Fire Department Federal Grant Administered by the SC Forestry Commission

2025 VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA) GRANT

VFA Grant Coordinator, Andy Johnson, 803-360-6956
ajohnson@scfc.gov

November 2025

The South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) is now accepting applications for the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)/National Fire Plan (NFP) Grant. The application deadline is December 31, 2025.

The VFA/NFP Grant helps rural volunteer fire departments strengthen their ability to meet the challenges of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) in South Carolina. Funding can be used to purchase wildland firefighting equipment or provide essential training, allowing departments to respond more effectively and safely to wildfires that threaten rural homes and communities. To qualify, departments must be staffed by at least 80 percent volunteers.

Strong partnerships between the SCFC and local fire departments are key to protecting WUI communities. The SCFC works closely with departments to conduct community assessments, host Firewise workshops, and develop Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs). By applying Firewise principles and working together, firefighters can improve safety and increase the likelihood of saving homes at risk from wildland fire.

PLEASE NOTE: NOT ALL FIRE DEPARTMENTS APPLYING WILL RECEIVE GRANT FUNDS. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THOSE:

- **Applying for the first time**
- **Purchasing a skid (slip-in) unit for a brush truck**
- **Purchasing wildland PPE (Nomex shirts, Nomex pants, Nomex coveralls, etc.)**
- **Purchasing VHF radios (no 800, UHF)**
- **Installing and maintaining dry hydrants**

Please email a shapefile of your fire department district/service area. If you don't have a shapefile, mail the hardcopy/map in with the other required paperwork. Shapefiles can possibly be captured by your county GIS Department.

2025 VFA GRANT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Deadline: December 31, 2025

Mail Application To:

South Carolina Forestry Commission
VFA Grant Coordinator: Andy Johnson
P.O. Box 21707
Columbia, SC 29221-1707

OR EMAIL SCANNED PDF ONLY TO ajohnson@scfc.gov

Please mail in application without staples and in a large envelope without folding.

VFA Grant Eligibility and Guidelines

• **Volunteer Requirement:** Departments must be staffed by at least 80% volunteer firefighters to be eligible.

• **Focus on Wildland Firefighting:** Previous VFA grants included both structural and wildland items. The current grant focuses solely on wildland firefighting. **Requests for structural firefighting equipment will not be accepted.**

• **Community Population:** Eligible departments must serve a rural community with a population of **10,000 or fewer**. Applicants must clearly show how each station's response or service area is defined. The VFA Grant is designed for small, rural volunteer departments with limited budgets that need assistance purchasing wildland firefighting equipment.

• **Grant Type:** This is a **50/50 reimbursable matching grant.**
Example: A department awarded $3,400 must submit receipts totaling $6,800. No single item may exceed $10,000. *Note:* If purchasing a skid unit that exceeds $10,000, request an itemized invoice showing the cost breakdown (e.g., tank, pump, hose, etc.).

• **Maximum Award:** Grants are available for up to **$5,000.**

• **Eligible Items:** Only items listed on the *Eligible Items for VFA Grant* sheet or *Brush Truck Specifications* list may be purchased.
Any other items must receive **pre-approval** to be considered, and exceptions will be limited and reviewed **case by case.**

• **Recordkeeping:** All purchases and related records are subject to review by federal and state authorities. Departments must keep all documentation for **three years** from the reimbursement date. **Purchases must match the approved request**—otherwise, reimbursement will be denied.

• **Purchase Period:** Purchases are eligible between **May 1, 2025, and May 1, 2026.** Do **not** send invoices with your initial application. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions by **December 31, 2024**, along with instructions for submitting receipts and required documentation.

• **Training Compliance:** Departments must be in compliance with **NIMS training requirements** to apply.

• **Matching Funds – Labor and Training:** Time and expenses related to refurbishing federal excess trucks (e.g., creating brush trucks) may count toward the department's matching share, valued at **$24.69 per hour.** Visit http://www.roscommonequipmentcenter.com/ for guidance on refurbishing wildland equipment. Time spent attending approved **Wildland Fire Training** between May 2025 and May 2026 may also count toward matching funds at **$24.69 per hour** (see specific class requirements).
Documented time spent installing or maintaining **dry hydrants** within the same period may be credited at the same hourly rate.

• **FEPP Compliance:**
Departments participating in the **Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP)** must ensure all federal excess equipment is maintained and in active use. The SCFC may request updated **Equipment Loan Agreements** and **Certificates of Liability Insurance** before awarding grants.

Without complete documentation, your request will not be considered. You must keep a copy of your application and request, as your purchases must match the original request.

