FRESPACE Findings

Fall/Winter 2026

President– Mick Royston

FRESPACE is an acronym for Friends of Edisto Beach State Park and Environmental Learning Center (ELC). Since our founding in 2002, we have relied on memberships to finance improvements for the Edisto Beach State Park (EBSP) and the ELC. The last three years, we have increased our solicitation of grants and significantly increased our contributions to the EBSP. Unfortunately, Frespace is unable to meet all the needs of the EBSP and ELC.

Why are additional funds needed now? Let's start with climate change. We debate the causes, but there is no doubt water levels and temperatures are rising, and our SC coastal parks are more susceptible than ever to flooding and storm damage. Repairing storm damage is expensive, and budgets for repairs spread over several years. SC State Parks are still completing repairs from Hurricane Mathew that occurred a decade ago. Costs have reduced funds for other park improvements.

Second, there are constraints on State and Federal Budgets. South Carolina is committed to supporting its state parks, but statewide budget considerations limit our legislature from supporting our state parks to the extent many would wish. Reduced Federal funding, especially reductions in FEMA funding, are also restrictive.

We also must include inflation, especially the cost of fuel. These costs eat into everyone's budget, and our state park is no exception. These factors shrink our park's buying power and reduce its outreach, that's why we are looking for a few special friends among the Friends of Edisto Beach State Park and its ELC.

If you are a Frespace member, you know how important EBSP and ELC are. EBSP offers some of the most beautiful and unique camping sites available in the state. The beachside day-use area features a pristine and undeveloped beach area for swimming and fishing, along with bathrooms and shower facilities, a playground, picnic tables and grills, and parking. The Live Oak campus of the park features the ELC, an interactive learning venue that introduces thousands of visitors each year to the wonder and beauty of the Low Country, as well as a boat launch onto Big Bay Creek, a fishing pier, camping, and miles of walking and biking trails.

In addition to facilities offered by the park, the EBSP plays a major role in protecting Edisto Island's unique biosphere through its outstanding loggerhead sea turtle program, efforts to protect nesting seabirds and endangered coastal plants, and dune restoration.

Many of our members have friends or neighbors who enjoy Edisto Island. Please encourage them to become Frespace members, or better yet, gift them a membership this Christmas. It's a great gift for forty dollars!

Frespace now offers you an option to make a tax-deductible donation to Frespace and specify how you would like the money used. A specified fund donation lets you make sure your gift goes to the project you want to support, the tur-

tle program or stipends for park interns, for example.

We have a robust group of volunteers that show up for scheduled work sessions. We offer fresh air, exercise, and a chance to get to know other members and park staff. Frespace takes pride in the extra value our volunteer work hours add to our financial contributions. Our annual Volunteer's Celebration and covered dish supper will be held at the beachside day-use area in November. Exact date and time will be announced by e-mail in October. All are welcome, so please try to attend this wonderful meal and celebration.



Members are always welcome at Frespace bimonthly board meetings. If you have an issue you would like to discuss, or you would like to become an officer or board member, please join us at our board meetings and get to know more about Frespace. Frespace will announce at least two fundraising events during the next year. Please follow our event announcements and support us if you can.

Anyone who would like to become a FRESPACE friend should contact me for more information at edistofrespace@gmail.com. I promise a quick and personal response.

Park Manager's Report – Kyle Bullock
Greetings FRESPACE Members,

Another summer season has come and gone at EBSP, and we hope you've had the opportunity to enjoy all the park offers over the past few months. While our day-use area experienced a slightly slower summer, our campgrounds and cabins continued to see strong occupancy, keeping the park bustling.

This spring, our staff completed resurfacing on portions of the Scott Creek and Campground Trails. To improve the longevity of these trails, we installed Terra-Cell units within the base material before adding the final layer of shell sand. We're pleased to report that these sections have held up extremely well, standing strong against both regular use and the weather challenges that come with life on the coast.

One of the highlights of this year's sea turtle season was the support provided by FRESPACE through the rental of a four-seat UTV for our turtle patrol team. Having this vehicle available made a tremendous difference, allowing staff and volunteers to travel throughout the park during patrols and conservation activities. Your generosity had a direct impact on our ability to carry out this important work, and we are sincerely grateful. Thank you for helping make another successful turtle season possible.

As we move from summer into fall, our staff will shift gears and focus on improvement projects throughout the park. Over the next six months, we'll be hard at work on:

- Repairing Scott Creek Trail bridge
- Improving ADA beach access by installing a sidewalk connection at the day-use restroom
- Resurfacing sections of the Spanish Mount Trail damaged by previous storms
- Installing glamping tents at two selected sites within the Beachfront Campground

As always, we encourage you to watch for volunteer opportunities. These events are not only a great way to give back to the park, but an oppor-

tunity to work alongside fellow FRESPACE members and park staff. Thank you for your support of EBSP. We couldn't accomplish as much without partners like you.

Interpretive Ranger– Samantha Foreman
Our busy season has flown by! Since spring, we upgraded the theater audio. The equipment was old and malfunctioning. Now, it is clear and crisp! This was possible through grants to FRESPACE.



We hosted ACE Basin Fun Day with DNR. Other events in the works are Bat Week and, our First Day Hike to kick off 2027. We are working on an ELC legacy project with the Edisto Island Preservation Alliance. This is possible through donations, along with additional funding from SCDNR. This is in the early stages of development.

While sea turtle nesting season is over, we have some nests yet to hatch through October. Our 2026 turtle tally was 291 nests and 299 false crawls, 3 of those nests were from a green sea turtle That is a first for EBSP!

Membership – Ann Luckadoo
We have 371 family memberships and 18 corporate sponsors. Please note the expiration date on your hangtag and on this newsletter. The membership is valid until the end of the month stated on your hangtag. Some of the benefits are entry to the Edisto Beach State Park, boat ramp privileges at Live Oak Landing, use of picnic shelters, parking & restroom facilities, admission to ELC, and use of the Park trails for hiking and biking.

To renew, send your check to FRESPACE, P. O. Box 523, Edisto Island, SC 29438. You can also renew or join our organization on our website through PayPal. Family memberships continue to be $40 for 1 year or 3 years for $120, and a corporate sponsorship is $100. Thanks for your support of FRESPACE and the EBSP.

Volunteer Coordinator – Ron Steele
Summer is less active with volunteer projects due to hot weather and busy state of the park. However, we weren't completely dormant.



We conducted litter sweeps of the day-use area prior to Memorial Day and after the 4th of July. Also, Hole Patrols were conducted each evening from mid-May through the second weekend of September. Hole patrols are in support of the state park's sea turtle program by filling holes and knocking down sandcastles that could impede both momma and baby sea turtles.

Communications – Iddy Andrews
We have 9.6K followers on Facebook, a big leap this year!
https://www.facebook.com/FRESPACE) and over the last year, we had 6791 visits to our website.