

Background Information

Open space planning has been a concern of Horry County for many years. The County has experienced rapid population growth which has led to increased development activity and increased strains on our natural environment. This section describes the departments, boards and related planning efforts that the County has undertaken to identify open space needs and set priorities for preserving the quality of life for Horry County residents.

Horry County Departments and Boards

Parks and Open Space Board

The Open Space Board was created in 2000 and re-established as the Parks and Open Space Board in 2004. The Board was established to:

- promote the preservation of open space, scenic areas and vistas, greenways, squares or village greens;
- promote the protecting and conservation of environmental or natural resources;
- promote the expansion of quality open space for a wide range of recreational opportunities including playgrounds, playfields, plazas, parks, mini-parks, picnic areas, bicycle or hiking trails, or golf courses for all County residents;
- promote tourism emphasizing open space, recreational sites, and natural resources of Horry County;
- promote education, awareness and research relating to environmental and natural resources;
- assist in coordinating activities of volunteers, organizations, businesses and governmental agencies interested in the preservation of open space, recreational sites and natural resources;
- prepare and submit to the Horry County Council for consideration a proposed list of areas of open space, significant environmental and natural resources and recreational sites to be acquired, leased, preserved, protected, maintained or developed through a new Horry County Open Space Fund.

The ordinance also gives several criteria to use to list significant properties and addresses resources that need to be protected. These criteria include sites for the expansion of countywide recreational space, land for hunting, fishing, water access and trails, ecologically sensitive land, wildlife habitat, and areas of significant environmental and natural resources.

The Parks and Recreation Department

The Parks and Recreation Department in Horry County was created in November of 1997 to meet the immediate and long-term recreational needs of County residents. Their mission is to provide the highest quality of active and passive recreation by providing diverse programs and facilities to promote the mental, physical and social well being of residents. The Department's activities are funded through the County General Fund and the Maintenance Department currently dedicates staff for park upkeep. A special tax district in Socastee finances a separate community recreation fund.

Related Planning Efforts

1999 Comprehensive Plan

In 1994, the South Carolina General Assembly passed the "South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act", which consolidated existing planning legislation, scattered throughout the State Code, into one location. The Act required that all local governments with planning programs revise their comprehensive plans and ordinances to conform to the provisions of the Act by May 3, 1999. Horry County adopted its current plan on March 16, 1999. A Comprehensive Plan addresses seven subject areas: Community Facilities, Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Housing, Land Use, Natural Resources and Population.

In the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, natural resources and recreation are addressed in separate sections. Natural resources is a stand alone element and recreation is a component of the Community Facilities Element. This plan laid the foundation for several important strategies to natural resource and recreational planning. It led to creating the Open Space Board in 2001, initiating a recreation needs assessment and developing an Open Space Inventory that includes both permanently protected natural resources and recreational opportunities. Goals within this plan regarding natural resources included mapping natural resources, increasing cooperation between local governments and state and federal agencies to establish conservation areas, ensuring water quality through the conservation of the natural function of wetlands and waterbodies and supporting countywide programs to designate and preserve scenic vistas.

Several strategies used to accomplish these goals will be completed with the publishing of this Open Space Plan. These include developing an inventory of stream corridors, watersheds, wetlands, viewsheds, prime habitat, wildlife corridors, prime farmland, open spaces and Carolina bays. Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology, the Open Space Plan identifies areas along waterways and tidal wetlands for environmental easements and lands that would create linkages between wildlife corridors. Other recommended strategies from the 1999 Comprehensive Plan are to:

- establish a scenic vista program that identifies scenic viewsheds throughout the County and promotes the co-management of these areas by local community and conservation groups;
- coordinate efforts with local governments, landowners and conservancy groups to establish an urban forest management plan that promotes the County's reforestation goals;
- expand County efforts to coordinate the designation of conservation areas. Encourage conservation incentives for areas 10 acres or more through conservation easements, property tax adjustments and density adjustments.

The first goal of the 1999 Comprehensive Plan was to complete a comprehensive recreation study. This study was completed in the same year. Other goals and strategies for recreation include:

- acquiring additional open space and expanding the existing park system to meet the growing population.
- ensuring geographical equity in location of parks.
- targeting recreation expansion toward satisfying high demand for soccer fields, aquatic facilities and passive parks and trails.

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- identifying needs for the County's growing retirement population.

Envision 2025 Plan

Building upon the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, resident recreation needs are discussed along side environmental assets of Horry County in the Natural Resources Element of the Envision 2025 Plan. The actual recreational facilities are listed in the Community Facilities Element. The Envision 2025 Plan is an update to the 1999 Comprehensive Plan and is still in the development stages. This plan has not received approval from the Horry County Council. Policy and strategy recommendations described in this section have been adopted by the Envision 2025 Steering Committee.

The Natural Resources Element uses an environmental planning approach to describe ecological and environmental health. The Element goes into greater detail than the 1999 Comprehensive Plan to inventory natural resources by category—land, water and air—and updates pollution information. Major findings from this element conclude that the two greatest threats facing Horry County's natural resources are habitat fragmentation and stormwater run-off. The goals, policies and strategies reflect how conserving our natural habitats (preserving large tracts of land and securing linkages between tracts) will support greater biodiversity. The strategies encourage site designs that compliment the environment by supporting natural functions and decreasing our ecological footprint.

The plan recommends that a countywide Open Space Plan be developed in order to guide the creation of permanently protected, interconnected useable open space around other significant features and within residential developments. The Envision 2025 plan suggests that the approved Open Space Plan should be used to guide open space dedications and decisions regarding spending from the Open Space Fund. Additionally, the focus of natural resource conservation should be directed towards acquisition of large tracts of open space as well as tracts that can provide linkages between larger tracts. The goals, policies and strategies from this element recognize that there are many state and federal resources such as the Wildlife Conservation Plan that can be incorporated into future open space planning and that supporting state and federal initiatives to acquire lands for the Heritage Preserves and National Wildlife Rescue will only increase ecological diversity. Other strategies include pursuing federal, state and foundation funding for the acquisition of open space, exploring creative planning techniques to conserve important natural and scenic features and using the inventory and findings from the Open Space Plan to guide land use and development patterns towards areas where the effect on natural resources are minimized.

Other approaches recommended by the Envision 2025 Plan that apply to the Open Space Plan are:

- future decision making regarding natural resources should encompass watershed boundaries as well as political boundaries;
- buffer ordinances to protect riparian areas and jurisdictional and isolated wetlands (these areas would have potential to become linkages);
- cooperation between the County, landowners, and state and federal conservation programs to encourage greater participation.

Thus far, in the Envision 2025 process, recreational facilities have not been addressed. The Natural Resources Element tackles recreational need within the County. In order to

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ensure that the recreational needs of different geographical areas and age groups are recognized and met, the Envision 2025 Plan recommends prioritizing and implementing the recommendation from the Horry County Recreation Needs Assessment, seek grants to fund new recreational areas and programs, complete construction of the East Coast Greenway through Horry County and acquire property to increase public access to waterbodies in the County.

1999-2009 Recreation Needs Assessment Study

In 1999, the Horry County hired a consultant to complete a recreation needs assessment for 1999-2009. The study found that the rapid growth of our area had outpaced the County's ability to provide enough active and passive recreational facilities for these new residents. The Needs Assessment divides the County into four subdistricts and proposes different types of park facilities within each subdistrict. The facilities are grouped into park models which are community parks, district recreation complexes, civic parks and regional parks.

The Needs Assessment concluded that in 1999 the County needed four regional parks, two civic parks, eight district recreational complexes, 25 community parks and numerous additional single-purpose facilities. These numbers were conservative for 1999. A key issue addressed in this report is land acquisition. The study discusses the County's limited resources and stresses the importance of land acquisition when working towards achieving the recreation goals.

Goals in the assessment are based on three park objectives—local parks, regional parks and nature preserves. A goal was set for the County to provide 6.25 acres of local or close-to-home parks for every 1,000 residents. The ratio for the County in 1999 was 2.81 acres per 1,000 people for local parks. The study proposes that an additional 573 acres would need to be added to the recreation system in order to bring the local park ratio up to 4.67 acres per 1,000 people by 2009. Currently, there have been 132.49 of acres added since this report was published in 1999.