Again, the following application forms and related information can be found on the SCFC website at: https://www.scfc.gov/protection/other-programs/vfavfa-programs-and-grants/.

Checklist of **REQUIRED** Documents for VFA Grant Application Package:
_____VFA Form A: Completed Grant Application/Checklist
_____VFA Form B: List of WUI Communities Protected
_____VFA Form C: List of Equipment/Items Requested
_____W-9 Form: Request for Taxpayer ID Number and Certification
_____Emailed shapefile OR copied map of fire district/service area

Appendix (Additional Resources):

- Appendix A: Eligible Items for VFA Grants
- Appendix B: Type 6 Engine (Brush Truck) Specs – Suggested Requirements
- Appendix C: List of Vendors for Wildland Firefighting Equipment and Supplies
- Appendix D: Fire Service Mutual Aid Frequencies
- Appendix E and F: VFA Time Sheet Instructions and Time Sheet
- Completed sample VFA Application

DEADLINE: December 31, 2025
(It is highly recommended that you mail your application using Certified Mail/Return Receipt)

The South Carolina Forestry Commission and the USDA Forest Service are equal opportunity providers and employers.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission and the USDA Forest Service prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)
To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD).

ITEMS ELIGIBLE FOR 2025 VFA GRANTS

REMINDER: Only items listed on this sheet, or the Brush Truck Specifications Sheet, may be purchased. Any other items must receive prior approval to be considered eligible. Such approvals will be limited and reviewed on a case-by-case basis. No single item may exceed a total cost of $10,000.

The 2025 program focuses solely on wildland firefighting equipment. Requests for structural firefighting gear or supplies will not be considered.

Communication Equipment

Eligible for use on mutual aid frequencies between SCFC and fire departments:

- *VHF two-way radios (mobile or portable) for narrowband mutual aid frequencies (150–174 MHz range)
- Pagers (low priority)
- Radio harnesses

Wildland Firefighting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

All PPE must meet NFPA 1977 standards.

- *Flame-resistant pants, shirts, and coveralls (Nomex®, Aramid, etc.). Treated cotton is not eligible.
- *Wildland fire helmet, leather gloves, safety goggles, ear protection, and leather boots. Dual-purpose wildland/rescue boots may be approved if they meet NFPA 1977 standards.
- *Nomex jackets are eligible but will only be funded at the cost equivalent of a Nomex shirt.

Structural firefighting gear, including turnout/bunker gear, helmets, gloves, or similar items, is not eligible.

Wildland Firefighting Equipment (Primarily for Brush Trucks)

- *Slip-on pumper/skid units (If the total cost exceeds $10,000, submit an itemized quote for the tank, pump, hose, and related components.)
- Water tanks, pumps with engines, foam proportioners, hose reels, hoses, and other plumbing for brush trucks (see Brush Truck Specs Sheet for details)
- Portable pumps
- Dump tanks
- Lightweight forestry hose (1.5" diameter or less), drafting hose, foam nozzles, and hose fittings for pumpers and pumper tankers
- Class A foam, mop-up kits, thread adapters, double female/male adapters, increasers, reducers, caps, gated wye valves, shut-off valves (see Brush Truck Specs Sheet for more information)
- *Projects to develop static water supplies such as dry hydrants and cisterns

Note: Items marked with an asterisk (*) are priority items. Applications where these comprise the majority of the purchase will receive additional consideration.

Brush Truck (Type 6 Engine) Specifications- 2025 VFA Grant

4X4 truck with suspension adequate for load. Baffled tank with a capacity of 150 to 400 gal. Pump rating- minimum flow of 30 gpm at 100 psi. Do NOT exceed stated GVW.

