**Southeastern Partnership for Forests and Water
Coordinator (June 19, 2019)**

The Southeastern Partnership for Forests and Water (Partnership) seeks a qualified person to lead and coordinate implementation of the Partnership’s activities. The Partnership’s purpose is to facilitate conservation and sound management of the forested watersheds within the southern region through improved understanding and communication between the forest and water utility sectors. This has been accomplished primarily through regional coordination and state-wide partnership meetings. The general goals for 2019-2021 are to:

* Identify and engage individuals and organizations to advance the Partnership’s mission.
* Accelerate the implementation of the Partnership’s strategic plan.
* Facilitate the implementation of the Partnership’s communication / messaging strategy.
* Support research and development that advances the Partnership’s goals.
* Disseminate forest watershed related information to a wide range of partners.
* Explore creative watershed finance opportunities including green bonds, clean water state revolving funds, grants, and other mechanisms.
* Assist state forestry agencies with identifying state and/or local watershed coordinators. Deliver training and support to these individuals.
* In South Carolina, Georgia, Arkansas, and Texas, where multiple state-level meetings have already been held, enhance communication among water supply authorities and the forestry and conservation communities, and continue implementation of activities identified in earlier meetings, as well as develop new topics.
* In Virginia, Florida, Mississippi and other interested states that have not had multiple state-level organizing meetings, initiate or expand fledgling state-wide forest and water partnership based meetings. It is anticipated that the coordinator will help plan and host one to three statewide meetings per year.
* In each state that expresses interest and that is willing to provide resources, identify watersheds and/or collaboratives and initiatives with a high degree of potential success to achieve forested watershed protection and management goals in areas that supply public drinking water.
* Work with interested partners in each state to develop sustainable communication and collaborative networks between the forestry and water communities with minimal support from the Partnership.
* Work with partners in each to state to develop concise action plans for enhancing collaboration between the forestry and water communities.
* Assist interested states with establishing a sustainable process for communication and collaboration, such that this Partnership is no longer required to play a lead role.
* Assist partners in each state with fundraising and communication opportunities.

**About the Southeastern Partnership for Forests and Water**The Partnership was launched by the USDA Forest Service and the South Carolina Rural Water Association at a meeting in Greenville, SC, on March 29, 2012. At this meeting, more than 40 representatives from the water utility and forest sectors found much common ground regarding the importance of healthy, well-managed forests to the Southeast’s water supply. There was strong consensus that maintaining or expanding healthy forests in watersheds is a cost-effective and appealing strategy for helping ensure clean, abundant supplies of water.

Despite this broad agreement among the participants on the value of healthy forests for clean, abundant water, there are many challenges to maintaining forest cover in the Southeast, particularly in key watersheds. These challenges fall into three main categories:

Political: principally the lack of broad-scale planning and coordination efforts that link forest and land owners with water providers and users, and piecemeal zoning and regulations;

Financial: the lack of sustainable funding for forest conservation and management programs limits opportunities to secure healthy forests in important watersheds;

Communication: infrequent and ineffective communication between the forestry/landowner and water utility sectors limits opportunities for collaboration and coordination.

Meeting participants agreed that continued dialogue was essential, and that other sectors, such as agriculture and development, should be invited to the table.

The participants agreed that the next step in the process was to hire a coordinator to help advance the Partnership’s goals. This Coordinator works at the direction of the Partnership through an executive committee (South Carolina Rural Water Association, the USDA Forest Service, Texas A&M Forest Service, Georgia Forestry Commission, U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities). The individual presently being sought will fill this role.

For more information on the Partnership, visit [www.southeasternpartnership.org](http://www.southeasternpartnership.org).

**Compensation**The Partnership Coordinator is an independent contractor position administered by the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities. The initial contract is for up to $150,000 over 24 months, beginning as soon as a qualified individual is identified. Contract extensions will be dependent upon availability of funding and contractor performance. Progress toward goals will be reviewed quarterly. No office space is provided. The contractor will be expected to communicate regularly via email or phone with the members of the Partnership team. Part-time administrative support is available to the Coordinator. Regional residency is strongly preferred, but candidates who live outside the area but who have familiarity with the region and who have a strong network within the affected states will be considered.

**Necessary Skills**

* Superior written and oral communication skills;
* Proven self-starter with excellent time management and organization skills;
* Leadership in organizing and facilitating meetings;
* Ability to serve as a public spokesperson/representative of the Partnership;
* Strong analytical skills and knowledge of forestry practices, source water protection, and drinking water management issues.

**Desired Experience**

* Professional experience with drinking water and/or source water protection, and preferably with forestry issues, or a degree in one of both subjects;
* Professional experience working with a variety of interests on complex water and forestry projects;
* Experience organizing and conducting meetings of forestry, resource conservation or watershed professionals;
* Knowledge of a wide range of organizations who could be interested in cooperation or advancement of the goals of the Partnership.

To apply, please send a resume and cover letter to Peter Stangel (404-915-2763; peter@usendowment.org) This position will remain open until a qualified candidate is identified.