

**Ducks Unlimited, Inc.**  
**South Carolina Conservation Programs Annual Report**  
**Fiscal Year – 2006**

In South Carolina, Ducks Unlimited's wetland conservation program continues to grow and gain popularity, especially land protection. We are finding and responding to excellent opportunities for wetland conservation on both private and public lands. Our habitat conservation priorities continue to be the protection, restoration, and enhancement of coastal, forested and riverine wetlands. Collectively, these programs have benefited in the conservation of over 121,000 acres of various wetland habitats since conservation activities began for South Carolina in 1989.

The following is a summary of the activities and accomplishments of the DU South Carolina Conservation Program for the period July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006.

**South Carolina Public Lands**

To date there are 24 completed projects that have conserved over 27,000 wetland acres on public lands throughout the state. Projects completed in FY06 include the **Broad River WMA** in Fairfield County, which enhanced 49 acres of wetland habitat. This project involved construction of a cross dike and installation of a water control structure to enhance water level management. Partners included DU and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR).

A project was also completed on **Santee NWR - Pine Island Unit** in Clarendon County. This project consisted of enhancing 300 acres of wetland habitat by installing a levee and two water control structures. DU provided engineering and design services as well as financial support. Additional partners on this project include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

A 701-acre wetland enhancement project was completed on **Cape Romain NWR** in Charleston County. This project involved the installation of two rice trunks and three wooden riser structures in addition to ditch work. This project will allow the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to better manage water levels in the Jack's Creek and Summerhouse impoundments on Bull Island. DU provided engineering services and financial support for this project.

Also, DU continued its support of the **Governor's Wood Duck Box Program** organized by the SCDNR and the Historic Ricefields Association. DU has contributed over \$40,000 to this project since 2004. Future projects include enhancement of 375 wetland acres on the **ACE Basin NWR** and 4,600 acres of wetlands on the **Santee Coastal Reserve**. Informational requests on public land projects should be referred to Dale James, Regional Biologist ([djames@ducks.org](mailto:djames@ducks.org)) or Craig LeSchack, Director of Conservation Programs ([cleschack@ducks.org](mailto:cleschack@ducks.org)) at (843) 745-9110.

**Lowcountry Initiative – Land Protection**

South Carolina is where DU accepted its first easement in 1989. Since then, 94 easements perpetually protect approximately 86,000 acres of wildlife habitat in the Lowcountry and an additional 8,284 acres in the rest of the state. In FY06, we accepted donation of 6 properties that totaled over 5,700 acres. Easement opportunities will continue to expand as landowners become more aware of how to use this program as a means to protect the conservation value of their property. For more information on the Lowcountry Initiative, contact Badge Humphries, Director of Land Protection, at (843) 745-9110 or [bhumphries@ducks.org](mailto:bhumphries@ducks.org).

**Private Lands**

The SC Partners Program is a cooperative program to assist private landowners with wetland restoration and enhancement projects. Partners include DU, SC Dept. of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. In FY06, 742 acres of wetland habitat were restored and/or enhanced throughout the entire state.

**Total acres protected, restored, and enhanced in FY06 – 7,496**