Category	Quantity	Item Description	Total length
Hose	1	Booster Hose, 100' x 1"	100'
	2	Hard Suction Hose (1½ ")	8' or 10'
	1	1 ½" NH, engine protection (25')	25'
	1	1 ½" NH, refill hose (15')	15'
	3	1 ½" NH (100')	300'
	3	1" NPSH (100')	300'
	6	¾" NH, garden hose (50')	300'
Nozzle	2	Forester, 1" NPSH	
	2	Adjustable, 1" NPSH	
	2	¾" brass nozzle NH	
	1	Mopup Wand (¾" threads)	
	1	Foam, air aspirated, 1"	
Reducers	1	2½"NH-F to 1½"NH-M	
	1	1½" NH-F to 1" NH-M	
	2	1½" NH-F to 1" NPSH-M	
	3	1" NPSH-F to ¾" NH-M	
Increasers	1	¾" NH-F to 1" NPSH-M	
	1	1" NPSH-F to 1½" NH-M	
Adapters	1	1½" NPSH-F to 1½" NH-M	
	1	1½" NH-F to 1½" NPSH-M	
	1	1" NH-F to 1" NPSH-M	
Tee	2	1" NPSH-F x 1" NPSH-M x 1" NPSH-M, w/cap	
	2	1½ " NH-F x 1½" NH-M x 1" NPSH-M, w/cap	
	2	1½ " NH-F x 1½" NH-M x 1" NPSH-M, w/valve	
Gated Wye	2	1½" NH x 1½" NH x 1½" NH	
	1	1" NPSH, Two-way	
	4	¾" NH w/Ball Valve	
Couplings	2	1½" NH, Double Female	
	1	1½" NH, Double Male	
	1	1" NPSH, Double Female	
	1	1" NPSH, Double Male	
Valves	1	1½" NH-F, Automatic Check and Bleeder	
	1	1½"Shut Off, NH	
	1	1"Shut Off, NPSH	
	5	¾" NH Shut Off	
	1	Foot, w/strainer, 1½"	

#	Additional items	#	Additional items	#	Additional items	#	Additional items
1	First aid kit	2	Pulaski	1	Chainsaw	2	Bladder bag
1	Hose clamps	2	Fire rake	1	Chainsaw kit	1	Bog/tow chain
1	Bolt cutters	1	Class-A foam	1	Chaps	1	Hydrant wrench
1	Jumper cables	1	Rogue Hoe	1	Chainsaw fuel	2	Spanner wrench

Note: These are specs adapted from NIFC (National Interagency Fire Center), January 2014 release date.

VENDORS FOR WILDLAND
FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

(This is only a partial listing of vendors for wildland firefighting equipment, others are available. The inclusion or exclusion does not endorse or discriminate against any of the listed vendors.)

Company Name	Location	Phone	Website
Anderson Fire and Safety	Anderson, SC	864-225-1128	www.anderson-fire.com
Ben Meadows	Janesville, WI	800-241-6401	www.benmeadows.com
Cascade Fire Equipment	Medford, Or	800-654-7049	www.cascadefire.com
FeldFire	Carroll, IA	800-568-2403	www.feldfire.com
Fol-Da-Tank Company	Milan, IL	800-637-8265	www.foldatank.com
Forestry Suppliers	Jackson, MS	800-647-5368	www.forestry-suppliers.com
JME	Milwaukee, WI	800-333-3331	www.JMESales.com
The Leslie Company	Newberry, SC	803-276-4071	n/a
Mallory Safety and Supply	Longview, WA	360-636-5750	www.malloryco.com
MES	Charlotte, NC	877-711-5557	www.mesfire.com
NAFECO	Decatur, AL	800-628-6233	www.nafeco.com
National Fire Fighter Corp.	Eugene, OR	800-423-8347	www.nationalfirefighter.com
Poseidon Supplies and Equipment	Prosperity, SC	888-858-2227	www.poseidonrescue.com
Roscommon Equipment Ctr.	Roscommon, MI	989-275-5211	www.roscommonequipmentcenter.com
Safe Industries	Easley, SC	864-845-7175	www.safeindustries.com
TECGEN XTREME®	Greenville, SC	888-607-8883	http://firedex.com/tecgen/
The Fire Store	Coatsville, PA	800-852-6088	www.thefirestore.com
The Supply Cache	Ft. Collins, CO	888-577-4526	www.firecache.com
Unitex	Moncton, New Brunswick Canada	800-964-6161	http://www.unitexuniforms.ca/
Wally's Fire & Safety Equipment	Mullins, SC	888-784-2224	www.wallysfire.com
Waterax	Montreal, QC	855-616-1818	www.waterax.com
Wildland Warehouse	Blairstown, NJ	866-945-3526	www.wildlandwarehouse.com/

2025 FIRE SERVICE MUTUAL AID FREQUENCIES

Positive communication among fire protection agencies is essential when they share a fire ground. This need is emphasized by the growing number of Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fires handled cooperatively by South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) and Fire Service firefighters.

The following **VHF high-band mutual aid frequencies** have been assigned specifically for fire protection response. As one of the many fire protection agencies in South Carolina, the Forestry Commission encourages all fire departments to install these frequencies in mobile and portable radios.

