inspired activities: Fishing, Boating, Kayaking, Tennis, Bike Trails and more....



# In the beginning.... 2002

- Concern for Risk of Wildland Fire
  - Classified as a Community at Risk by SC Forestry Commission due to the close proximity of homes, undeveloped lots and forestlands.
  - Savannah Lakes Village Board of Directors created a Control Burn Task Force and met with SC Forestry Commission and requested information on how to become involved in the Firewise Communities/USA Program.

# “How to Have a Firewise Home” Workshop

August 2004



# FIRST SOUTH CAROLINA FIREWISE COMMUNITY



## ● GROWTH.....

- 2005 we received a partial grant from the SC Forestry Commission and purchased a wood chipper to use doing Firewise Workdays.
- Workdays are held annually with more than 175 participants.



Annually we arrange to bring our “Firewise Wood Chipper” to homes and reduce piles of brush, limbs and debris to usable mulch! The mulch can be returned to flower beds or removed from the property.





In conjunction with the local Sandy Branch Volunteer Fire Department, Firewise information was available during an “Open House” to introduce new and existing residents to the program.



SCFC foresters talk to residents at Firewise Mobile Exhibit



# Workshops

- *How to Have a Firewise Home* August 2004; attendance 250+ residents
- *Living on the Edge* community leader workshop for Abbeville and McCormick counties *October* 2004; attendance 43
- *How to Have a Firewise Home* 2006; attendance 33
- *How to Have a Firewise Home* 2007; 39
- *How to Protect your Home from Wildland Fire* 2010; attendance 30

# Corner Stone of Program

As indicated below the addition of the “ Firewise Wood Chipper” was a key element in the growth and success of our Firewise Workdays – “The Corner Stone of our Program” – which allows us to Take the Program to the People.

2005 75 homes participate in debris removal 37,500 lbs.

2006 88 homes participate in debris removal 44,000 lbs.

2007 91 homes participate in debris removal 45,500 lbs.  
(One workday in each of six neighborhoods)

2008 Spring –98 participated in debris removal 49,000 lbs.  
Fall - 76 homes participated in debris removal 38,000 lbs.

2009 Fall - 90 homes participated - 45,000 lbs.

2010 Fall – 95 homes participated – 45,000 lbs.

2011 Fall – 90 homes participated – 44,000 lbs.

2012 Fall - 116 homes participated – 51,000 lbs.

2013 Fall - 179 homes participated – 75,000 lbs.

2014 Fall - 112 homes participated – 50,500 lbs.

# Fuel Mitigation

In 2010 SLVPOA was awarded a Five year \$19,000 grant through the SC Forestry Commission for fuel mitigation on undeveloped lots in Savannah Lakes Village. This project resulted in underbrushing 34 undeveloped lots located next to existing homes.

# Fuel Mitigation (cont.)

**The 2010 Fuel Mitigation Project was the first phase of a five-year program with a funding level of approximately \$20,000 each year to address the worse case properties selected each year. This program has significantly reduced the fuel load on selected undeveloped lots and will enhanced fire protection & defensible space for approximately 150 homeowners in Savannah Lakes Village.**

2011- \$20,125 fuel mitigation grant used to underbrush and remove trees from 32 properties

2012 – \$22,500 fuel mitigation grant used to underbrush and remove trees from 37 properties. Following on mowing obligation each year for 2 years added to the application.

2013 – \$22,500 fuel mitigation grant project started October 1<sup>st</sup>. 54 applications screened, 43 lots acceptable, approximately 37-40 were underbrushed during project

2014 -- \$22,500 fuel mitigation grant project started in October. 35 lots were underbrushed during project.

