

Edisto Island Preservation Alliance

working to protect Edisto Island & Edisto Beach, SC

Quarterly E-Newsletter

P.O. Box 157

Edisto Island, SC 29438

Signs Along the Edisto Island National Scenic Byway

One of the fastest ways to ruin the scenic beauty of Edisto is to allow a proliferation of signs. Fortunately Charleston County... long before Highway 174 was designated a scenic byway... put in place reasonable sign restrictions for the entire county. While state scenic highway laws prohibit billboards, the county regulates virtually all other signage including temporary signage. A permit is required for ALL signs except real estate signs. The drawback is that the county has very limited personnel to enforce these regulations. It behooves us to identify signs which are non-compliant and to notify Dan Pennick, Planning Director, of possible violations. Such notifications can be sent to dpennick@charlestoncounty.org. The sign regulations are on-line in the county's ZLDR, though they are not particularly easy to interpret. When in doubt, let Mr. Pennick have a look. He knows we're trying to protect a particularly important part of Charleston County.

Litter Pick- p Funded for 2011

Thanks to donations large and small, the immediate crisis is past. In fact, thanks to some late contributions from companies like Edisto Sales & Rentals and Edisto Creations Salon & Spa, we actually have a start on what may be needed next year. Those funds designated for litter clean up have been kept separate on our books. They will NOT be used for any other purpose. We are working with the Chamber to ensure that this vital service continues. (To see all donors visit http://www.preserveedisto.org/EIPA_news.html)

Driving in the Marsh



Steamboat Landing Road June 2011

Driving in the marsh is illegal. It destroys the fragile ecosystem and turns our beautiful viewsheds into muddy roads. Please help us educate island visitors to keep all vehicles out of the marsh, and should they be uncooperative report them to SCDNR or the local sheriff's office. If caught there is a significant fine.

Report violators to Operation Game Thief (SC DNR's hotline number) 1-800-922-5431.

This picture was taken off Steamboat Landing Road where repeated violations have taken place. We have heard of similar violations on other roads near creeks. At least one violator on Steamboat became stuck, and several have been reported, warned or fined.

The most common question we have heard is "why are they doing it?" The only answer is that they are too lazy to carry their fishing gear or crabbing equipment, the few hundred feet from the road to the creek.

The Plantation Course at Edisto – proposed changes



(the following is a letter from EBPOA to its members, reprinted with permission)

An issue of concern has come up with our Town Council which we feel you should be fully informed on even though it is still a maturing issue.

At a meeting of the Planning Commission on March 22, 2011, Dwight Funderburk indicated a desire to "obtain an easement" for the purpose of demonstrating "how many units could be built on the golf course." His request was postponed after Mr. Funderburk failed to show up. Back on the agenda at the April 26 meeting, he again failed to show up, at which time all seven members of the commission voted to deny his request.

At the June 9 meeting of Town Council, Council accepted a rezoning proposal, as outlined in a revised PUD zoning map from Dwight Funderburk (see the attached copy of the map and acreage summary; I have also attached a copy of the current zoning map for comparison). Council also agreed to meet with Dwight Funderburk, Council members and lawyers for both sides to discuss an undisclosed issue. Iris Hill, Town Administrator, later confirmed to Tom Mason, The Press & Standard reporter for Edisto Beach, that the meeting is solely for the purpose of negotiating a new contract for "brown water" usage on the golf course. According to her, the zoning proposal will not be considered or discussed.

This proposal, submitted directly to Town Council, proposes to absorb 19.26 acres of the Plantation Golf Course for new residential development. Additionally, 1.62 acres adjacent to the golf course are proposed for a golf maintenance building. The applicant has indicated his interest is to get the proposed revisions approved, but only to facilitate getting a conservation easement or trust to reduce the tax consequences on the golf course and not to actually move forward with any actual residential development. The concern is that once the zoning map (the legal zoning document for a PUD as defined by State code) is changed, there is nothing to prevent the residential development from going forward if the developer chooses to do so.

The second concern is that this was submitted first to the Town Council and not to the Planning Commission for evaluation consistent with our PUD ordinance (86-144). This ordinance requires that both the Planning Commission and the Town Council be involved at both the preliminary plan and final plan development and approval stages. If Town Council evaluates and approves a zoning map change without following the Town ordinances, then Town Council would be in non-compliance with their own law.

The third concern is that Town Council has set up a committee of two of its members (Hutto and Mann) to meet with the applicant and his lawyer outside of normal Town Council meetings. The purpose of this meeting as outlined above is solely to negotiate a contract according to the Town Administrator. This, of course, will be followed closely. There has been no indication of what Town Council intends to do with the rezoning proposal.

