



FRESpace Findings

Summer/Fall 2015

President's Report

2015 has been an interesting and very successful year for the Edisto Beach State Park and our volunteer group, FRESpace. More and more visitors have discovered our "heaven on earth" area within the ACE Basin in South Carolina's Lowcountry.

Several items of note that our group has achieved include ever increasing number of volunteers who have joined our efforts in The Great American Cleanup and our Beach Sweep. Thanks to Ida Tipton's leadership and enthusiasm, these programs have become models of excellence that other communities can only hope to develop.

Our fund raising project, the sale of FRESpace tee shirts, led by Bill and Iddy Andrews, was a total success this past summer at the Turtle Walk program.

Bill also coordinates the BLOWHARD project, which is probably the longest continuing FRESpace project. Volunteers work on a rotating schedule power-blowing the State Park trails every two weeks throughout the year to lighten the workload on our park's staff.

FRESpace gained two new cooperate sponsors in 2015. Thank you, EDISTONIAN and McCONKEYS for your commitment to helping improve our community through your support of FRESpace and our mission.

Every individual and business who is a member of FRESpace is interested in helping our State Park staff to ensure our visitors and residents can enjoy our beautiful area for many years to come. In 2016, I urge each of you to invite your neighbors and friends to join us in support for

our State Park, and the preservation of our wonderful way of life on Edisto Island. When you talk to your neighbors, encourage them to check our website as well as the Edisto Beach State Park's website.

John Rogers, President

Park Manager's Report

Greeting FRESpace Members,

What an unusual year we have had! From record number of turtle nests, record attendance levels during the July 4th Holiday, and the 1000 plus year flood in October, 2015 definitely will go down in the record books! Despite all the unusual weather and severe tides, the Park has continued to grow.



The Park has completed several large projects this year. The renovation of the second Beachfront Campground Bathhouse was completed in April. This facility got a much needed makeover, and we have received great feedback from the campers. The Park also partnered with the United State Marines Wing Support Squadron 273-Engineering Company. This was a great project. All the park got reworked and State Cabin Road got ditches just in time for the 24 inches we received the first weekend of October.

I would like to thank Brandon Goff, Assistant Park Manager, for his leadership at the Environmental Learning Center. His vision for updating the exhibits has been a great asset for the Park. Practically all exhibits have been updated in one way or another. I encourage everyone to stop in and see all the great things happening at the center.

Have you attended one of Ranger Ash's programs? If not, you are missing out on a great asset to the Park and Edisto Island. He continuously surprises me with new program ideas that keep guests coming back. Who would have thought we would have waiting lists for all the Survival programs this year! The Survival program series has been a great addition. Keep up the good work Ashby.

Portions of the Scotts Creek Trail and Spanish Mound Trail are closed due to damaged boardwalks and erosion from the "king tides." The Scotts Creek Trail is scheduled to be reopened by the first of the year. Plans for the Spanish Mound are still being discussed, but a plan should be in place by spring. Thank you BLOWHARDS for keeping the trails maintained!

Has anyone noticed the increased activity around the park and the Environmental Learning Center? What are all these school kids doing here? Programs! I am very pleased with the numbers of schools utilizing the Park. From special programs, campouts, and picnics, it's great seeing all the youngsters making memories. A huge thanks to Rosa Lee, Program Specialist, for helping keep the peace in all the chaos and taking such great care of Albert.

Another milestone has been reached last week. Friends of Edisto Beach State Park and ACE Basin NERR's Facebook site received its 1000th like! That is awesome to see such interest in the Park and Environmental Learning Center. If you are wondering what is going on around the Park, check it out on Facebook.

What a great Park to manage and call home! My gratitude goes out to all the staff and volunteers that make this place so amazing. Last but not least, thanks to all FRESpace members for their continued support and funding. I hope we can continue to make great things happen in 2016. See you in the Park.

Jon Greider, Park Manager

Interpretive Ranger's Report

Introductions are in order before we begin our year in review. My name is Ashby Gale. Some of you may remember me as the Program Specialist, but I have now stepped up as Interpretive Ranger for the park and Learning Center. I am pleased to announce that we have experienced a 20% increase in program attendance at the center this year (after a 54% increase observed the previous year)! If you were one of the 6,569 park visitors that attended a program this year, we thank you for your support.

