

Speak up for South Carolina.
Speak up for waterfowl.
Speak up for the Conservation Bank.



DON'T LET THE SUN SET ON THE SOUTH CAROLINA CONSERVATION BANK

If we do nothing, the Conservation Bank's legacy will expire on June 30, 2018.

NOW is the time to tell your elected state officials to renew the Conservation Bank.

Please call, write, or email your legislator(s) and tell them why the Bank is important to South Carolina, to DU, and to YOU!



To find your state legislator, please visit <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/>

For more information and resources about the Conservation Bank, please visit www.ducks.org/sccb

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Conservation Bank

BANKING ON CONSERVATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA

QUICK FACTS

The South Carolina Conservation Bank (SCCB) is a historic, innovative, and bipartisan legislative achievement passed in 2002. The SCCB is the only statewide source of funding available for willing landowners and their land trust partners to conserve important lands. Through a competitive grant process, the Bank benefits drinking water supplies, provides public recreation areas and continues family farms and timber operations. Moreover, the Bank invests in our natural resource legacy at no extra cost to taxpayers. In fact, the Bank enables partners like DU to bring more federal and private conservation dollars into the state.

- The Bank has conserved **288,000 acres** of natural lands for the benefit of all South Carolinians.
- Funding for the Bank originates through a deed stamp on real estate transactions and **may only be used for conservation.**
- Through the Bank, DU and partners have protected and restored nearly **24,000 acres** of waterfowl habitat on public and private lands.
- DU and its partners have used **\$13 million in Bank funding to obtain another \$14 million** for waterfowl habitat on public lands in South Carolina.
- If we do nothing, the Conservation Bank's legacy **will expire on June 30, 2018.**
- **NOW** is the time to tell your elected state officials to **renew the Conservation Bank** and pass this legacy on to future generations.
- Please **call, write, or email** your legislator(s) and **tell them why the Conservation Bank is important** to South Carolina, to DU, and to YOU!



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SPEAK UP FOR SOUTH CAROLINA'S CONSERVATION LEGACY

WHAT IS THE CONSERVATION BANK?

In 2000, a conservation-minded group of individuals, businesses and organizations worked together to determine what lands in South Carolina (SC) were significant and how they could be protected. This effort, the Land Legacy Initiative, examined the threats to our natural resources and sought reasonable solutions. South Carolina's healthy waterways and abundant wildlife are one of the biggest reasons the state is so attractive to tourists and new business and industry. In turn, this makes development one of the greatest threats to these natural resources. Realizing that many threats could be addressed by preserving greenways, open spaces and parks acquired from willing sellers, these conservationists had to find the funding to conserve these natural areas and improve public access. In a bipartisan effort to fund conservation efforts, the South Carolina General Assembly passed the South Carolina Conservation Bank (SCCB) Act.

The bill was introduced by Senator Chip Campsen from Charleston. "As an avid duck hunter and Ducks Unlimited (DU) member, I am committed to conservation," Campsen said. "We must support the SCCB to ensure future generations are able to share our passion for waterfowl and waterfowling."

Sen. Campsen, chairman of the Senate Fish, Game and Forestry Committee, authored the SCCB Act and the South Carolina Conservation Incentives Act. These two laws have protected more than 300,000 acres through competitive grants and tax credits for conservation easements and public land acquisition. An avid hunter, fisherman and

conservationist, Campsen continues to be a leading advocate for the SCCB in the Senate.

Signed and ratified by the Governor in 2002, the language in the Act prevented Bank funding, which is derived from a portion of the State Documentary Fee Funding, from being placed in a separate trust fund until July 2004. That gave the 12-member Bank Board two years to set board policy, establish the grant application process and study other states' conservation efforts before the first dollar was spent.

ECONOMIC INVESTMENT

Since July 2004, the Bank has pursued its *mission of conserving significant sites that make South Carolina so special*. Importantly, the SCCB protects valuable natural resources and private property rights. Landowners participate voluntarily and may sell property or enter into a conservation easement while retaining ownership and traditional use of the land. Rep. Kirkman Finlay of Columbia appreciates the willingness of landowners to protect the natural resources we all enjoy and the ability of the Bank to make it possible to pass those resources down to future generations.