Local parks consist of community parks and district recreation complexes. A community park is optimally four acres in size, but can range from three and a half to fifteen acres. The recreation industry standard for a community park is one park per 2,000 people. These parks should be easily accessible to neighborhoods and geographically centered within safe walking and biking distance. They may be located within residential communities or at elementary or middle schools. The prototypical park contains a playground, soccer/football/multi-purpose field, softball or baseball field and three picnic tables and shelters. District recreation complexes are larger in size. Optimally, they range from 20 to 100 acres and the industry standard is one park per 10,000 people. These complexes should be located centrally within the park service area with consideration given to adjacent land uses, safety, access and land availability. Items included in a prototypical district recreation complex are a community center, gymnasium and areas for active sports such as baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, basketball and volleyball. Other possible activities include a swimming pool and passive recreation areas. This facility should include proper landscaping, adequate parking and maintenance facilities.

The assessment set the goal of 10.2 acres for regional parks per 1,000 people. Regional parks are approximately 300 acres in size and the standard for this type of park is one park for every 30,000 people. Activities in this large of park can be varied and

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provide a range of passive and active activities such as softball, basketball, tennis, nature trails, picnicking, boating and fishing. The park should be located in an area with unusual natural features or ornamental quality and within a reasonable driving distance to the area that it serves. The County currently contains one regional size park—the Myrtle Beach State Park.

The assessment notes the presence of natural resource conservation within the County. The state's Heritage Preserves and the National Wildlife Refuge are open for public use and passive recreation. The researchers suggest that the recreational possibilities within the Heritage Preserve should be explored and that the County should consider land acquisition near preservation areas that would support passive recreation. Civic parks, the park model used in the Needs Assessment, incorporate natural areas. A civic park is approximately 20 acres in size and usually located near a natural feature such as wood wetlands, lakes, rivers, etc. These parks are predominantly passive, but may include active recreations such as, bike trails, playgrounds, tennis courts, horseshoe pits and other non-organized activities. These spaces can also be used for public exhibitions, festivals or gatherings.

The final park model mentioned in the assessment is single-purpose facilities. These types do not fit any of the other models, but as such do fulfill recreational needs. They are parks and properties specialized for single purpose recreational activities such as a ball field, historic and archeological sites, nature preserves, marinas, boat landings, fishing facilities, canoeing and kayaking trails, golf courses and equestrian facilities.

Recreational needs continue to face Horry County as a quality of life. The County is the fastest growing county in South Carolina. From 1990-2000, our population rose by 36.5 percent when the overall state population increased by 15.1 percent. In the most recent estimates, Horry County population has increased by 10.7 percent from 2000 to 2004. The state's average for the same timeframe was 4.6 percent.

East Coast Greenway

The East Coast Greenway is a multi-use urban trail system extending from Maine to the Florida Keys. Horry and Georgetown Counties approved a master plan that identifies route options for users of the Greenway to traverse each county. Segments of the trail have been installed within Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach and Georgetown County. The South Carolina Department of Transportation is a strong supporter of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and has made them an integral part of current and new projects. Funding is available for Greenway projects through the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Zoning and Land Development Regulations

Requiring a developer of land in Horry County to provide open space is triggered during the development review process. Primarily, residential development, over commercial development, requires providing the most usable open space. This density threshold occurs when residential development exceeds four dwellings units per acre or one dwelling unit per 10,000 square feet. Within the Zoning and Land Development Regulations, open space is more comprehensively addressed as a section of the Land Development Regulations (LDR). Open space is also required in the Planned Development District (PDD) of the Zoning Ordinance.

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In the Land Development Regulations, open space is required once the density of the project exceeds its density threshold. Open space within a project can be achieved by providing a combination of common and/or recreational elements. At least 50 percent of the required open space for a project must be considered a recreational element.

If providing open space on site is unfeasible, the Land Development Regulations provide several options for the developer. Projects that use any of these options must be approved by the Parks and Open Space Board. The first option is a *land exchange*, meaning that the developer may mitigate the open space for a particular project at a different off-site location. Depending on the amount of open space acreage that is required, all or a portion of the land may be exchanged. The exchange is not required to be a 1:1 exchange. The second option is a *fee-in-lieu* payment. Instead of providing the required acreage of open space on-site or engaging in a land swap, a developer can pay the appraised value of the land requesting exchange. The appraised value is based on the value of the land in its fully developed state, either for residential or the intended land use of the proposed development. A project may combine a land exchange and a fee-in-lieu payment as a final option when providing open space. Monies collected through this process are placed in the Horry County Open Space Fund and appropriation guidelines are established in the Land Development Regulations.

Planned Development Districts (PDD) have open space requirements similar to the Land Development Regulations. A greater percentage of open space is typically required in these districts, but developers have greater density incentives and more freedom to either cluster or disperse density. All open space must be provided on site within a PDD and sidewalks and pedestrian pathway are also encouraged.

Open Space Inventory, Existing Infrastructure and Preserved Lands

A road system, water system or utility system is not built piece by piece, with no advanced planning or coordination between different system components and jurisdictions. These built infrastructure systems are planned, designed and invested in far in advance of their actual use. The same principles and approaches that are used for built infrastructure should be followed when looking at our open space network, our green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is the interconnected network of protected land and water that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources and contributes to health and quality of life. It is not intended to isolate people from nature by creating a separate network of open spaces just for wildlife. The purpose of green infrastructure is to weave nature into the community in a way that meets human recreational needs as well as maintains ecosystem health and function. (USDA Forest Service and The Conservation Fund, Green Infrastructure). It is the overall goal of the Open Space Plan to map our green infrastructure in a way that provides for long-term ecosystem health and function, meets the recreational needs of County residents and continues to accommodate growth in the region.

This section describes several environmental characteristics and physical attributes that make up Horry County's green infrastructure and is divided into Natural Systems and man-made systems. In order to create a comprehensive database and map using Geographic Information System (GIS), over 45 municipal, county, state, federal, utility and non-profit entities were contacted. The results show that approximately **42,600** acres were set aside for natural resource protection and recreation which equal about **5** percent of the land area in the County.

Natural Systems

Horry County is home to truly unique natural resources. Some of the County's distinct natural features include the sandy beaches adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean, meandering estuaries, the black waters of the Waccamaw River and the unique Carolina Bays.

From an ecological perspective, land is often organized into watersheds. A watershed is the land that water flows across or through on its way to a common stream, river, or lake. A watershed can be very large, draining thousands of square miles to a major river or lake or the ocean, or very small, such as a 20-acre watershed that drains to a pond. (USEPA, Principles of Watershed Management). There are eight basins in South Carolina. Horry County is in the Pee Dee Basin.

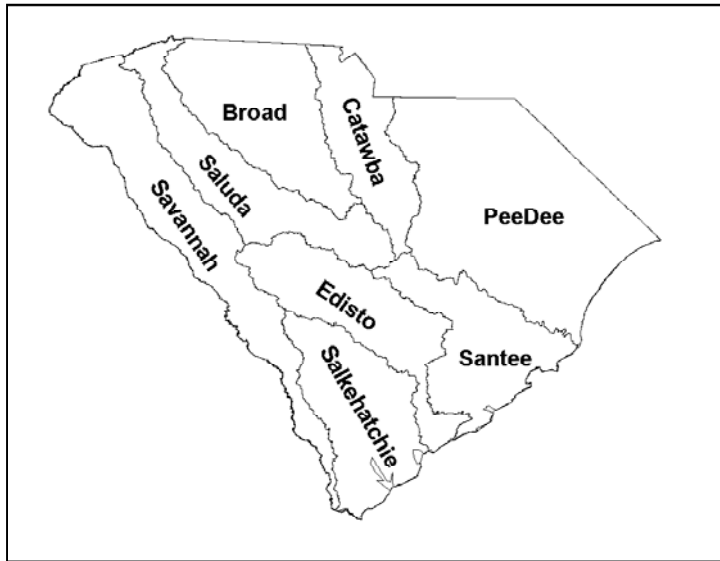
The Pee Dee Basin incorporates 74 watersheds and 4.8 million acres within the State of South Carolina (a portion of the basin resides in North Carolina). Within the Pee Dee Basin are the Lynches River Basin, the Black River Basin, the Pee Dee River Basin and the Waccamaw/Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Basin. There are a total of 8,075 stream miles, 15,984 acres of lake waters, and 25,195 acres of estuarine areas in the Pee Dee Basin. (SCDHEC, Watershed Water Quality Report, Pee Dee Basin, 2000)

