



PABCJournal

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FORESTRY ASSOCIATION'S 50 YEARS

Congratulations to the Forestry Association of South Carolina celebrating 50 years of service in 2018.

SUPERSOD Recognized

Congratulations to Super SOD for being chosen Best of Houzz 2018 for Outstanding Customer Service.

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PABC BOARD ELECTS OFFICERS FOR 2018



Randy Brown



Cam Crawford



Sarah Windham

Randy Brown, Plant Manager for Perdue, was re-elected Chairman of PABC. Cam Crawford, President and CEO of the Forestry Association of SC, was elected Vice Chairman and Sarah Windham, Partner with Dixon Hughes Goodman, LLC was elected Secretary/Treasurer.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SC AGRIBIZ & FARM EXPO



The 2018 SC AgriBiz & Farm Expo held in January at the Florence Civic Center experienced record attendance. This year's Expo featured educational programs, equipment shows, Taste of SC and the Commissioners Breakfast.

At left, Farm Bureau President Harry Ott speaks at one of the sessions. PABC CEO Ronnie Summers (also pictured) was a presenter as well.

USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue Visits South Carolina

USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue, was hosted by Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers in January, as he visited several SC agribusiness operations.

One of the stops was Manchester Farms in Hopkins. Pictured at right is Manchester Farms Owner Brittney Miller with Secretary Perdue as he toured one of their facilities.



TAXES TOP PABC LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2018

Maintain Agribusiness Sales Tax Exemptions/Property Tax Assessments

A SC House Tax Policy Review Committee was appointed to review all tax exemptions and met through the early part of the last session to prepare their findings. With lawmakers examining current exemptions which include those for agribusiness, this continues to be an issue to watch to make sure we maintain these important sales tax exemptions and property tax assessments for the industry.

Surface Water & Groundwater Withdrawal

Surface and groundwater withdrawal regulations will be a big issue next session with the recent focus on the water situation in Aiken County. PABC believes no changes should be made to amend the Surface Water Permitting Act of 2010 until the completion of the Statewide Assessment of Water Resources and be based on sound science.

Poultry Permitting

Last session, the House passed H.3929, which addresses the appeals process for DHEC permits for animal ag facilities as it relates to setbacks and property owners of adjacent properties. The Senate Ag Committee voted recently to pass the bill out of committee. This legislation is needed to allow the SC poultry industry to remain competitive.

Stay Bill

S.105 passed the Senate and is now in the House Judiciary Committee. This bill would limit the automatic stay in contested cases in the Administrative Law Court (ALC). Under current law, a plaintiff objecting to a permit can object to a project and receive an automatic stay for an indefinite period of time without offering any evidence that a permit should not be issued. This legislation provides for the automatic stay to still be available, but the person objecting would have to show legitimate grounds for objecting to a project.

CDL Liability Insurance and Driver Shortage

PABC and members of the Associated Industries of SC are working with the Governor and two cabinet agencies on CDL issues. The Department of Insurance is developing a report to identify what is increasing costs for liability insurance for truck drivers, especially log truck drivers. Insurance premiums have tripled for many logging truck owners. The Associated Industries of SC is examining funding opportunities with the Department of Employment and Workforce to promote careers as CDL drivers, heavy equipment operators and in the construction trade. It will also be PABC's intention to monitor the Vehicle Owner Tort Equity Act (VOTE) legislation being proposed by the SC Civil Justice Coalition.

Dams and Reservoirs Standards

The House passed H.3218, the Dams & Reservoirs Act, which increases the number of dams that could be regulated by DHEC, pursuant to the Dams and Reservoirs Safety Act. The legislation is now in the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. The Forestry Association and Farm Bureau are working on a proposed amendment to provide Dam owners a tax credit for any repairs they are required to make under the provisions of the legislation.

Agency Funding

Support funding for the budget requests of the SC Department of Agriculture, SC Forestry Commission and Clemson PSA.

Skilled Workforce Development Initiative

PABC is in support of this initiative by the SC Trucking Association to promote careers in skilled trades for state funding of \$950,000 to be allocated to the State's Technical College System to be used to build and deploy a mobile skilled professional jobs promotion workshop.

Private Property Rights – Eminent Domain

Act 205 of 2016 prohibits a "private, for-profit pipeline" company from using eminent domain authority for a period of up to three years while a Petroleum Pipeline Study Committee reviews the issue. The Committee had until December 31, 2017, to report their recommendations to the General Assembly.

Business License Fees

Support a better integrated system of determining business license fees and a cap on the amount local governments can charge.

SC Conservation Bank

S.219 would reauthorize the S.C. Conservation Bank, a state agency that improves the quality of life in our State by providing competitive grants and leveraging funds to protect family farms and working forests.

(continued on page 3, See Legislative)

SC CHAMBER HOSTS SPOTLIGHT ON AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

Agribusiness representatives enjoyed networking at the SC Chamber of Commerce's 2nd Spotlight on Agriculture & Forestry in February. The event, which was held with the Forestry Association of SC, the SC Department of Agriculture, SC Farm Bureau and PABC, was sponsored by AgSouth Farm Credit and ArborOne Farm Credit.



Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers speaking at the event.



Angus LaFaye, Chairman Emeritus– Milliken Forestry and Cam Crawford, President and CEO, Forestry Association of South Carolina.



Margaret Spaulding, Sen. Tim Scott's office; Pat Calhoun, CEO, AgSouth Farm Credit and Ronnie Summers, PABC.



Jack Shuler, SC Department of Agriculture and Charles Vernon, ArborOne Farm Credit.

LEGISLATIVE (cont. from pg. 2)

Farm Bill

The Farm Bill is broad legislation directly impacting agriculture, forestry and SC rural communities. Consideration is given to this key agribusiness legislation on a 5-year cycle. Accordingly, 2018 should include debate on the new Farm Bill.

Labor Issues

Immigration (State/Federal)

For agribusiness to remain profitable and in business, we must have federal immigration reform that allows access to a stable and legal workforce.

Agribusiness Labor (State/Federal)

PABC opposes unionization of agribusiness labor and along with other organizations, will continue to study legislation enacted in North Carolina in 2017.

Water of the U.S. (WOTUS)

President Trump signed an Executive Order directing the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to begin the rulemaking process to rescind or revise the WOTUS rule. As this process continues, it is important that states have a clear rule that defines WOTUS based on objectively identifiable characteristics in order to reasonably administer the program within their borders.

Tax Reform

The current Administration is working on an overhaul of the federal tax system. PABC supports favorable tax reform legislation for agribusiness.

Highway Infrastructure (State/Federal)

PABC is in support of efforts to secure federal funding for South Carolina's infrastructure and also will be monitoring the progress of the infrastructure funding bill approved in 2017.

Energy Issues (State/Federal)

Offshore Drilling - PABC has not taken a position on offshore drilling. On the federal level, the current administration has authorized the development of a new oil and natural gas leasing plan that could include the Atlantic Coast. In response to this, the issue will be reviewed by the SC House Ag Committee with two bills proposed – one in opposition and one in support. PABC is in support of exploring alternative sources of energy that benefit the agribusiness industry.

Agribusiness Trade (State/Federal)

PABC supports both state and federal efforts to enhance trade relations regarding agriculture and forest products.



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OFFICERS

Randy Brown, Chairman
Cam Crawford, Vice Chairman
Sarah Windham, Sec./Treas.

STAFF

Ronnie Summers, CEO
Sandy Boozer, Exec. Assistant

We're on the web
Scagribusiness.com

CEO Message From Ronnie Summers

Coming from an almost 36-year career in the "for profit" world, I have thoroughly enjoyed the past year. However, there is a difference in a "for profit" work environment and a "nonprofit" setting. How do you measure a "nonprofit's" success? Somewhat easy in my old work life – you meet profit expectations or you don't. At the Palmetto AgriBusiness Council, success relates to how well we accomplish our MISSION, which is not easily quantified.

Often asked questions are - what does PABC do or what value does my company receive as a Council member? Admittedly, both long-time members and new members might struggle at times with an answer to this type questioning. So, ... lets review our Mission Statement –

"To define a common agenda for agribusiness (agriculture & forestry) and to advance that agenda aggressively in support of every component of the diverse agribusiness community and entities which support the agribusiness industry. PABC will serve as the private sector conduit for economic development, working in partnership with agencies and organizations committed to agribusiness expansion."

Simply put, it can be difficult to determine the level of success when the success is difficult to "measure". Looking back at 2017, your staff believes we were successful, BUT frankly, our "members satisfaction" is the true test as to whether PABC was successful or not. Please provide us feedback – criticisms, compliments, suggestions, etc. Your staff wants to meet your expectations. Accordingly, your communication is extremely valuable!



PABC WELCOMES NEW MEMBER WALKER GIBSON, AGR PARTNERS

Walker Gibson, Vice President with **AGR Partners**, has joined PABC as an associate member. AGR Partners provides capital though non-controlling equity and subordinated debt to cultivate long-term growth in leading agribusinesses and food companies. AGR seeks to add value by using its knowledge base, relationships and industry experience to support organic growth, strategic acquisitions and ownership transitions. Over the past four years, AGR has invested over \$280MM into seven outstanding companies. The goal of AGR Partners is to wisely steward its investor's capital by cultivating sustainable growth across the food value-chain.

Mr. Gibson has been working with the AGR team since its inception in 2012 supporting the underwriting and portfolio management of the business. Most recently at TIAA, he assisted with fundraising, structuring and the portfolio management of third-party products within TIAA's Private Markets group that focused on Farmland and other natural resources. Prior to joining TIAA, he was with Bank of America in its Corporate Treasury division as a bank funding trader. Mr. Gibson holds a Bachelor of Science in Financial Management from the Calhoun Honors College at Clemson University, and is a CFA charter holder. He lives in Charlotte, NC with his wife and two children.