"As a legislator, farmer, citizen and hunter, I believe the SCCB is the most important piece of legislation we have ever passed for conservation. The Bank allows families, farmers and small businesses to continue using their land in its traditional way while protecting it for the future citizens of our state," Finlay said. As a landowner and private citizen activist, Finlay worked aggressively in the original efforts to convince the General Assembly to create the SCCB, and he has remained an articulate voice in the House by supporting full funding for the Bank.

For South Carolina to continue attracting new businesses and building a quality workforce, the state's natural resources and landscapes must be protected. Sen. Hugh Leatherman of Florence recognizes the importance of clean water and public lands to the economy of the state.

"Out of all the tasks of my service, I am most proud of helping to bring good jobs to South Carolina," Leatherman said. "I hear consistently from companies that have joined our state, like

Boeing, Honda, Fuji, Michelin, Continental, Volvo and others, that they choose South Carolina because of our hard workers and our tremendous quality of life." As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and president pro-tem of the Senate, Leatherman has provided the highest leadership support for full funding of the Bank since its passage. Without his unwavering support, Bank resources may have waned, and many critical conservation opportunities would have been lost.

MAGNIFYING CONSERVATION

The SCCB is the only statewide source of funding available for willing landowners and their land trust partners to conserve important lands. The Bank's projects benefit drinking water supplies, provide public recreation areas and continue family farms and timber operations. Moreover, the Bank *invests in our natural resource legacy at no extra cost to taxpayers*. In fact, the Bank enables partners like DU to bring more dollars into the state. DU often uses the dollars invested in forever protecting critical habitat on private properties and matches them with federal and private dollars. This process enables DU to secure public lands and enhance public hunting opportunities in the state. Because of the SCCB, DU and its partners have secured more than \$30 million from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act for conserving South Carolina's wetlands over the last 10 years.

"By partnering with DU, the SCCB enhanced habitat and hunting opportunities on wildlife management areas such as Bear Island, Botany Bay, Santee Coastal Reserve, Donnelley, Yawkey Wildlife Center, Palachucola, Webb, Washo Reserve and Bonneau Ferry and private properties adjacent to these public areas such as the Annandale, Ashepoo, Fenwick and Nemours properties," Campsen said.

The importance of the match provided by the Bank and the properties it protects can't be overstated.

"The SCCB is an incredibly sound investment in waterfowl conservation, land protection and hunting opportunities for South Carolinians. Most of the restoration we do on public lands in South Carolina simply wouldn't be possible without the state and private match generated through Bank projects," Craig LeSchack, DU director of conservation programs, said.

Through the Fiscal Year 2016 application period, the *Conservation Bank has provided \$151 million* to conserve *288,000 acres* of forests, wetlands, urban parks, farmland and historic lands across

the state. More than *200 miles of river and creek frontage* have been protected. By leveraging these investments, DU has enhanced and restored 23,900 acres for waterfowl and hunters.

"I have always been grateful to the SCCB for the tremendous job it does in preserving our way of life. DU has amplified this effort, while at the same time protecting wildlife and creating opportunity for hunters and non-hunters alike to enjoy our natural resources," Leatherman said.

LURKING DANGERS

Despite its financial efficiency and conservation accomplishments, *there are threats to the Bank and all the future habitat conservation it will help us to deliver for South Carolina*. Funding levels are determined each year, and competing interests often try to divert funds to other uses. Because of the efficient use and leveraging of Bank funding, the loss of each dollar has a multiplied impact to conservation. Most troubling to DU, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and other conservation partners, the Bank's authorization will expire June 30, 2018. There are already discussions of channeling the funding elsewhere, which would eliminate our ability to leverage it.

DU and its partners are working hard to keep the SCCB a permanent and sustainably state-funded conservation solution. It is vital that every citizen, landowner and businessman understands the incredible conservation work made possible by the SCCB and that you support its continuation. *It is time for DU members and supporters to speak up in support of the South Carolina Conservation Bank.*



This new rice trunk water control structure on Bear Island WMA was installed by leveraging SCCB match to secure a NAWCA grant for the area.

The importance of the match provided by the Bank cannot be overstated. DU and the SCCB enhanced habitat and hunting opportunities on Bear Island, Donnelley, Botany Bay, Palachucola, Webb, and Bonneau Ferry wildlife management areas and the Santee Coastal Reserve, Yawkey Wildlife Center, and Washo Reserve.