The Waccamaw River flows across the South Carolina state line from North Carolina and accepts drainage from Kingston Lake and the Atlantic Intercoastal Waterway

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(AIWW) via Socastee Creek. The Waccamaw River then joins the Sampit and Pee Dee Rivers to form Winyah Bay, which drains into the Atlantic Ocean. (SCDHEC, Watershed Water Quality Report, Pee Dee Basin, 2000)

Figure 1. South Carolina Watershed Management Basins



Source: SCDHEC, State of South Carolina Integrated Report for 2004, Part II: Assessment and Reporting, 2004

Figure 2. Pee Dee River Basins



Source: SCDHEC

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The Pee Dee River flows across the North Carolina/South Carolina state line and accepts drainage from Thompson Creek, Crooked Creek, Cedar Creek, Three Creeks, and Black Creek. The Pee Dee River then accepts drainage from Jeffries Creek, Catfish Creek, the Lynches River Basin, the Little Pee Dee River, and the Black River Basin before draining into Winyah Bay. (SCDHEC, Watershed Water Quality Report, Pee Dee Basin, 2000)

In Horry County, a river's journey ultimately ends at the Atlantic Ocean. The beach along the Atlantic Ocean is the most recognizable and popular of all the natural resources in Horry County. The County is fortunate to have over 30 miles of sandy beaches and more than 24,000 acres of estuarine areas. These resources support wildlife habitat, recreation and serve as the primary draw for tourists from throughout the country.

Another component to green infrastructure in Horry County are wetlands. Wetlands are those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soils. (EPA- ACOE, Wetland Definition).

There are about 4.5 million acres of wetlands in South Carolina, about 23.4 percent of the state's land surface. Only four states have a higher percentage of wetlands than South Carolina. Horry County is approximately 50% wetlands. Historically, the value of wetlands has been misunderstood, resulting in the destruction of more than 50 percent of the United States' naturally occurring wetlands. In the past two decades, 84 percent of wetlands losses have occurred in the southeastern United States. (SCDHEC, The Facts on Wetlands).

Carolina bays are isolated wetlands in natural shallow, elliptical, depressions that are largely fed by rain and shallow groundwater. Researchers believe Carolina bays are 30,000 to 100,000 years old, yet scientists are not certain of their origins. They are found primarily in North and South Carolina and Georgia but range from Florida to Delaware. They fill with rainwater during winter and spring and dry during summer months. When left in an unaltered condition, these bays are generally considered to be an isolated, freshwater wetland. The bays provide many of the values associated with wetlands including stormwater storage, water quality enhancement, and habitat for many wildlife species. Each bay may range in size of less than one acre to more than 1,000 acres. Only 10% of the original bays remain. (NRCS, Unique Wetlands Make a Comeback in Horry County). More than 97% of the Carolina bays once found in South Carolina have been destroyed or severely altered. (University of Georgia, Carolina Bays Fact Sheet).

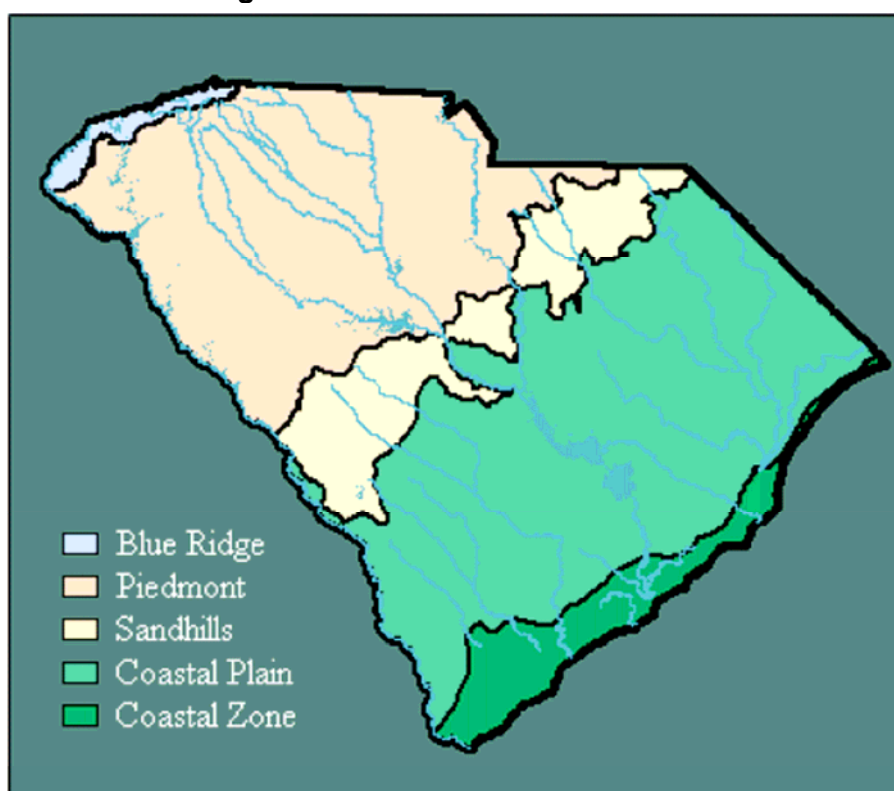
Green infrastructure also includes vegetation. The functions of vegetation include filtering pollutants from the air and water, providing shade and erosion control. Yet, one of the most important functions of vegetation is providing habitat for wildlife. In the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, habitats (or vegetation) are grouped into "ecoregions". Most of the County is located in the Coastal Plain Ecoregion. There is a small portion Coastal Zone that sits roughly east of US Highway 17.

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Typical characteristics in the Coastal Plain Ecoregion are grasslands, pine woodland and river bottoms. Grasslands include managed open areas such as meadows, pastures, golf course or expansive lands. Pine woodlands include all pine-dominated forest throughout the ecoregion. Canopy trees include the loblolly pine or longleaf pine. Dense shrub thickets of hollies and wax myrtles maybe found throughout these forests. River bottoms of the coastal plain include a variety of hardwood and hardwood-pine forests and are often characterized by the presence of the American beech (SC DNR, Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy).

The Coastal Zone Ecoregion contains the most diverse array of habitats. In Horry County, some of the main habitats are those related to maritime forests, estuarine systems, and ocean beaches and transition zones. Trees such as live oak, laurel oak, cabbage palmetto, southern magnolia and southern red cedar typify maritime forests. These forests contain shrub plants such as yaupon holly and red bay and wax myrtle. Estuarine systems contain a mixture of marshlands, exposed flats of sand and/or mud and tidal creeks. The prominent marsh plant is smooth cordgrass. Ocean beaches and transition zones consist of dune habitat that includes sand dunes, swales, flats and pools between dunes. Plants in this area include sea oats, bitter panicgrass, seabeach evening primrose and dune waterpennywort. Although there is no above ground vegetation, the importance of the marine ecosystem should not be forgotten as an aquatic habitat (SC DNR, Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy).

FIGURE 3. The Five Ecoregions of South Carolina



Source: SC Department of Natural Resources. Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. 2005.

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Floodplains perform important natural functions. These functions include temporary storage of floodwaters, moderation of peak flows, maintenance of water quality, groundwater recharge, erosion prevention, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Floodplain has come to mean the land area that will be inundated by the overflow of water resulting from a 100-year flood, a flood which has a 1% chance of occurring any given year (SCDNR, Regulations for Floodplain Management).

Horry County has both non-tidal and tidal floodplains, as well as coastal high hazard areas and coastal barrier resource areas. Approximately 177,070 acres, or 24 percent, of Horry County's total land area is composed of 100-year non-tidal and tidal floodplains. Approximately 3,090 acres, or 0.4 percent, of Horry County's total land area is composed of 100-year coastal high hazard area floodplains, and 2,520 of this classified as Coastal Barrier Resources Act areas (Horry County Comprehensive Plan, 1999).

