

Audubon South Carolina's Working Lands Program

Land that works for both birds and people.

PHOTO: CARSON LOVE

Audubon South Carolina's Working Lands Program serves as a bridge between landowners and the resources available to aid in managing their property. Our goal is to support and facilitate forest management for the economic, ecological, and recreational benefit of landowners and their communities.

The Working Lands Program offers a series of educational workshops for landowners. These workshops feature presentations from conservation partners and cover a range of relevant topics, including:

- Cost-share opportunities
- Voluntary carbon markets
- Bird-friendly forestry practices
- Conservation easements
- Demonstration sites
- Habitat restoration
- Income diversification

We also provide:

- Landowner property site visits
- Technical assistance
- Habitat Management Plans
- Carbon credit enrollment assistance
- Referrals to our extensive network of conservation partners

Audubon South Carolina manages over 30,000 acres of land by leveraging a variety of management strategies. These include the use of prescribed fire, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and longleaf seedling cost share programs, voluntary carbon market programs, conservation easements, hardwood restoration, and strategic timber harvesting. The Working Lands Program allows us to share our depth of knowledge in these areas with the private landowners of South Carolina.



PHOTO: MICHAEL WARREN

Audubon SC's Working Lands Program promotes science-based stewardship that supports working forests, enhances wildlife habitat, and strengthens the long-term resilience of South Carolina's landscapes.

We work with private landowners to determine management objectives for their property and identify avenues to achieve those objectives. Some of the opportunities available to landowners include NRCS cost-share programs, conservation easements, timber harvesting, and participation in voluntary carbon market programs.



Cost-Share Programs

Cost share programs provide financial assistance to landowners that implement approved conservation or land management practices on their property. Application processes, monitoring, timing of payment, and project duration vary from program to program. Financial assistance can range from 40-90% of the total cost of the project. Opportunities are available through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and other state, federal, and non-profit organizations.

Prescribed Fire

Prescribed fire is the planned application of fire to a landscape. It is an efficient and cost-effective management tool that can promote valuable wildlife habitat, promote forest resilience, reduce hazardous fuels, and recycle nutrients to the soil. Burning during specific seasons and under various weather conditions can help landowners achieve different objectives.

Bird-Friendly Forestry

South Carolina has a high diversity of bird species, all with different habitat needs. Some forage and nest in disturbed openings or grassy areas, while others prefer old-growth pine or hardwood forests. Bird-friendly forestry practices encourage property owners to manage for a wide variety of wildlife habitat on their property. This can include creating wildlife openings, having stands at different stages of succession, and implementing uneven-aged management.

Voluntary Carbon Markets

Various programs provide monetary incentives for landowners to put their forests in a carbon bank. Forests can store carbon for extended periods of time and if managed in certain ways can be a candidate for offsetting societal carbon outputs. Carbon agreements are long-term commitments to manage forests for carbon storage under certain criteria, which vary between programs.

Visit ASC's Working Lands website for more information.

