The Partnership: The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities and the U.S. Forest Service are jointly funding the Southeastern Partnership for Forests and Water (Partnership), a collaborative effort to enhance forested watershed protection to benefit drinking water and local economies. The Partnership includes Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, and Texas. Future Partnership outreach will include Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

How did the partnership form? The effort builds on a 2012 meeting in Greenville, South Carolina of drinking water utilities, forestry sector leaders, state and local agencies, and conservation groups. The 2012 Greenville gathering began a conversation between these sectors and provided information about the importance of drinking water source protection, forestry perspectives, and creative financing tools for forested watershed protection.

What are the partnerships’ goals?

- Help maintain or expand healthy forests in drinking water watersheds
- Initiate and develop working relationships between state and local agencies, Rural Water Associations, forestry interests and conservation groups
- Identify watersheds and initiatives that have high potential for cooperative forest conservation, sound management and restoration
- Explore pilot projects to implement creative watershed protection strategies such as Payment for Watershed Services and forestry best management practices, demonstrating the interdependence of healthy forests and drinking water.

THE PARTNERS:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture: Forest Service (USFS)
- U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities
- State of Arkansas
- State of Georgia
- State of Kentucky
- State of South Carolina
- State of Texas
**How is the partnership pursuing these goals?**

To do this, the Partnership's contractor, Kitty Weisman, is working with forestry, drinking water and conservation stakeholders to organize planning meetings in southeastern states to share knowledge, available technical resources and assistance, and identify watersheds for further cooperative and collaborative action. Ultimately, the Partnership hopes to enhance existing watershed protection efforts in key areas that can benefit drinking water and forest lands, as well as the communities that depend on these resources.

**Additional Information**

For more information about the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, and the Southeastern Partnership for Forests and Water, see [http://www.usendowment.org/ntmseasternpartnership.html](http://www.usendowment.org/ntmseasternpartnership.html)