



FRESpace Findings

Spring/Summer 2025

President's Report— Mick Royston

Edisto Beach State Park and Frespace have made great progress this year, despite Tropical Storm Debbie. Debbie resulted in widespread damage throughout Edisto Island. Our two Park Campuses bore the brunt of much of her destruction. The Live Oak Section of the Park sustained severe damage, with trees toppled across the maritime walking trails and damaged Park cabins and campsites. The beach day-use area was severely affected, with debris covering the ground. Fortunately, no one was injured and major infrastructure received minor damage. EBSP staff worked relentlessly, not only to clean up and repair the damage here at Edisto Beach Park but also at other South Carolina State Parks.

A proud moment for the Frespace volunteer was their response to an emergency call to clean the debris covering the beach day-use area. Twenty-three volunteers showed up on short notice and worked to clear the debris in a single work session, so park staff could quickly reopen the beach campus.

With the exception of our stormy weather, this has been a great year for EBSP and Frespace. Frespace memberships have grown to 368 and our renewal rate continues to be high. Our corporate memberships remain constant at 25. We invite all Frespace members to show their thanks by supporting our sponsors: *Edisto Salt Water Tours, Positive Zenergy Massage Therapy, All Clear System, Swann Associates, Slo-Boat Construction, Cope Concrete, Green Boat Discount Liquor, Higgins Adjusting, Peaceful and Productive LLC, Edisto Beach Vacation Rentals LLC, Carolina One Real Estate/Kempson, Kennerly Surveying Inc., G&P Constructors, The Joggle Factory LLC, McConkey's Jungle Shack/Padgett, McConkey's Jungle Shack/Smith, Edisto Bike Rentals, Pressley's at the Marina, Sea Spirits, Ecological Associates Inc, Ace Basin Lock*

and Key, Todd's Convenience Stores, TWA Holdings, With These Hands Gallery, and Sea Island Group-Carolina One/ Kelly Hyatt.

Communication with our members and prospective visitors to EBSP has continued to strengthen through our newsletter, website, and our Facebook. Website visits are averaging almost 500 visits per month, and Facebook followers have increased to 7,400, a new high. We continue to maintain our rack card distribution, and rack card holders have been placed in most Edisto Beach establishments and are being refilled regularly.



In 2024, Frespace contributed over \$12,000 toward projects and amenities benefiting Edisto Beach State Park. These funds were derived mainly from membership fees. Funding included the purchase of sand fencing and posts to erect 54 sections of protective sand fencing along the shoreline, new slide sets and microscope for the ELC, a new microscope for the ELC, and new computer tables and chairs for the Wi-Fi room.

Website: www.frespace.org; email: edistofrespace@gmail.com

In an exciting new development this year, Frespace received a \$2,000 grant from the Edisto Lions Club, and a \$10,100 donation from members, Ned and Elizabeth Maner, high bidders for ELCEE, the Frespace entry in the Edisto Chamber of Commerce's Turtle Tide Auction. These additional funds allowed Frespace to allocate \$17,500 for new projects and amenities, including construction of over 300 linear feet of ADA compliant sidewalks at the beach day-use area, five new microscopes with stands for school group water studies at the ELC, a new turtle tub for the ELC aquatic display, and a new A/V projector and other upgrades for the conference room. Please see "FRESPACE ACCOMPLISHMENTS—2024" for a full list of funded projects.

Our annual meeting for Frespace membership is April 12, 10:00 AM at the ELC. Our by-laws require attendance/proxies of 15% of our members. If you are unable to attend, please email your proxy to edistofrespace@gmail.com no later than April 5 so the board can transact business at that meeting.

Thank you for your support. Together we can make 2025 our best year ever!
Mick Royston, President

Park Manager's Report – Kyle Bullock

Greetings FRESpace Members,
As spring approaches, park staff have been busy getting off-season projects completed. During this period the park was able to rent equipment to work on the closed section of Scott Creek Trail. There are still many trees that must be removed and the reconditioning of the trail to open that section. In the aftermath of Helene, our staff has been pulled to assist with recovery efforts at several parks throughout the affected areas of the state. This coupled with staff turnover has slowed our progress. We hope to have the closed portion open by the end of April.