Mutual Aid Frequencies for Fire Protection Services

Transmit	Receive	TX tone	Rx Tone	Label
151.2050	151.2050	203.5	203.5	TAC 1
151.2275	151.2275	203.5	203.5	TAC 2
151.3550	151.3550	203.5	203.5	TAC 3
151.4000	151.4000	203.5	203.5	TAC 4
151.2800	151.2800	203.5	203.5	TAC 5
151.4825	151.4825	203.5	203.5	TAC 6

Authorization & Licensing

The Federal Communications Commission provides two ways of accessing the mutual aid frequencies:

1. **Obtain your own license.**
   A new license is needed to operate a base station on the mutual aid frequencies. Mobile and portable radios may be added to your existing license. Information on licensing is available by contacting:

FCCA: Use the Frequency Coordination above for additional info

FCCA Frequency Coordination
424 E. Middle St - Rear Unit
Gettysburg, PA 17325
Phone (717) 398-0826
Fax (717) 778-4237
Email : Michelle.Fink@frequencycoordination.org

2. **Enter into a use agreement with an existing licensee.**
   To help keep fire department costs down, the Forestry Commission will share its mutual aid license for mobile and portable units with the Fire Service in South Carolina. Terms of the agreement include:
   - -Departments will install the frequencies on their radio equipment.
   - -Only **clear text** will be used in transmissions.
   - -Departments will employ mutual aid frequencies ONLY on incidents in which Forestry Commission personnel are involved.
   - -Departments sharing the SCFC license will use the Incident Command System (ICS).
   - -FCC regulations will be strictly followed. Violation will result in loss of use privileges. Any fines related to such violations will be paid by the fire department.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission encourages that all Public Safety licensees also include frequencies required by the current **South Carolina Interoperability Channel Plan.**

To obtain a Forestry Commission radio license use agreement, contact:
Statewide Communications Coordinator
5500 Broad River, Rd.
Columbia, SC 29212
803-896-8800

2025 INSTRUCTIONS FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA) TIME SHEET SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTRY COMMISSION

1. Enter Firefighter's Name

2. Wildland Fire Training: Enter DATE, COURSE TITLE, and HOURS for each firefighter. Courses approved are:

   - I-100 Incident Command System (3 hours)
   - I-200 Incident Command System (14 hours)
   - S-211 Portable Pumps and Water Use (18 hours)
   - S-212 Wildfire Power Saws (30 hours)
   - S-215 Fire Operations in the Wildland Urban Interface (24 hours)
   - Course 1181- Wildland Firefighting for the Structural Firefighter (16 hours)
   - Course 1182- WUI Operations for Structural Firefighters (8 hours)
     NOTE: Course 1181 and 1182 are registered through the Fire Academy. **Both of these classes are great wildland firefighting classes, and are highly recommended!**

3. Wildland Fire Equipment Construction: Enter DATE, EQUIPMENT TYPE, and HOURS worked for each firefighter. Construction of pumper unit for Brush Truck, repair, and modifications needed to convert a truck to a Brush Truck, installation of slip-in (skid) unit and connections to make it operational.

4. Dry Hydrant Installation/Maintenance: Enter DATE and HOURS for each firefighter spent on dry hydrant installation and/or dry hydrant maintenance.

5. Fire Department Official Approval: The Chief, or a designated Time Officer for the fire department, must sign off for each firefighter's time. The fire department can go back to **May 1, 2025, and go up through May 1, 2026**. This is to document time for Wildland Fire Training, Wildland Fire Equipment Construction, and/or Dry Hydrant Installation/Maintenance. Keep this Time Sheet on file at the fire department until it is asked for by the Forestry Commission. If a fire department receives a grant, a copy of the Time Sheet will have to be submitted to the Forestry Commission along with a Claim for Reimbursement for a Volunteer Fire Assistance NFP Grant. A copy of the training certificate must also be turned in if the fire department is funded, and you decide to use this toward your 50/50 matching grant portion.

A

SOUTH CAROLINA FORESTRY COMMISSION
VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA) GRANT
NATIONAL FIRE PLAN (NFP)
2025 GRANT APPLICATION/CHECKLIST

Please TYPE, or print CLEARLY

Fire Dept./Station Name:	☐ Fire Dept. (FD) ☐ Rural Fire Dept. (RFD) ☐ Fire and Rescue ☐ Volunteer Fire Dept. (VFD) ☐ Other:	Zip Code **29**
Mailing Address:	City:	County / FDID#
Fire Chief's Name:	Cell: / Work:	A. # of Volunteer Firefighters: / B. Total # of Firefighters: ÷ / C. % of Volunteers (A/B x 100)= **%**
Fire Chief's E-mail:		

