

Charleston County is Awarded FHWA Grants for The Edisto Island National Scenic Byway

The Edisto Island Preservation Alliance (EIPA) and its Scenic Byway Committee are pleased to announce a milestone achievement for the Edisto Island National Scenic Byway. The Federal Highway Administration has awarded 2011 Scenic Byway grant funding totaling \$904,780 to the Charleston County Division of Transportation for two major public improvement projects along our Byway.

The two projects include the construction of bike lanes and recreational creek access along the Scenic Byway. The first project is for a 3.6-mile extension of the existing 10-mile network of bicycle lanes that originate in the Town of Edisto Beach and currently terminate at the Colleton County line. The new bike lanes will start where the existing bike paths end -- at the intersection of the Edisto Island National Scenic Byway and Palmetto Road – and will accommodate bicycle and pedestrian usage along both sides of the Scenic Byway all the way to Botany Bay Road in Charleston County. Visitors to Edisto Beach will be able to bicycle or hike from Town center to the Botany Bay Wildlife Management Area, a major eco-tourism draw on Edisto Island, and a wild and natural area that thousands of residents and tourists enjoy each year. The grant awarded for the construction of the bicycle lane extensions was \$635,500.

The second project is for the construction of scenic overlooks and recreational creek access along the Edisto Island National Scenic Byway. Residents and visitors alike cannot resist pulling over along the Byway to photograph the views and stopping along the bridges to ply the creeks for fish, shrimp and crab. This project's purpose is to improve public access to these recreational opportunities, both passive and active, along three creeks that traverse the Byway. The project aims to:

- Provide parking and safe access to Sand Creek and Store Creek to allow for fishing access, kayak/canoe launching, and for enjoying the scenic views.
- Also to create a pullover area near the Russell Creek bridge intersection for enjoying the expansive marsh views.

The grant awarded for the construction of the recreational creek access improvements along the Scenic Byway was \$269,280.

Several years ago when the Edisto community participated in the development of the Corridor Management Plan, they set as their highest priority goals the creation of bike and pedestrian paths and the creation of safe public creek access. When EIPA took over the administration of the Corridor Management Plan two years ago, members of EIPA's board and Scenic Byway Committee worked to develop partnerships with Charleston County Department of Transportation Development and the Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission for assistance in pursuing these goals.

The Charleston County Department of Transportation Development will administer the grants and manage the design and implementation. Once completed the Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission will maintain these facilities. We are grateful to

these Charleston County leaders for making this community vision a reality. We would like to thank Molli LeMin, Steve Thigpen, and their team of experts at the Charleston County Department of Transportation Development, who led the grant effort and who will manage the projects. We are also grateful to Julie Hensley and Cynthia Montague at the Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission for their support and leadership in planning the future management of these new recreational facilities and access areas within the corridor of the Edisto Island National Scenic Byway.

For more information about the Edisto Island National Scenic Byway, please visit www.edistoscenicbyway.org or pick up a copy of the official Byway brochure, which is available to visitors at the Edisto Chamber of Commerce and at numerous other local and regional tourism outlets.