The topography of Horry County is generally level to gently sloping, with elevations ranging from sea level to over 100 feet. According to the soil survey, the majority of soils in Horry County range between 0 to 6 percent in slope. As such, slopes greater than 15 percent are not a prevalent development constraint in Horry County. The majority of soils in Horry County are loamy sand and sandy loam with generally poor drainage characteristics. Along the coast is a thin strip of soils with thick beds of level or dune sand, which provide better drainage.

Man-made Systems

An inventory is an integral first step in open space planning and the information presented here should be used as a guide for future decision making. This narrative inventory has been organized by the eleven County Council Districts within Horry County in order to identify built infrastructure and distinguish some natural systems within each council district. Each district summary identifies the recreational facilities and boat landings, public beach accesses, where applicable, and any future plans for recreation. Next, the school facilities and community facilities are listed as well as a brief overview of significant cultural resources within that district. Green infrastructure is inventoried in each district, which includes a list of lands set aside for natural resources conservation and a list of significant hydrological features. Finally, major roads are listed as well as the number of miles of unpaved roads. Both the hydrological features and roadways can be used later in determining greenway connections. In future planning, when these unpaved roads are paved, certain roads can be identified to support multi-modal transportation and could possibly include a protected shoulder for biking or walking. The boundaries and contents of each council district are described below.

The corresponding maps categorize sites by function—natural resource conservation, active recreation parcels, cultural resources sites and vacant County owned property.

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District 1

District 1 is the main northern gateway into Horry County on US Highway 17. Travelers enter into the Little River community when they cross the state line. The northeastern edge of this district touches the Brunswick County, North Carolina. The contours of the Waccamaw River make up the northern boarder of this district. To the south, the district ends at the Atlantic Ocean. This district is resort and residential in character. The majority of North Myrtle Beach is located within District 1 as well as the Town of Atlantic Beach.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

Aquatics and Fitness Center

indoor pool, fitness areas, gymnasium, indoor basketball, racquetball courts

T. Craig Campbell Landing

Central Park

2 ball fields, 2 soccer fields, 4 tennis courts, walking trail, roller hockey rink, 4 basketball courts, community center, restrooms, concessions.

Cherry Grove Boat Landing

City Park

4 picnic tables, restrooms

Frink Park

2 picnic tables, walkway

Heritage Shores Nature Park

walking trails

Hill Street Park

tennis court, playground, picnic area

Little River Neck Park

pond

McLean Park

ball field, 2 tennis courts, walking trail, grills, picnic table, restroom

Second Avenue Boat Landing

Vereen Memorial Gardens

picnic area, gazebo, marshwalk, walking trails

Worthams Ferry Landing

Yow Park

picnic area, basketball court, restrooms

District 1 has 78 public beach access points.

Schools and public facilities include:

Atlantic Beach Community Center

North Myrtle Beach Elementary School

North Myrtle Beach Branch Library

Stevens Crossroads Library

Little River has a long history. It is believed that the first settlement of Horry County occurred here. However, most of remaining structures are from the 19th and 20th centuries. This district contains one of two swing bridges in the County. Evidence of Native Americans in the area can be found on Waites Island.

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The largest of the natural resource conservation areas in District 1 is the Winyah Bay, 1,058.5 acres owned by the Nature Conservancy. There are 488 acres of the Waccamaw Heritage Preserve in this district and 219 acres are owned by the State in order to protect the Little River Marsh Land. Other vacant lands include 43.8 acres of spoilage easements.

As one of the coastal districts in Horry County, water plays an important role. Some of the hydrological features include:

- Atlantic Ocean
- Dunn Sound Creek
- House Creek
- Hog Inlet
- Intracoastal Waterway
- Jones Big Swamp
- Little River
- Little River Inlet
- Mullet Creek
- Sheephead Creek
- Waccamaw River

Major roads in District 1 include US Highway 17, SC Highway 57, portions of SC Highway 9, SC Highway 111 and Ocean Boulevard. The East Coast Greenway, a national bike and pedestrian trail extending from Florida to Maine, traverses this district. A route through the entire county has been assessed. The City of North Myrtle Beach has constructed several segments of the Greenway. There are existing sidewalks in the urban areas and potential for sidewalks in new developments in District 1.

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District 2

The Waccamaw River is the northern and western boundary of District 2. The District extends to the southern edge of the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve on the district's western side. The Atlantic Ocean bounds the southern edge of this district. There are three municipalities in District 2: the City of Myrtle Beach, Briarcliff Acres and the City of North Myrtle Beach. Other communities include Nixonville, Wampee, Poplar, Shell and Hand. The district is characterized by a large amount of natural resource conservation in the northern part and a coastal resort environment east of the Intracoastal Waterway.

Recreational facilities and boat landings in District 2 include:

- 48th Street Park
 - passive park
- Briarcliff Acres
 - passive park
- Gray Park
 - passive park
- Hibben Park
 - walking trails
- Hootersville Boat Landing
- McCleod Park
 - playground, minishelter
- McMillan Park
 - botanical park, benches
- Red Bluff Boat Landing
- South Cabana Park/Women's Park
 - beach access, playground, gazebo, fitness trail

In this district, there are 49.5 acres that have been dedicated for future recreation as part of the Carolina Forest development.

There are 39 public beach accesses in District 2.

Schools and public facilities in this district include:
Arts, Science and Technology Academy

The historic district of Myrtle Heights—Oak Park is located in District 2 as well as the Ocean Forest Country Club. Both of these sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Several tourism destinations are located in this district.

District 2 contains two heritage preserves. Four hundred and thirty eight acres of the Waccamaw Heritage Preserve are found here as well as 2,920 acres of the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve. Ducks Unlimited has preserved 1,250 acres adjacent to the Waccamaw Heritage Preserve. The North American Land Trust holds 24.6 acres of oceanfront in conservation within Briarcliff Acres. Vacant lands also include 48 acres of spoilage easements and 2.5 acres of land conserved by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). Deed restrictions preclude structures, however, these lands have the potential for greenway connections.

Some hydrological features in District 2 are:
Alligator Pond

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Atlantic Ocean
Bear Creek
Big Bay
Buck Island Swamp
Cane Patch Bay
Cane Patch Swash
Chapin Pond
Deep Head Swash
Donnies Lake
Intracoastal Waterway
Jones Big Swamp
Lewis Ocean Bay
Long Bay
Long Branch
Long Pond
Mill Swamp
Singleton Lake
Singleton Swash
Sterritt Swamp—East and South Prong
Tilley Swamp
Waccamaw River
Withers Swamp

Major roads in this area include US Highway 17 Bypass and Business, SC Highway 90, Carolina Bays Parkway (SC Hwy 31) and Veterans Highway (SC Hwy 22). Other significant roads include International Drive and Ocean Boulevard. The East Coast Greenway has been designated in this area and the City of Myrtle Beach has constructed part of the path as well as constructed linkages to the East Coast Greenway. Sidewalks are prevalent in the urban areas of this district.

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District 3

Within District 3, one can find a range of characteristics. At the oceanfront, the district contains the County's core hotel district. Tourism continues to move back from the ocean to the Intracoastal Waterway. On the other side of the waterway, the character of District 3 changes and becomes more medium density residential. Portions of the City of Myrtle Beach and the unincorporated area of Carolina Forest are located in this district. SC Highway 90 bounds District to the north and the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve serves as the northeastern border. To the west, the district is outlined by US Highway 501 and to the southeast the district ends at the Atlantic Ocean.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

Alliance Inn Park

passive park

Anderson Park

beach access, swings, gaming tables benches

Balsam Street Park

playground

Bratcher Park

passive park

Breakers Park

walkway, benches

Buz Plyer Park

beach access, walkway, benches, game tables

Cameron Park

beach access, arbor

Canal Street Park

indoor pool, bathhouse, gym, weight room, game room, meeting rooms, banquet hall, 2 playgrounds, picnic area

Chapin Park

playground, picnic shelter, gazebo, arbor

Coastal Federal Field

professional baseball field, playground, concessions

Futrell Park

playground, pond, fishing dock, picnic shelter

Hurl Rock Park

beach access, arbor

Lyons Cove Park

playground, gazebo

Myrtle Beach Tennis Center

10 tennis courts

Nance Plaza

passive Park

Pepper Geddings Recreation Center

indoor pool, 2 gyms, fitness room, indoor track, 2 playgrounds, ball fields, stadium, skateboard park, picnic shelter

Pinner Place Park

playground, shelter, basketball court

Racepath Park

ball field, picnic shelter, grills, playground, basketball court

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Spivey Park

playground

Stuart Square Park

minishelter

Withers Swash Park

nature trail, picnic shelter, playground, covered dock, grills

Horry County also has 5.3 acres reserved for recreation named the Oak Forest Lane recreation site as well as 34 acres reserved for future recreation in the Carolina Forest development.

