

Heritage Trust Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
260 D Epting Lane
West Columbia, SC 29172

Thursday, October 16th, 2025 - 10:00 a.m.

Members Present

Dr. Oswald H. King, III (for Chairman
Campbell Coxe)
S. Frampton Morris, Jr.
Kevin Hunter
Rob Keck
Dr. Julia Krebs (via phone)
Julien Springs (via phone)
Brad Sauls (for Dr. Eric Emerson)
Clarke Thompson (for Harry Lightsey)
Chisolm Beckham (for Scott Phillips)
Ken Rentiers
Daniel Gambrell (for Duane Parrish, via
phone)
Dr. Mark Hartley (via phone)

Others Present

Allison Morris
Barry Kesler
Bill Marshall
Brian Long
Dawn Beaver
Elizabeth Miller
Fran Varacalli
Hunter Young
Jen Konarski
Jodi Barnes
Julie Binz
Keith Bradley
Ken Prosser
Kevin Ryan
Luke Allen
Megan Levinson
Sam Chappellear
Sean Taylor
Susan Porter (via Teams)

Call to Order

Dr. Oswald “Sonny” King called the meeting to order and provided the Freedom of Information Statement.

Welcome and Introduction

Mr. Ken Rentiers gave a welcome to the Board and everyone attending and confirmed the meeting had reached quorum.

Public Comment Period

Dr. Sonny King asked if anyone wanted to speak during this time. No public comment was made.

Approval of Minutes from August 14th, 2025 Meeting

Mr. Rob Keck made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the minutes from the August 14th, 2025 meeting as submitted. Mr. Clarke Thompson seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Items for Board Information

A) Better Together: The ACE Basin NERR and the St. Helena Sound Heritage Preserve/WMA: *Julie Binz, Director for Coastal Reserves and Outreach, Marine Resources Division, SCDNR*

Director Julie Binz provided an overview of the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR), detailing its importance for natural and cultural resources and its tenants of research, education, training, and stewardship. She also took questions from Board members regarding the health of our salt marshes, confirming the use of new technologies such as drones and high-resolution GPS mapping for monitoring.

B) Project Updates on Natural Heritage Preserves, Region 3: *Hunter Young, Region 3 Heritage Preserves Manager, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, SCDNR*

Mr. Hunter Young provided a comprehensive overview on the work being done at SCDNR's Natural Heritage Preserves, including at Aiken Gopher Tortoise HP, Congaree Bluffs HP, Shealys Pond HP, and Peachtree Rock HP.

Potential Conflict of Interest Statement

Dr. Sonny King read the "Potential Conflict of Interest Statement". No Statement was made.

Motion to Enter Executive Session

Dr. Mark Hartley made a motion that the Board go into Executive Session pursuant to S.C. Code Section 30-4-70(A)(2) to discuss requests for approvals related to Action Items A through C, and property acquisitions related to Action Items D through I. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to Close Executive Session

Mr. Rob Keck made a motion that the Board return to open session, and that the record reflect that no action was taken in Executive Session. Mr. Ken Rentiers seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Motions on Action Items A through I

A) Request for Approval: Dedication of approximately 1 acre encompassing the Historic Comingtee House Ruins within the Bonneau Ferry WMA to the Childsberry Towne Heritage Preserve into the Heritage Trust Program (Berkeley County):

Dr. Julia Krebs moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation from SCDNR staff, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant approval to dedicate 1 acre within the Bonneau Ferry WMA to the Childsberry Towne Heritage Preserve in Berkeley County, which encompasses the Historic Comingtee House Mill Ruins, and place it in the Corpus of the Heritage Trust program. Mr. Kevin Hunter seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

B) Request for Approval: Dedication of approximately 1 acre encompassing the Historic Rice Mill Ruins within the Bonneau Ferry WMA to the Childsberry Towne Heritage Preserve into the Heritage Trust Program (Berkeley County):

Dr. Julia Krebs moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation from SCDNR staff, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant approval to dedicate 1 acre within the Bonneau Ferry WMA to the Childsberry Towne Heritage Preserve in Berkeley County, which encompasses the Historic Rice Mill Ruins, and place it in the Corpus of the Heritage Trust program. Mr. Kevin Hunter seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

C) Request for Approval: Heritage Trust Funding for Public Access Project at Fish Dam Ford Heritage Preserve in Chester County:

Mr. Clarke Thompson moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation from SCDNR and the Director, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant approval for the expenditure of \$297,429 from the Heritage Trust Fund for the purpose of installing public access to Fish Dam Ford Heritage Preserve, located in Chester County. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

D) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary approval for approximately 410 acres in Aiken County (Aiken Gopher Tortoise HP/WMA – Keadle Bridge):

Mr. Rob Keck moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Director, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant preliminary approval and \$30,000 in Heritage Trust Funds to investigate the potential purchase of approximately 410 acres in Aiken County that may be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust program. Mr. Chisolm Beckham seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

E) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary approval for approximately 698 acres in Horry County (Waccamaw River HP-WMA – OSI-Duncan Todd):

Mr. Kevin Hunter moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Director, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant preliminary approval and \$50,000 in Heritage Trust Funds to investigate the potential purchase of approximately 698 acres in Horry County that may be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust program. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

F) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary approval for approximately 2,330 acres in Horry County (Waccamaw River HP-WMA – OSI-Murrell):

Mr. Kevin Hunter moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Director, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant preliminary approval and \$50,000 in Heritage Trust Funds to investigate the potential purchase of approximately 2,330 acres in Horry County that may be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust program. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

G) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary approval for approximately 524 acres in Horry County (Waccamaw River HP-WMA – OSI East Edge):

Mr. Rob Keck moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Director, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant preliminary approval and \$50,000 in Heritage Trust Funds to investigate the potential purchase of approximately 524 acres in Horry County that may be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust program. Mr. Clarke Thompson seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

H) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary approval for approximately 1,766 acres in Horry County (Waccamaw River HP-WMA – OSI West Edge):

Mr. Julien Springs moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Director, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant preliminary approval and \$50,000 in Heritage Trust Funds to investigate the potential purchase of approximately 1,766 acres in Horry County that may be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust program. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

I) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary approval for approximately 410 acres in Horry County (Waccamaw River HP-WMA – Rivers Oaks Addition):

Mr. Julien Springs moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and the Director, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant preliminary approval and \$30,000 in Heritage Trust Funds to investigate the potential purchase of approximately 410 acres in Horry County that may be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust program. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Other Items

Board members commented on the excellent, large acquisition of property in Horry County.

Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director of the Land, Water and Conservation Division, noted that the actions taken in today's meeting were substantial to the legacy of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board and thanked everyone for their work. He commented that the focus of the meeting's presentations aligns with the emphasis the late Jake Rasor always placed on the proper management of our properties. Dr. King also welcomed new Board Member S. Frampton Morris, Jr., to the First Congressional District seat and noted it was a good meeting to welcome him. Mr. Morris thanked the Board for having him.

Time and Place of the Next Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board was noted as February 12th, 2026. The location of the next meeting will be determined at a later date.

Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, Mr. Rob Keck moved that this meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board be adjourned. Mr. Kevin Hunter seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Allison Morris
Heritage Trust Advisory Board Administrative Assistant
Land, Water and Conservation Division
S.C. Department of Natural Resources*