This past winter the park has added new employees to the team. Caitlin Smith left to return to graduate studies, and Samuel Goodwin was promoted to Ranger II at Hunting Island State Park. The park hired Benjamin Skrobola and Hannah Kelly. Ben joins us from Devils Fork State Park. Hannah served as the Off-Park Ranger at Lake Wateree State Park.

Park staff along with FRESpace volunteers are working on the ADA sidewalk expansion project in our day-use area. This addition will increase access to portions of the park. The access mats will be repurposed to our campground beach accesses. Along with the sidewalks the park is installing an additional beach rinse shower tower that relates to the sidewalk system. This project along with others would not be possible without your support and funding through FRESpace.

As always, thank y'all for your continued support of the park. We look forward to seeing you out in the community and in the park.

Kyle Bullock, Park Manager

Interpretive Ranger's Report –Sam Foreman

Hi FRESpace!

Winter season visitations at the Learning Center have been slower than previous years. That has allowed us to focus on making changes to our existing programs and creating new ones. Additionally, it has allowed us to plan some upcoming events. We will have some new programs for spring and summer, which will focus on birds and fish in the area. Next month, we will have a Spring/Earth Day celebration on April 19 from 10 AM-1 PM and a beach clean-up immediately after. This will include live animals, fun activities, information booths and an "egg" hunt! Be sure to stop by and join in the fun.

Since our last newsletter, we have had a staff change. Piper has left to continue her education in North Carolina. I hired Austin Toscano as our new assistant interpreter. He comes from Connecticut and has a background in field work and ecology. We are excited to have him as a part of our team! Be sure to stop in and say hi the next time you are in the park.

For exhibits, we received the macroscope from the same company as the microscope we currently have. We are installing our new addition along with slide turntables in the next couple of weeks. Additionally, we have installed the slide holder and new slides for the microscope. All these updates are made possible from a grant that FRESpace received and FRESpace funds. Thank you to

FRESpace for always supporting improvement projects at the ELC!



Stay tuned for more exciting updates to the ELC. Hope to see you around in the park and at the ELC!
Samantha "Sam" Foreman, Interpreter Ranger

Membership – Ann Luckadoo

Currently, we have 368 family memberships and 25 corporate sponsors. This is an increase of 12 new memberships since October 2024. 204 of the memberships are Edisto Island addresses. Your membership is valid until the end of the month noted on the hangtag.

As a reminder, here are some of the benefits of membership:

- Entry to the State Park
- Boat ramp privileges at Live Oak Landing.
- Use of the picnic shelters, tables, and grills.
- Parking and restroom facilities at the beach.
- Admission to the ELC.
- Use of the Park trails for hiking and biking.
- Membership in an organization helping preserve Edisto's natural beauty.

To renew your membership or sponsorship, please send to FRESpace, P. O. Box 523, Edisto Island, SC 29438. You can also renew on our website through PayPal.

Volunteer Coordinator – Ron Steele

Originally several volunteer projects were scheduled to be completed in the state park last fall.

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However, due to damage from tropical storms here and in upstate parks, priorities changed. We were able to do two small projects in December. The first was to repair/replace storm damaged sand fence near Coots parking lot. After that project, volunteers moved to the park's shop area and prepared sand fence and fence posts for future installation.



Volunteer opportunities coming this spring include:

- Assisting Park staff install concrete form work for approximately 300 feet of new sidewalk in the beach day-use area.
- Installing sand fence along shoreline to help establish and protect sand dunes.
- Clearing trails of overgrowing vegetation and landscape maintenance around the ELC.

Frespace members will receive additional information on these projects via their email address of record. This information will also be posted on the FRESpace Facebook page.

Communications – Iddy Andrews

We have 7.4 K Followers on Facebook. (<https://www.facebook.com/FRESpace>). Our website had an average of 428 visitors in the last four months.

Please check the mailing label on the back of this newsletter to determine when your membership is scheduled to expire. It takes several weeks to process the memberships and get the up-to-date hang tags to you.