How to Enter

Create a poster or graphic illustrating the theme "Healthy Forests = Healthy Communities" and submit your entry by April 30th, 2021 for a chance to win cash prizes!

1. Research the traits and qualities of a healthy forests. How do forests affect you, your family, and the environment? How do you contribute to the health of a forest? What are ways everyone can help a forest stay healthy? Who is in your community and how do they benefit from a healthy environment?

2. Turn your research into a design! Your design **must** include the title "Healthy Forests = Healthy Communities."

3. Digital illustrations are acceptable. For complete rules and guidelines, scan the QR code below or visit: **https://bit.ly/2VdEo6H**

SCAN ME!

4. Submit a copy of your illustration by April 30, 2021. Contest winners receive cash prizes and more!

Who can enter?

- Richland County, SC K-12 Students

Students in other SC counties should visit **scacd.org** to discover whether their conservation district is accepting entries.

Sponsors

Richland Soil and Water Conservation District

Congaree National Park

SC Association of Conservation Districts

SC Department of Natural Resources

SC Forestry Commission

US Forest Service

National Association of Conservation Districts

HEALTHY FORESTS
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

2021 POSTER CONTEST

HEALTHY FORESTS = HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Trees and forests are critical to providing clean air and water, healthy soil, abundant wildlife habitat and valuable products we use every day. They also promote mental, physical, and emotional health and have a huge positive impact on local economies! Healthy forests—those which support a variety of plants and animals and provide the things humans and other animals need to survive—promote healthy communities in several ways.

Environmental Health

Healthy forests promote healthy communities by creating healthier environments. Trees reduce stormwater runoff, increase the soil's ability to absorb and store water, and prevent soil erosion—all of which lead to cleaner, healthier waterways and reduce flooding that can impact communities. Trees can also absorb and break down certain pollutants, and their shading and cooling effects make cities more livable and help reduce cooling costs and energy consumption. Through photosynthesis, which converts carbon dioxide and water into tree trunks, roots, and leaves, trees can help capture and store atmospheric greenhouse gases and mitigate the risks associated with climate change.

We are **bear-y** excited to see your posters!

Mental, Physical, and Emotional Health

Healthy forests also promote mental, physical, and emotional health. Studies indicate that spending time in forests reduces stress, improves mood, boosts concentration, and can strengthen the immune system. Attractive "green" environments (such as forests) enhance the motivation for physical exercise; exercise, in turn, reduces our risk for numerous illnesses. These "green" areas also promote community identity, social activity, and social participation.

Economic Health

Approximately 63% of South Carolina (and 66% of Richland County) is forested. Forestry and forest product industries provide more than 98,000 jobs and have a $21.2 billion impact on our state's economy. Forests also provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and tourism, and these economic sectors also make significant contributions to local economies. Healthy forests create jobs and economic opportunity; jobs and economic opportunity, in turn, promote community health!

The Challenge

Keeping forests healthy by replanting when trees are removed, inspecting trees regularly for signs of infection or infestation, identifying and removing non-native and invasive species, and preventing pollution of the air, soil, and water are all ways to promote forest—and community—health. Please join us in celebrating the connections between #HealthyForests and #HealthyCommunities by submitting your illustration by **April 30, 2021**!