The fourth and final concern is that the Town Administrator has indicated that the meeting will be closed to the public "because lawyers will be present." This obviously raises concerns from a public disclosure perspective. However, if the only issue considered is a renewed "brown water" contract, then this would not be a concern.

In conclusion this is a maturing issue. If Town Council does not approve and implement a zoning map change, then non-compliance with 86-144 is not an issue. We will keep you advised. We feel this issue is of serious concern to both the Wyndham property owners and Edisto Beach property owners outside Wyndham and needs our full attention.

Finally, your Board is considering contacting your legal council for guidance on whether there are legal concerns with Town Council actions to-date. Again, we will keep you informed.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate contacting us via email or by phone.

**Thanks for your support!
EBPOA**

Bay Creek Park – Farmers' Market Hours 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesdays



Big Bay Park is officially open. Visitors are using the dock to fish and crab, they are enjoying the picnic tables, and bicycle racks. Soon there will be playground equipment, and there are already port-o-lets. And on Wednesdays there is now a farmers' market in the old garage which is decorated with photos of Edisto Beach history.

The farmers' market is starting off fairly modestly with vendors selling such things as island photographs, blueberries and jewelry, but as word gets out more and more items will be for sale and traffic will pick up. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays.

Spread the word, drop by and visit. This is what we said we wanted the park to be used for; now we need to support it!

Botany Volunteers

With thousands of Edisto visitors taking advantage of Botany Bay WMA the need for volunteers is great. They explain the rules, hand out maps and passes, detail operating

hours (½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset) and answer questions particularly on holidays and during the summer and fall is critical! If you can take a 4 hour shift, even occasionally, please contact Bess Kellett, our volunteer coordinator, at 843-442-8140. We have two stations, the entrance kiosk and the beach tiki hut. Both need volunteers!

Edisto Community Association Awards SIX Scholarships

EICA, a founding organization of EIPA, just announced that they have awarded six scholarships to deserving island high school seniors. In order to be eligible students must be accepted to an accredited college, technical school or university; they must have a GPA of 2.5 or above; they must have superior ACT or SAT scores; they must have letters of recommendation from their principal and/or teachers, and they must submit a hand-written statement of why they desire the support. All of this year's applicants were screened by a committee led by Francine Morrison and met all criteria. five of the six had a GPA of 3.0 or above.

The winners are: Shaquoya Moultrie, who will attend Winthrop University; Kenneth Fisk, who will attend the University of SC; Tyquanda Legare, who will attend Voorhees College; Simone Gadsden, who will attend the Art Institute of Charleston; William Wightman Smoak, who has been accepted at the Citadel and Clemson University and whose decision is still pending; and Shyra Hutchinson, who will attend Voorhees College.

EIPA congratulates our sister organization which has invested over \$35,000 in the young people of Edisto Island since beginning this program.

Edisto Community Association Fights To Save Student Support Position

When you think of schools, you immediately think of teachers and in these difficult funding times you worry that class sizes are rising. Teachers are taking furlough days. At Jane Edwards some of the progress we've been making can be attributed to a non teaching job provided by Communities In Schools. This position, filled by an energetic and compassionate young woman named Amanda Fox, makes sure that children are ready to learn when they come to school. She works with parents and the community to see that conditions support learning. CIS tells us that each such position costs them approximately \$60,000 to fund and, like all non-profits during the recent recession, their funding is way down. Grant money that had helped fund this position has disappeared. Led by our principal, Ms. Susan Miles, the community has tried to raise a portion of the funds necessary to encourage CIS to continue this critical position at Jane Edwards. Roughly \$9,000 has been pledged including a \$1,000 grant from the Edisto Community Association. For a community of less than 3,000 people this is a significant accomplishment, but it may not be enough. We are currently waiting to hear if the position will be continued for next year. If you want to help, contact Ms. Miles at Jane Edwards School, 843-869-2124.

Progress Continues For The Edisto Island National Scenic Byway



**Thanks to the Charleston County Parks Commission, a new kiosk has been erected at the Dawhoo Landing, next to the McKinley Washington Bridge. While they will utilize the front for information like PRC rules, catch limits, boating safety updates and the like, they will allow the EINSB to utilize the back to post an enlarged version of our brochure and map.

**We continue to get wonderful comments about the EINSB sign and want to thank Bob Sandifer for leading the effort to clean up around it and look after the landscaping.

**We have already had to replenish the supply of EINSB brochures at one of the state's welcome centers on I-95. Obviously people are interested in our beautiful scenic drive.

