



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact:

SOUTH CAROLINA RECEIVES EMERGENCY FUNDING FOR TREE PLANTING

Columbia, SC, (March 30, 1999)—South Carolina has has been allocated over \$137.,000 under the Emergency Forestry Incentives Program (FIP) due to the 1998 weather disaster event, better known as El Nino. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is providing financial assistance to landowners eligible for tree planting assistance due to acts of nature.

“Weather related tree damage has caused quite a bit of concern in South Carolina,” says Mark W. Berkland, NRCS state conservationist. “We’re hoping that additional funding will allow counties in the state to regain some of the valuable tree and timber resources that have been lost due to El Nino.”

The Emergency FIP funding covers any damage incurred from El Nino, including dead trees, droughts, tornado damage and fire. Landowners who meet the criteria may submit an application to NRCS. The agency will establish contracts based upon an evaluation and needs determination conducted by the South Carolina Forestry Commission. Currently, NRCS is offering a 40 percent cost share rate for approved contracts. Once the funding is allocated, a landowner has up to 20 months to complete the project.

Seventeen counties in South Carolina have received Emergency FIP funding. Contracts will be funded until monies have expired, so please contact your local USDA Service Center for further information.

30