# Fuel Mitigation Lots

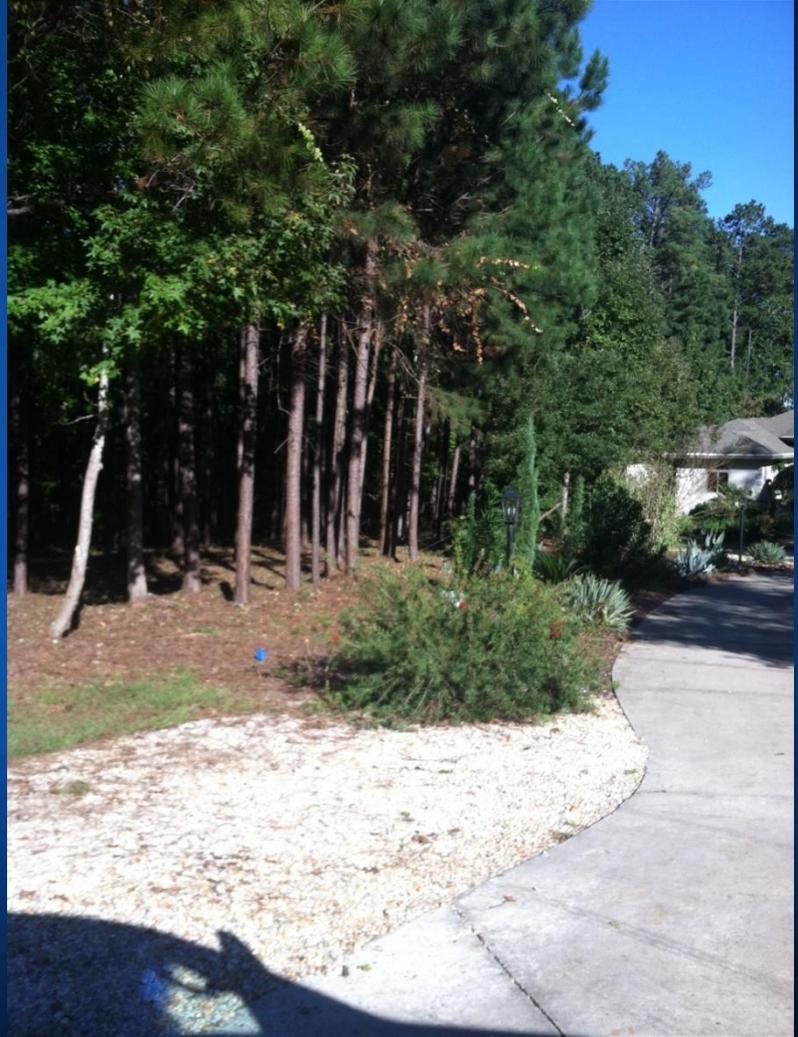


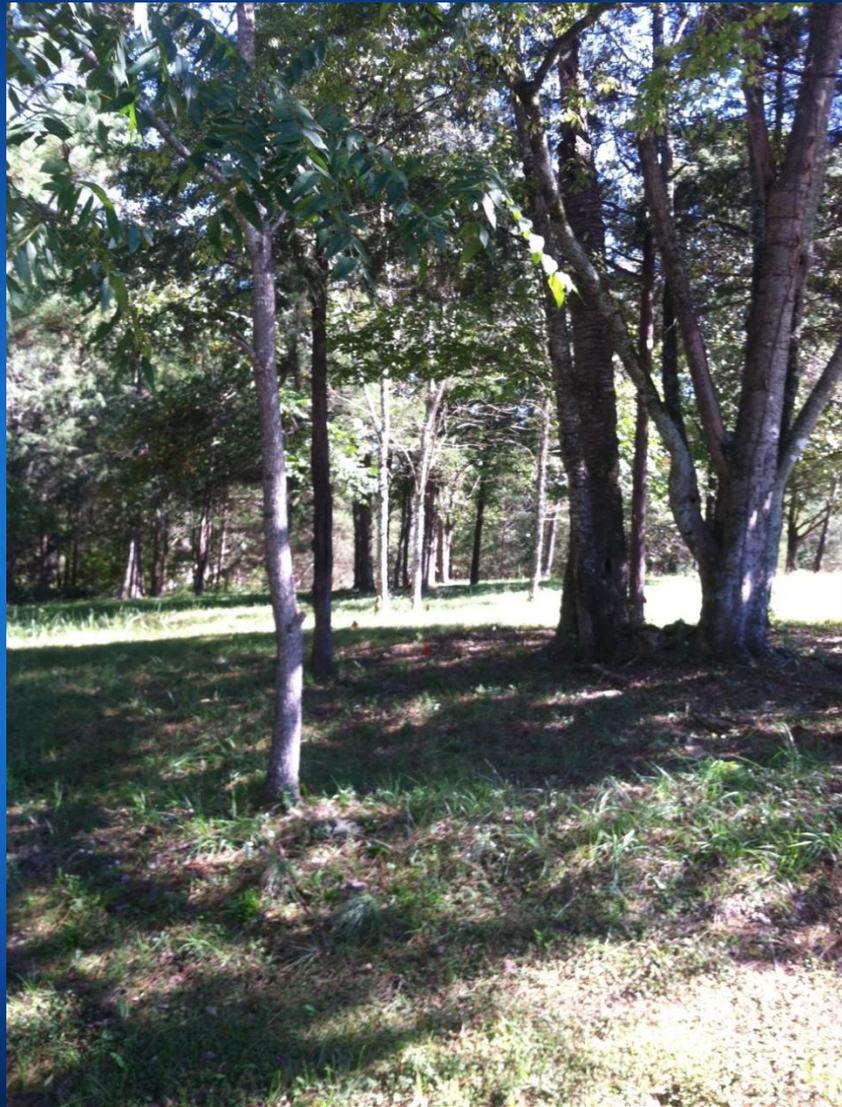
**SLVPOA – FIRST FIREWISE  
COMMUNITY IN  
SOUTH CAROLINA**

THIS PROPERTY WILL BE UNDERBRUSHED AS  
PART OF A SPECIAL FUEL MITIGATION  
PROJECT TO REDUCE THE DANGER OF WILD  
FIRE ON UNDEVELOPED LOTS FROM  
ENDANGERING ADJACENT HOMES.