District 3 has 90 public beach access points.

Schools and other public facilities in District 3 include:

Carolina Forest Elementary School

Carolina Forest Middle School

Carolina Forest High School

Chapin Library

Grand Strand Senior Center

Myrtle Beach Primary School

Myrtle Beach Elementary School

Myrtle Beach Intermediate School

Myrtle Beach Middle School

Myrtle Beach High School

There is a host of tourism and cultural opportunities in this district. This district is home to the Pavilion Amusement Park (until redevelopment), Children's Museum of South Carolina and the South Carolina Hall of Fame. Within this district, one can find Broadway at the Beach, several amusement parks, and a plethora of tourist attractions. Portions of the Myrtle Heights and Oak Park Historic District are located here. Additionally, other historic features listed on the National Register of Historic Places are the Myrtle Beach Atlantic Coastline Railroad Station, the Chesterfield Inn, Pleasant Inn, and the Rainbow Court. Because of the proximity, creating greater opportunities to connect some of these features can be explored.

Natural resource conservation areas include 482 acres dedicated by International Paper Corporation and 5.5 acres owned by South Carolina Department of Transportation. Horry County Solid Waste Authority has 93.5 acres preserved for wetlands mitigation. Other vacant lands include 120.8 acres of spoilage easements.

The most prominent hydrological feature is the Atlantic Ocean. Other features in District 3 include:

Intracoastal Waterway

Socastee Swamp

Withers Swamp

Withers Swash

US Highway 501, US Highway 17 Bypass, Kings Highway (US Hwy17 Business), Carolina Bays Parkway (SC Hwy 31) are major arterial roads in this district. Other main roads also include and SC Hwy 90, Bob Grissom Parkway, Carolina Forest Boulevard, River Oaks Drive and International Drive. The City of Myrtle Beach has a developed grid

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system roadway network. The City's planning efforts also include sidewalks, designated bike paths and portions of the East Coast Greenway already constructed.

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District 4

District 4 has a unique shape. On the eastern edge, it touches the Atlantic Ocean as well as completely surrounds District 5. The District extends westward to the Waccamaw River and then south to the County line at Georgetown County. This district includes portions of the City of Myrtle Beach and portions of the Burgess Community.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

Barc Parc/Mallard Lake

dog park, benches, pond, bike trail, lacrosse field

Base Recreation Center

community center

Crabtree Gym

Enterprise Boat Landing

Midway Park

tennis and basketball courts, gym, fitness room, racquetball courts,
aerobics/dance

Virginia Marshal Park

nature trail, pond

Whispering Pines Golf Course

golf, driving, range, pro shop, snack bar

Warbird Park

airplanes, benches, swings

Both the City of Myrtle Beach and Horry County have vacant land devoted to recreation in this district. Horry County has 51 acres set aside for recreation of which 48 of these acres will be the South Strand Park. The City has 80 acres reserved for recreation.

Aside from the Myrtle Beach State Park, this district has 8 public beach accesses.

Schools and public facilities in this district include:

Horry-Georgetown Technical College—Grand Strand Campus

Lakewood Elementary School

St. James High School

Cultural opportunities in District 4 are diverse. The ability to connect to tourism attractions arises in this district. In addition to several other popular tourism destinations, the Freewoods Farm is a 40-acre cultural resource site in the district and the Franklin G. Burroughs and Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum is also located here. Oakwood Memorial Cemetery is another 20-acre cultural site.

An important attraction and natural resource conservation area is the Myrtle Beach State Park. The park is comprised of 288 acres. Sixty-three acres of the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge is located in District 4. Part of the Clemson University Experiment Station is also located in this district. Vacant lands include 101.75 acres of spoilage easements.

Some hydrological features in this district are:

Atlantic Ocean

Cedar Swamp

Collins Creek

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Crystal Lake
Intracoastal Waterway
Midway Swash
Prince Creek
Socastee Swamp
Waccamaw River

Major roads in District 4 include US Highways 501, 17 Business and 17 Bypass, SC Highways 544 and 707. Other significant thoroughfares are Tournament Boulevard, TPC Boulevard, Holmestown Road and Burcale Road. District 4 contains a regionally significant transportation feature, the Myrtle Beach International Airport. Like other districts in the County this district has many urban aspects. Several neighborhoods have sidewalks throughout the neighborhood. The City of Myrtle Beach has a well-developed grid system and sidewalks and bike paths exist. A section of the East Coast Greenway is dedicated to cross this district.

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District 5

Situated at the southeastern most corner of Horry County, District 5 contains the Town of Surfside Beach and the unincorporated community of Garden City Beach. The district is distinguished as a resort residential community. The district is bordered by Georgetown County to the south, Surfside Beach to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. The marshes of Murrells Inlet extend into the southern portion of this district.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

All Children's Park

2 playgrounds, picnic area, restrooms

Burgess Community Park

playground, basketball court, restrooms

Garden City (Elizabeth Street) Park

playground, picnic tables, grills, walkway gazebo, pier

Fuller Park

2 tennis courts, playground, picnic area, restrooms

Huckabee Recreation Complex

3 ball fields, football field, tot lot, picnic shelter, restrooms

Martin Field

ball field, multi-purpose field

Martin Park

2 shuffleboard courts, horseshoe pit, 2 bocce ball courts, 4 picnic shelters, activity building

Passive Park

picnic table, gazebo

Stanley Drive Boat Landing

This district has 48 public beach access points.

Schools and public facilities in District 5 include:

Burgess Senior Center

Dick M. Johnson Civic Center

St. James Elementary School

St. James Middle School

Seaside Elementary School

South Strand Senior Center

Surfside Branch Library

One of the most prominent features in District 5 is the Atlantic Ocean another would be the numerous salt-water marshes. Other hydrological features include:

Dogwood Lake

Floral Lake

Lake Elizabeth

Murrells Creek

District 5 is characterized as an urban environment and this is reflected in their road network. Northbound travelers enter the Horry County through District 5. The main thoroughfares include US Highway 17 Business and Bypass, small portion of SC Highway 707, Holmestown Road and Glens Bay Road. A path for the East Coast Greenway is designated in this district and the County has begun laying the groundwork

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for construction of the Greenway through District 5. The district has a couple of boardwalks that cross the salt marsh. Because of the urban make-up, resort nature and bountiful public beach access, there are greater opportunities for an interconnected pedestrian or non-motorized pathways system.

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District 6

District 6 is an interior council district of the County. It is comprised of Socastee and residential neighborhoods off of Forrestbrook Road. The Intracoastal Waterway bisects the district and meets the Waccamaw River here. US Highway 501 touches the district to the northeast and the Carolina Bays Parkway (SC Hwy 31) bounds the district to the north. US Highway 17 Bypass outlines most of the southern border of District 6.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

- Peachtree Boat Landing
- Rosewood Boat Landing
- Socastee Landing Park
- Socastee Yacht Basin Landing

Future parks include the Socastee Landing Park on Peachtree Road.

Schools and public facilities in this district include:

- Forestbrook Elementary School
- Forestbrook Middle School
- Socastee Elementary School
- Socastee High School
- Socastee Branch Library

District 6 contains the Socastee Historic District. The historic district is on the National Register of Historic Places and contains one of the two Intracoastal Waterway swing bridges in the County.

United States Fish and Wildlife owns 1,621 acres in District 6. These acres make up the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge. Vacant lands include 14 acres of spoilage easements. The majority of the Clemson University Experiment Station is also located in this district.

Although there are many wetland areas in District 6, some of the named hydrological features include:

- Intracoastal Waterway
- Socastee Swamp
- Waccamaw River

District 6 comprises of several major thoroughfares. SC highway 544 divides the district and other major roads include US Highway 501 and 17 Bypass, SC Highway 707, Forrestbrook Road and Dick Pond Road. This area is a mix of well-established and emerging neighborhoods. Sidewalks already exist along some major thoroughfares and are included in several of the neighborhoods.