We have a new member at the center, Edisto native, Rosa Lee, who joined us in May as our new



Program Specialist. We are glad to have her on board and look forward to all of the program development and expertise she brings to the table.

This past summer we welcomed a new Sea Turtle Specialist to our team, Meredith Hinton, who had previous sea turtle work at Botany Bay in 2014. Meredith, our summer interns (Sydney Bickerstaff, Kendall Lynch, and Laura Whalen), and our wonderful turtle volunteers helped manage the *largest year* for sea turtles our park



has ever seen, protecting a grand total of 178 nests! Through their hard work, we had over 13,000 baby turtles successfully make their way to the ocean. Swim on, guys! Meredith is furthering her passion for wildlife work at the Lemur Conservation Foundation, in Myakka City, Florida.

Two areas we have focused on improving this year are monthly program series and display renovations at the Learning Center. After a successful pilot run of programs in our spring Wilderness Survival Series, we continued the program with another series in the fall. These programs go in depth on topics such as primitive shelter building, fire by friction, primitive hunting, edible plants and fungi, cordage and knot tying, cooking with fire, orienteering, and much more. Keep an eye out for our spring 2016 series, with many popular topics brought back.



This fall, we introduced a series on animal dissection, led by our Program Specialist, Rosa. These classes studied squid, frog, and shark anatomy, with a fun time had by all! We are receiving extremely encouraging feedback from all participants and look forward to the potential of continuing these programs in the spring.

Throughout the year, our center has seen many new renovations and display additions. The shrimp boat has a brand new assortment of equipment including color radar, color depth finder, new ship wheel, lighted dash, working ignition, functional boat controls, and new lighting arrays. We also have a new set of reptile tanks in our back room housing corn snakes, a yellow rat snake, rough green snake, and green anoles. A new exhibit on crops of the ACE Basin is being installed as well, featuring specimens of indigo, cotton, and rice, and products made from each historic crop.

Perhaps the crown jewel of our newest exhibits is our joint display on Marine Ecology Research, funded by DNR, Edisto Beach State Park, and FRESpace. This 32" touchscreen display features interactive videos and activities for visitors to learn about research on horseshoe crabs, red drum, and water quality.

Thanks to funding from FRESpace, we have life size decals of a tiger shark and sea turtles mounted around the center, and a brand new (squirrel-proof) bird feeding station. While you are visiting to check these and our new exhibits, be sure to look at our baby alligator. He is a growing boy!

I am so proud of all of the hard work everyone has put into the center this past year and look forward to seeing what the next year has in store. It is always a pleasure to put faces to names, so when you stop by, please introduce yourself as a FRESpace member. As always, we are more than happy to answer any natural history questions you might have. Come out and play. See you soon!

Ashby "Ranger Ash" Gale, Interpretive Ranger

Save the Date

ANNUAL FREESPACE MEETING – April 16, 2016; 10:00 a.m.

Great American Cleanup – March 19, 2016; 9:00 a.m.; website – www.edistopride.org

Beach Sweep – September 17, 2016; 9:00 a.m.

www.frespace.org

APPLICATION

If you would prefer to receive information, minutes, newsletters, etc. by email, please advise. (It will help us save on postage and printing) Thank You for your support! Contact John Rogers at 869-1310

MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL

NAME _____

STREET / P.O. BOX _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

E-Mail _____

PHONE _____

Please circle your general area of interest and note any background, experience, etc. you might like to share.

Educational. Staff information desk at Interpretive Center, lead tours/programs, assist with school visits/field trips, assist in collection of educational material.

Resource Management. Assist in environmental studies/projects, to include dune stabilization, oyster reef monitoring, establishing riparian buffers and other landscaped areas and flora and fauna inventories.

Facility/Grounds Maintenance. Includes carpentry, electrical, plumbing, landscaping, trail, exhibit and aquarium maintenance.

Family Membership Donation (\$25) _____

Corporate Membership Donation (\$100) _____

Contribution (Thanks!) _____

TOTAL (Payable to FRESpace) _____

We are a 501c3 non-profit organization.

Please mail application to:

FRESpace
8377 State Cabin Road
Edisto Island, SC 29438
www.frespace.org

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
FRESpace ANNUAL MEETING – April 16;
10:00 a.m.