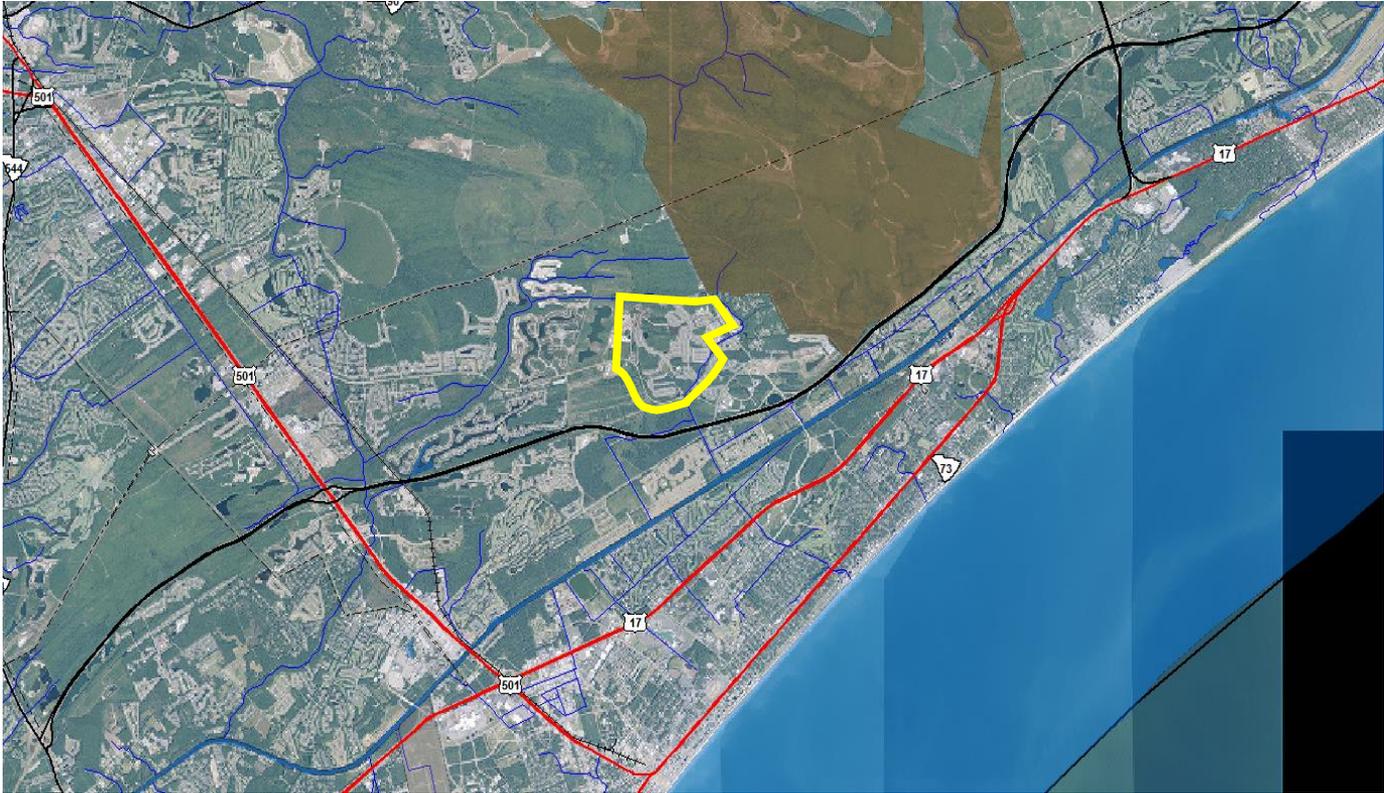
FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT PROVIDED  
BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTRY  
COMMISSION AS PART OF THE SLV  
FIREWISE COMMUNITY PROGRAM







# The Farm at Carolinas Forest Firewise Community



# The Farm at Carolina Forest Firewise Community



- Overview of Community
- Firewise since 2010
- Firewise Community organization



# The Farm at Carolina Forest Firewise Community



- Community mitigation projects



# The Farm at Carolina Forest Firewise Community





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# Discussion & Questions

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