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District 7

District 7 contains both rural and urban areas. Southwest Conway is located in the northern area of this district and the rural communities of Bucksport and Toddville are to the south. The Waccamaw River borders this district to the east. The southwestern and southern edge of District 7 are separated from Marion and Georgetown Counties by the Little Pee Dee River, Great Pee Dee River and Bull Creek.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

Bucksport Park

ball field, picnic shelter and tables, grills, playground, 2 basketball courts, restrooms, concessions

Bucksville Boat Landing

Collins Park

4 tennis courts, basketball court, picnic shelter, grill, playground, activity building

City of Conway Recreational Complex

5 ball fields, football field, playground and picnic area

Pitch Landing

Port Harrelson Boat Landing

Punch Bowl Landing

Sandridge Park

ball field, tennis court, picnic shelter and tables, grill, playground, 2 basketball courts, concessions

Smith-Jones Park

2 tennis courts, volleyball court, picnic shelter, grills, playground, swimming pool

Yauhannah Boat Landing

A future 10-acre park is planned for this district called Greenwood Park. A community center is also proposed in the Bucksport Area.

Schools and public facilities in this district include:

Bucksport Branch Library

Bucksport Senior Center

Conway High School

Conway Senior Center

Homewood Elementary School

South Conway Elementary School

Whittemore Park Elementary School

The Bucksport community is of historical significance to Horry County. During the 1800s, the area was marked by three prosperous lumbering mills—Upper, Middle and Lower Mills. Each mill supported a separate community, although few structures remain today.

There are a large number of acres dedicated to natural resource conservation in District 7. One thousand one hundred and forty-four acres of the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge are located in District 7. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources owns 5,585 acres of a Heritage Preserve known as the Bucksport Wildlife Management Area. The City of Conway has set aside 53 acres in this district towards conservation. Additionally, there are almost 2 acres of land conserved by the Federal Emergency

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Management Administration (FEMA). Deed restrictions preclude structures, however, these lands have the potential for greenway connections.

Some hydrological features in District 7 include:

- Bear Swamp
- Big Swamp
- Big Buckskin Creek
- Brown Swamp
- Bull Creek
- Cowford Swamp
- Crabtree Swamp
- Four-Mile Swamp
- Grier Swamp
- Great Pee Dee River
- Halfway Swamp
- Jenkins Swamp
- Lake Busbee
- Little Pee Dee River
- Maple Swamp
- Old Mill Lake
- Waccamaw River
- Wadus Lake

The road network in District 7 is both urban and rural. In the urban area of Conway, sidewalks can be found. The rural are a series of collector and sub collector streets that feed into the large arterial roads of US Highways 701 and 378. Other important roads include Cates Bay Road, the Pee Dee Highway, Pitch Landing Road and Bucksport Road.

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District 8

District 8 is an interior district that encompasses a large portion of southern Conway. It is roughly bound by the Waccamaw River to the west, the Carolina Bays Parkway to the south and US Hwy 501 to the east. Much of District 8 exhibits urban characteristics such as the urban center of downtown Conway. Other communities include Jackson and Ransoms Bluffs.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

The Atlantic Center

12 soccer fields, 2 rugby fields, restrooms

Conway Marina

Riverfront Boardwalk

boardwalk along the Waccamaw River and playground

Riverfront Tennis Center

5 tennis courts

Sherwood Mini-Park

playground and picnic area

Savannah Bluff Landing

Schools and public facilities in this district include

Coastal Carolina University

Conway Elementary School

Conway Middle School

Conway Branch Library

Horry County Museum

Horry-Georgetown Technical College—Conway Campus

Palmetto Bays Elementary School

Waccamaw Elementary School

There are planned expansions for the Conway Branch Library and the Horry County Museum.

This Council district includes many cultural opportunities. The Theatre of the Republic is located in downtown Conway. Additionally, there are two historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places—The Conway Historic District and the Waccamaw River Warehouse Historic District. The following structures are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

H.W. Ambrose House

Beaty-Little House

Beaty-Spivey House

Burroughs School

Arthur M. Burroughs House

Conway Methodist Church

J.W. Holliday Jr. House

Kingston Presbyterian Church Cemetery

Old Horry County Courthouse (Conway City Hall)

C.P. Quattlebaum House

C.P. Quattlebaum Office

Paul Quattlebaum House

W.H. Windbourne House

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As listed earlier, Coastal Carolina University is located in District 8. The University offers the County a location for NCAA Division II athletics and cultural opportunities through performances at the Wheelright Auditorium and art displays at the Rebecca Bryan Art Gallery.

District 8 contains 1,042 acres of the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge. The South Carolina Department of Transportation owns 2,159 acres adjacent to the refuge. The acreage is also known as the Bucksport Wildlife Management Area and is in the process of being conveyed to the Department of Natural Resources. Also adjacent to the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge are 182.23 acres belonging to the Historic Ricefields Association. These lands were permanently protected as a wetland mitigation bank.

The City of Conway has 32.5 acres set aside for open space in District 8. In addition there are 25.6 acres of land conserved by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). Deed restrictions preclude structures, however, these lands have the potential for greenway connections. The South Carolina Forestry Commission has a fire tower site in this district.

Some hydrological features in District 8 include:

- Big Swamp
- Brown Swamp
- Cross Swamp
- Kingston Lake
- Smith Lake
- Waccamaw River

Major Roads through this area are US Highway 501 and SC Highway 544. This district is also contains the crossroads of several roads such as SC Hwy 905, SC Hwy 90 and US Hwy 701. The City of Conway has an extensive sidewalk network within their urban core. Sidewalks can also be found on SC Hwy 544. Pedestrian and bicycle pathways connect the many buildings within Coastal Carolina University and Horry Georgetown Technical College.

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District 9

District 9 borders Columbus County, North Carolina to the northeast and the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway to the south. The Waccamaw River meanders through the eastern part of this district. Similar to District 7, District 9 is varied in make-up from rural to urban. The eastern portion of this district is characterized by resort development and is facing significant development pressure. A portion of North Myrtle Beach is included in District 9. The western section contains the incorporated town of Loris and maintains a rural, agricultural atmosphere. Other communities in this district are Wampee, Red Bluff, Longs and Stephens Crossroads.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

Chris Anderson Landing

Heniford Recreation Park

5 ball fields, batting cages, soccer field, picnic area and playground

North Myrtle Beach High Athletic Field

North Strand Park

soccer field, ball field

Red Bluff Park

ball field, picnic shelter, picnic table, grills, playground, basketball court, volleyball court, restrooms, concessions

Popular Park

ball field, picnic shelter, picnic table, grills, playground, basketball court, volleyball court restrooms, concessions

Watson Park

ball field, playground

The County has approximately 57 acres of vacant property designated for recreation in this district. Twenty-one acres are slated for use as a passive park adjacent to Loris High School.

Schools and public facilities in District 9 include:

Horry-Georgetown Technical College—North Myrtle Beach Off-Campus Site

Loris Branch Library

Loris Elementary School

Loris Middle School

Loris High School

Loris Senior Center

North Myrtle Beach Elementary School

North Myrtle Beach Intermediate School

North Myrtle Beach Middle School

North Myrtle Beach High School

North Strand Senior Center

This district includes multiple tourist areas of interest, such as Barefoot Landing and a ten-acre fire tower site.

There are over 2,485 acres of the Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve in District 9. Other natural resource conservation lands in this area include 45 acres in the Wetlands Reserve Program and seven acres owned by the South Carolina Forestry Commission. Vacant lands also include 39 acres of spoilage easements.

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Some of the hydrological features in this district include:

- Bear Bay
- Buck Creek
- Cowpen Swamp
- Jones Big Swamp
- Little River Swamp
- Long Bay
- Mill Branch
- Mitchell Swamp
- Pleasant Meadows Swamp
- Round Swamp
- Simpson Creek
- Skeebo Brook
- Waccamaw River

Major roads in District 9 include US Highways 17, 701, SC Highways of 9, 31, 66, 90 and 905. This district has several collector and sub-collector roads that feed into the larger arterial roads. The City of Loris has initiated several streetscape improvement projects that include sidewalks for the central business district. The East Coast Greenway travels through the eastern section of this district. Also with new development in the eastern portion of this district, there are greater opportunities for pedestrian pathways connections.

