

# Media Advisory

from the South Carolina Forestry Commission



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SC Forestry Commission expands burning ban to entire state

COLUMBIA—The South Carolina Forestry Commission is issuing a State Forester's Burning Ban for all counties, effective at 6 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 19. The ban had previously been in place since Nov. 9 for only the 19 counties in the state's Piedmont region.

State Forester Gene Kodama expanded the ban statewide because of weather conditions associated with an approaching cold front that presents an elevated risk of wildfire. Forecasts for most of the state over the next week include gusting winds and very low relative humidity, which combine with dry fuels on the ground to create the potential for outdoor fires escaping easily and spreading rapidly.

The ban was also enacted as a precautionary measure because so many of the agency's personnel and resources are currently deployed to the Pinnacle Mountain Fire at Table Rock State Park in Pickens County. The National Weather Service will also be issuing a Red Flag Alert Saturday morning because of the expected cooler, windier and dryer weather.

A State Forester's Burning Ban prohibits outdoor burning, which includes yard debris burning and burning for forestry, wildlife or agricultural purposes. While campfires and open-fire cooking are not included in the ban, the Forestry Commission strongly advises all citizens to be extremely vigilant until the ban is lifted.

The ban will stay in effect until further notice, which will come in the form of an official announcement from the Forestry Commission.

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*As the only state agency responsible for wildfire suppression in all unincorporated areas of the state, the South Carolina Forestry Commission protects 12.9 million acres from wildland fire. More than 500 county, municipal and volunteer fire departments operate more than 1,100 fire stations in South Carolina. The Forestry Commission cooperates with these departments to prevent and control structural and wildland fires, employing highly trained firefighters and specialized equipment when fires burn into forested areas that are difficult to reach.*



The Forestry Commission performed a large-scale burnout on and around Table Rock Mountain Thursday to remove fuel from the wildfire on Pinnacle Mountain before high winds arrive Saturday. The operation was largely successful, burning more than 90 percent of the area inside the firelines that firefighters were able to construct over the past week.