Population Protected (#):	# of times funded (last 8 years)	2024 Total Annual Operating Budget	# of Wildfires in 2023	ISO Rating
		$		

Is there a Firewise Community USA in the fire district?
☐ No; ☐ Yes- name:

Is there a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)?
☐ No; ☐ Yes- name:

SCFC Office Use Only: MAIN Items Requested
☐ Skid Unit; ☐ VHF Radios; ☐ Wildland PPE; ☐ Dry Hydrant

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Return completed Application to:
SC Forestry Commission
VFA Grant Coordinator- Andy Johnson
PO Box 21707
Columbia, SC 29221-1707

NEW! You can also email COMPLETED package to: ajohnson@scfc.gov

Amount Requested: 1:1 Matching Funds **(PLEASE ROUND TO WHOLE NUMBERS)**

a. Grand Total from Form 3 **$ .00**	**Total Expenses**	Enter total dollar amount of expected expenses. (the "Grand Total" from Form #3)
b. **- $ .00**	**Fire Dept. Share**	Enter remaining share Fire Department will cover (a. – c.). This amount must be at least equal to, or greater than the Grant Allocation
c. **= $ .00**	**Grant allocation**	**This is the amount the fire department is asking to receive** Maximum of $5,000!

✓ **Place a "Check" below once completed, and ready to be mailed:**

1.) **VFA Form A:**	**Completed Application/Checklist (place on top & be sure all completed documents are enclosed)**
2.) **VFA Form B:**	**List of Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Communities Protected** –Be sure to include all communities protected that would be included in WUI … list individual communities
3.) **VFA Form C:**	**List of Equipment/Items Requested.** Be sure to explain how and where you plan on using the items. If you have a quote on items, please send it with the application.
4.) **W-9 Form – Request for Taxpayer ID# and Certification-**	Enter fire department name at "Business Name", address, Employer Federal ID#, and includes **fire chief's signature**. **NOTE:** → Return the first **(FRONT)** page of the W-9 **(If not funded in the previous 3 years)**
Emailed shapefile OR copied map of fire district/service area	**ajohnson@scfc.gov**

Fire Chief's Signature: ✗	Date: **2025**

Application due by December31, 2025

Recommend Certified Mail or Email

B

List of Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Communities Protected – REQUIRED:

Wildland Urban Interface is defined as the area where residences and other human developments meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland. Generally, rural fire departments protect several such communities.

Communities within the WUI are at risk when they are located near woodlands that historically have had wildfires or have the potential to have wildfires.

Such communities could be…

1. A named subdivision (i.e. gated community). OR…
2. A cluster of homes (10 minimum) in close proximity of each other which could effectively work together to develop and implement actions to protect their homes from wildfire (often known locally by some common name or area of the county). OR…
3. A group of homes with some organizational structure such as a homeowner's association.

Therefore, a town or the service area that a fire department protects may have several such communities that could be threatened by wildfires. These communities are known as Communities at Risk within the Wildland Urban Interface.

List those communities below that | the Fire Department | Protects:

(Please list the communities in alphabetical order. They are entered on a spreadsheet, and will be very helpful).

1.	11.	21.
2.	12.	22.
3.	13.	23.
4.	14.	24.
5.	15.	25.
6.	16.	26.
7.	17.	27.
8.	18.	28.
9.	19.	29.
10.	20.	30.

Total # of WUI Communities:	

Fire Chief Name- Printed	Fire Chief- Signature	Date
	X	**2025**

2025 VFA Equipment Request List (in order of priority)

C

The	Fire Department	would like to apply for the

Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant to purchase the following wildland firefighting equipment:

Grant period for item purchase: May 1st 2025 through May 1sr 2026

Item	Price per Item	# of Items	Total per Item
1.	$		$
2.	$		$
3.	$		$
4.	$		$
5.	$		$
6.	$		$
7.	$		$
8.	$		$
9.	$		$
10.	$		$
11.	$		$
Subtotal (Shipping/Freight and Taxes Inlcuded)			$

Grand Total (this amount will go on the VFA Form 1 as the "Total Expenses") → $ .00

Please include quotes on items if available.

Please round this to the nearest number- no decimals

Note: In order to receive priority for specific items (VHF radios, wildland PPE, skid unit, dry hydrant), the **MAJORITY** of the purchases MUST be of those items.

Briefly describe how the above mentioned item(s) will be used to enhance firefighting capacity in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). Attach additional sheet if needed.

Fire Chief Signature

2025

Date