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District 10

Western Horry County is comprised of two council districts. District 10 is bordered by the Little Pee Dee River to the west, Columbus County, North Carolina to the northeast and SC Hwy 90 to the south. The general character of the area is both rural and agricultural; however, a northern portion of Conway is located within the district. Rural communities such as Allsbrook, Daisy, Duford, Floyds, Green Sea, Mount Vernon Pleasant View, Red Bluff are located within District 10.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

Adrian Tennis Courts

Green Sea-Floyds Tennis Courts

4 tennis courts

Green Sea Floyds Park

4 ball fields, playground, restrooms, concessions

John Causey Boat Landing

Kingston Tennis Courts

2 tennis courts

Lee's Landing

Mc Neil Park

3 baseball fields, playground, restrooms, concessions

Mt. Vernon Tennis Courts

2 tennis courts

Ricefield Cove Boat Landing

Reeves Ferry Landing

Waccamaw Community Park

3 baseball fields, playground, restrooms, concessions, picnic shelter, picnic table

White Oak Park

ball field

Schools and public facilities in this district include:

Daisy Elementary School

Finklea Career Center

Green Sea Floyds Elementary School

Green Sea Floyds High School

Green Sea Floyds Branch Library

Green Sea Floyds Senior Center

Horry County Education Center

Kingston Elementary School

Mt. Vernon Community Senior Center

The John P. Derham House, located in District 10, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.

This district contains three main nature preserves. Thirty-five hundred acres of the Little Pee Dee Heritage Preserve and 567 acres of the Cartwheel Bay Heritage preserve are situated in District 10. Additionally, the Playcard Environmental Education Center is a 242-acre natural resource conservation area devoted to educating students about the natural environment of this region. There are 2.2 acres of land conserved by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). Deed restrictions preclude structures, however, these lands have the potential for greenway connections.

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Approximately 485 acres in this district have been protected through the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program and 965 acres have been conserved through the Wetland Reserve Program.

Some of the hydrological features in District 10 include:

- Alligator Bay
- Bob's Branch
- Breakfast Swamp
- Cartwheel Bay
- Cushion Swamp
- Gapway Swamp
- Hellhole Swamp
- High Hill Swamp
- Honey Camp Branch
- Iron Springs Swamp
- Kingston Lake
- Kingston Lake Swamp
- Little Baxter Swamp
- Little Pee Dee River
- Little White Oak Swamp
- Long Branch Swamp
- Maple Swamp
- Mitchell Swamp
- Playcard Swamp
- Pleasant Meadow Swamp
- Popular Swamp
- River Swamp
- Skinner's Swamp
- Small Pond
- Springs Swamp
- Sterritt Swamp
- Stanley Creek
- Waccamaw River
- White Oak Swamp

Major roads in this district include US Highways 76, and 701; SC Highways 9, 22, 905 and 90. Green Sea Road (SC Hwy 410), SC Highways 19, 917 and 66 are other significant roads in this district. Numerous collector streets support these roads.

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District 11

District 11 is located in the west/ southwestern area of the County. This district is bordered to the west by the Little Pee Dee River. The district recognized by its rural character and many farms. The town of Aynor is located in District 11 along with the western edge of City of Conway. Other communities include Galivant's Ferry, Cool Springs and Ketchuptown.

Recreational facilities and boat landings include:

Aynor Ball Field

ball field, 4 tennis courts, restrooms

Bayboro Park

ball field, tennis court, basketball court, picnic shelter, picnic table, grills, playground, restroom, concessions

Dogbluff Park

tennis court, basketball court

Huggins Boat Landing

Hughes Boat Landing

Galivants Ferry Boat Landing

Gunters Lake Boat Landing

Jordan Lake Boat Landing

Morris Graham Recreation Park

2 soccer fields, 5 ball fields, picnic shelter, picnic tables, playground, restroom, concessions

Pee Dee Park

4 ball fields, picnic shelter, picnic tables, playground, restroom, and concessions

Pee Dee Tennis Courts

Pitts Boat Landing

Sandy Bluff Boat Landing

Over 25 acres in the Cool Springs/Aynor area are designated for future passive recreation.

Schools and other public facilities in this district include:

Aynor Elementary School

Aynor Middle School

Aynor High School

Aynor Branch Library

Aynor Town Hall and Park

John W. Dawsey Senior Center

Midland Elementary School

Pee Dee Elementary School

The Career Center

Technology and Academic Academy

Galivants Ferry Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is also located in District 11.

The main natural resource conservation area in this district is the Little Pee Dee Heritage Preserve, containing approximately 3,000 acres of the preserve. Thirty-four acres are

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protected through the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program and 31.7 acres are preserved through the Wetlands Reserve Program.

Some of the hydrological features in District 11 include:

- Black Creek
- Brown Swamp
- Brunson Branch
- Brunson Swamp
- Brunt Bay
- Chinners Swamp
- Dawsey Swamp
- Forney Branch
- Grass Bay
- Hannah Bay
- Hughes Lake
- Hunting Swamp
- Joyner Swamp
- Lake Swamp
- Little Pee Dee River
- Little Pee Dee Swamp
- Loosing Swamp
- Maple Swamp
- Mill Branch
- Mose Swamp
- Popular Swamp
- Reedy Branch
- River Swamp
- Savannah Creek
- Springs Swamp
- Tredwell Swamp

The character of the road network in District 11 is a combination of federal and state highways with numerous collector streets. This district contains the major thoroughfares of US Highway 501, US Highway 378, US Highway 701 and Veterans Highway (SC Hwy 22). Other major roads include SC Highway 319, Nichols Highway and Pee Dee Highway. The Town of Aynor is in the process of making streetscape improvements to their downtown core area. These improvements will include sidewalks

Inventory of Nature Preserves, State Parks, and Wildlife Refuges

This section describes natural resource conservation areas that have been permanently protected in Horry County. In the previous section, the locations of each are noted within the corresponding council district.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Heritage Trust Program was created in 1976 to preserve those natural features and cultural remains, which are quickly disappearing as the state's population increases in size. The program's purpose is to identify, evaluate, and protect the elements considered the most outstanding representatives of the state's heritage. There are currently four heritage preserves in Horry County. (SCDNR, Protecting South Carolina's Natural and Cultural Heritage)

Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve – This preserve is 5,387 acres, which includes 30 miles of protected river wetlands and bottomland hardwood forests. The property contains the best examples of the endangered plant species, dwarf fimbry. It also supports habitats for four other threatened plant species and contains mature hardwood forest.

Cartwheel Bay Heritage Preserve – This 568 acre preserve protects one of the few known Carolina bay-longleaf pine savannah complexes in South Carolina. The longleaf pine savannahs contain white fringed, yellow fringed and rosebud orchids, venus' fly traps, pitcher plants and a diverse array of wildflowers.

Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve – This 9,393 acre preserve contains a group of 23 undisturbed Carolina Bays. This preserve includes habitats for black bear, the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, the threatened Venus flytrap and a pond pine pocosin plant community.

Little Pee Dee Heritage Preserve – This 9,000 acre tract is in both Georgetown and Horry Counties. This property protects the rare sarvis holly, a mature floodplain forest, and scenic frontage along the Little Pee Dee River. The preserve includes Knife Island and four scenic oxbow lakes. (SCDNR, Heritage Preserves).

The Civilian Conservation Corp built the **Myrtle Beach State Park** in the 1930's making it the first state park in South Carolina. The park is 312 acres and includes a campground, cabins, a mile of beach, picnic areas, fishing pier and nature center. Park rangers use the nature center and park grounds as an interactive learning environment to provide a variety of curriculum-based programs for students throughout the year as well as extra programs for locals and tourists during the summer months. As a South Carolina Heritage Trust site, the park's nature trail showcases the last stands of maritime forests on the northern coast of the State (SC Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) established the **Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge** (NWR) in December 1997. The refuge was established to protect and manage diverse habitat components within an important coastal river ecosystem for the benefit of endangered and threatened species, freshwater and anadromous fish, migratory birds, and forest wildlife. The Refuge includes a wide array of plants and animals associated with bottomland hardwood habitats and provides compatible wildlife-

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dependent recreational activities. These activities include hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, and environmental education and interpretation. Located in portions of Horry, Georgetown, and Marion County, the Waccamaw NWR acquisition boundary spans over 55,000 acres and includes large sections of the Waccamaw and Great Pee Dee Rivers and a small section of the Little Pee Dee River. The USFWS is actively acquiring lands within this acquisition boundary from willing sellers and presently refuge lands purchased total over 9,700 acres (3832 acres in Horry County) (USFW, Overview, Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge).

Addendum to Open Space Inventory Report **Description of Methodology**

Establishing an inventory of existing open space and complimentary features is the first step in this type of planning process. The next is to define objectives and criteria to achieve the desired goals of creating long-term ecosystem health and function and meeting the recreational needs of County residents.

Using the Open Space Inventory, input from existing Horry County plans, and current research studies, the Parks and Open Space Board set two distinct objectives for green infrastructure within Horry County—one objective for natural resource conservation and one for recreational resource expansion. Those objectives are:

- Maintain and protect ecological biodiversity and watershed function for the health, safety and future economic prosperity of Horry County.
- Improve availability and access to recreational opportunities and cultural sites in all areas to improve the health and quality of life of all Horry County residents.

Geographic Information System (GIS) technology was used to create a database and analyze the criteria established for each objective. GIS makes it feasible to extrapolate data and pictorially communicate an analysis. This process—both for natural resources and recreation—used quantitative data to identify lands on a macro-level. The maps generated from the analysis show prioritization areas and should be used as a tool to guide individual parcel acquisition decisions.

Methods for Natural Resources

The following target areas were identified to meet the objective of maintaining and protecting ecological biodiversity and watershed function:

- Large, unfragmented tracts of permanently protected land, which serve important ecological function (500+ acres).
- Intermediary unfragmented sites (150-500 acres), which serve important ecological function.
- Linear areas to serve as greenbelts, water quality protection areas, wildlife corridors, etc. to link to the large and intermediary tracts.

Characteristics used to identify these natural resource target areas are below. These characteristics were captured using GIS and the parameters for each are found in the appendix.

- Areas adjacent and in close proximity to rivers, ocean, estuaries, or other navigable waterbodies
- Areas adjacent and in close proximity to preserved natural resource conservation areas
- Areas adjacent and in close proximity to known pollution point sources
- Areas adjacent and in close proximity to known impaired waterbodies
- Known Carolina bays
- Wetland soils
- Identified areas of rare, endangered or threatened plant and animal species habitat
- Identified areas of sustainable wildlife habitat

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- Identified areas of pristine, unfragmented forest resources
- All flood plain areas
- Prime agricultural soils

Results for Natural Resources

Each of the above criteria was given one point. Each parcel was then scored based on the number of criteria that they met. The data was then sorted by number of points received. There were 242 parcels identified that met 2/3 of the criteria. Using this information, Natural Resources Prioritization Areas were established. (The Natural Resource Priority Map is attached at the end of this document.)

Methods for Recreation

Improving the availability and access to recreational opportunities and cultural sites can be achieved by identifying the following items:

- Municipal and county recreation and park areas, boat ramps, public beach access areas, and public fishing piers.
- Culturally significant areas
- Schools, community centers, libraries, senior centers
- Known scenic views
- Known trails systems
- New areas suitable for additional recreational facilities
- Linear areas to serve as new walking trail systems, equine trails systems, bike paths, etc. to link the above listed parcels

Characteristics used to identify the sites for acquisition and linkage sites will include:

- Areas of known concentrations of residents
- Areas adjacent to existing parks, schools, cultural sites, community centers, senior centers, scenic view sheds, boat ramps, etc.
- Areas with access to a public roadways
- Vacant County owned parcels of land

Population is a driving force in determining future recreational demand. Thus, this objective relies heavily on population data from the US Census. Using the parameters established in the 1999 Recreation Needs Assessment and density data from the 2000 US Census, prioritization areas were identified for each park model type—community park, district recreation complex, civic park and regional park. The park model definitions make considerations for both rural and urban areas. Nodes were established in urban areas around densely populated areas and at major crossroads in rural areas. From these nodes, buffers were established based on specified parameters and are described in the table below.

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Park Model	Standard	Service (buffer)	Radius	Acreage Range
Community Park	1 park/2000 people	Urban— ½ mile Rural— 3 miles		3.5 to15
District Recreation Complex	1 park/ 10,000 people	Urban— 2 miles Rural— 5 miles		20 to 100
Civic Park	1 park/ 40,000 people	N/A		Optimum is 20 acres. Found adjacent to unusual land features
Regional Park	1 park/ 30,000 people	15 miles or more		100 to 1,000 acres

Results for Recreation

The following maps present prioritization areas for each type of park model. Excluded from this list are special purpose parks, which have no applicable standard or optimum size because these parks are areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities such as tennis centers, historic sites or boat landings. The Recreation Prioritization Areas were created using GIS software

The *Recreation Needs Assessment* gives particular criteria for each park model. From a countywide perspective, the numbers of parcels that meet these definitions are unmanageable. County decision makers can use the Prioritization Area Maps to identify general areas where population demand requires a particular park types. Combining the park model definitions and GIS technology can determine specific parcels that meet the criteria once the general vicinities have been established.

Prioritizing Land Acquisition

The above methods use scientific data to create a list of possible properties. Once these parcels have been identified on a macro level, the next step is to complete an analysis on the individual property to assure feasibility of the acquisition. This plan recommends that the decision-making bodies develop a ranking system that is quantitative, but also incorporates qualitative features.

Quantitative Analysis

The Methods section for both natural and recreational resources provide an objective set of quantitative data that can be used to determine a parcels suitable to the Open Space goals and feasibility for acquisition. Another important factor is cost. A financial evaluation will need to be undertaken to determine the value of the property, whether the county will be required to purchase the property, if the property is a product of a land exchange, if the sale of the property will result in a loss of tax revenues and the ability of the County to purchase the land.

Qualitative Analysis

An effective analysis includes elements that incorporate some subjective criteria. Hence, qualitative factors to consider discussing parcels for open space acquisition are location, linkage, proximity, accessibility, aesthetic quality, use and utility, threat of loss, rarity,

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flood plain protection, cultural and historic resources and manageability. Some of the factors are taken into consideration during the quantitative process, but further assessment in a qualitative analysis can be useful in the decision making process. GIS can be a useful tool to pinpoint specific parcels for acquisition. These maps should be updated as new population information is released from the US Census. Each of the specifically used criteria are described below.

QUALITATIVE

- a. **Location:**
Defines where is the property located in the County
- b. **Linkage:**
Defines the overall importance of the property in the larger greenway system and evaluates the property's ability to connect other segments of the system
- c. **Proximity:**
Defines the location of land relative to its surroundings (i.e. existing open space, neighborhoods, schools, cultural resources, etc)
- d. **Accessibility:**
Defines the relationship of the property to other transportation routes.
- e. **Aesthetic Quality:**
The property's physical characteristics and scenic qualities
- f. **Use/Utility:**
Defines the property's ability to support specific types of uses for passive or active recreation, scientific or educational purposes.
- g. **Within the Open Space Plan:**
Determines if the parcel has been identified within the plan or
- h. **Threat of Loss:**
Used to determine if the property is facing development pressures looking at the current land use and the pace of urban growth.
- i. **Rarity:**
Determination if the property contains threatened or endangered species and/or critical habitat.
- j. **Flood Plain Protection:**
Does the property contain flood plains? Are the streams on this property classified as impaired.
- k. **Cultural/Historic Resources:**
An evaluation if the parcel contains significant cultural or historic resources including buildings and landscapes
- l. **Manageability:**
Defines if the parcel can be managed by a public or private entity so that the land does not become a nuisance

QUANTITATIVE

- a. **Cost:**
A financial evaluation to determine the value of the property, whether the county will be required to purchase the property, if the property is a product of a land exchange, if the sale of the property will result in a loss of tax revenues and the ability of the County to purchase the land.

Natural Resource Priority Areas in Horry County, SC