**In May volunteers from the EINSB committee traveled to the Lowcountry Tourism Commission's welcome center and spent two days greeting tourists and educating them about the Scenic Byway and what it has to offer. Many thanks to Mary & Gary Dirr and Lee & Jim Wenthe. And thanks to John Fisher who has worked quietly to make all of these achievements possible. John continues to guide the work of the committee and provide liaison with the EIPA Board

Beach Renourishment Issues from The State Newspaper – Editorial – June 19, 2011

“Right first step on restoring beachfront law”

THE BLUE-RIBBON committee reviewing our beachfront management law took an excellent first step last week when it called for an end to loosening building restrictions on beaches that taxpayers have paid to renourish.

The near-unanimous vote, by the panel of business, political and environmental leaders, appointed by the pro-business Department of Health and Environmental Control, underscores our contention that no one could support the anti-environment, anti-taxpayer policy unless they have a personal financial stake in it.

At issue is a perversion of the 1988 Beachfront Management Act that the best satirist couldn't have dreamed up. That law was designed to prompt a gradual retreat from the beach. Seawalls, which protect the property immediately behind them at the expense of the beach in front and any unguarded land nearby, would go away. New construction would be built a few yards farther inland, behind a “setback line” that is recalculated every decade so it remains the same distance from the ocean. As erosion ate away at existing foundations, structures would be rebuilt farther inland.

Positioned safely back from the waves, the new structures would be less susceptible to storms — putting taxpayers at less risk for having to rebuild them through the federal flood insurance program and direct congressional appropriations. Over time, the public would pay less to subsidize private property and have greater access to the beach that always has been considered public property. A protected beach would be more attractive to the tourists who fuel our economy.

But lawsuits, hurricanes, amendments to the law and tepid enforcement weakened the protections. And most absurdly, regulators decided that if they have to move the setback line inland when the beach erodes, they also must move it seaward when the beach accretes — even if the accretion results from taxpayers spending tens of millions of dollars to pour sand on the beaches. As a result, our state is spending tax money to encourage risky behavior that destroys our natural resources and puts taxpayers at risk of having to spend even more money to reward the risk-takers.

On Tuesday, in its first significant decision, the Blue Ribbon Committee on Shoreline Management said the state should never again move building-restriction lines closer to the ocean. This is not the only part of the law that needs restoring, and the panel probably won't be so unified on other issues. Some members are not only uninterested in toughening the law but even want to ignore the centuries-old realities of beach erosion and abandon the retreat-from-the-beach policy. That's a terrible idea whose short-term benefits will be more than outweighed by the financial cost and the long-term damage it will cause to the beaches that are a backbone of our economy.

But that is a battle for another day. Whatever else the panel recommends, on this point it is spot-on. The DHEC board should endorse this change. And whether it does that or not, the Legislature should adopt it. Our beaches are too important and our tax dollars too scarce to squander either with such a nonsensical policy.

Read more: <http://www.thestate.com/2011/06/19/1863637/right-first-step-on-restoring.html#ixzz1Pj080uMH>

Data Trickles In from the 2010 Census

A few of the highlights are beginning to become available for Edisto Island and the Town of Edisto Beach. Island information is as reported on www.bestplaces.net Beach information is as reported on <http://www.cubitplanning.com>

Zip Code Overview for Edisto Island

As of 2010, Edisto Island's (zip 29438) population is 2,965 people. Since 2000, it has had a population growth of 28.97 %. Breakdown by **race** (from CLRSearch) is 867 white (36.92%); 1,363 black or African American (58.72%) Asian 8 (.34%) Other 93 (4.01%)

Breakdown by **ethnicity** Hispanic 48 (4.01%) non-hispanic 2273 (97.93%) Note: Race vs Ethnicity – according to the census, race and ethnicity are considered two separate and distinct identities. Hispanic or

Latino origin is asked as a separate question and categorized under ethnicity. In addition to their race and/or races, all respondents are categorized by one of two ethnicities which are “Hispanic” or “non-hispanic”.

The median home cost on Edisto Island (zip 29438) is \$330,550. Home appreciation for the last year has been -6.76 percent.

Compared to the rest of the country, Edisto Island's (zip 29438) cost of living is 28.60% higher than the U.S. average.

Edisto Island (zip 29438) public schools spend \$5,036 per student. The average school expenditure in the U.S. is \$5,678. There are about 7.7 students per teacher on Edisto Island (zip 29438).

The unemployment rate on Edisto Island (zip 29438) is 14.30 percent(U.S. avg. is 10.20%). Recent job growth is negative. Edisto Island (zip 29438) jobs have decreased by 6.59 %.

Edisto Beach Town Census 2010 Data - Population

According to Edisto Beach town Census 2010 results, the population of the area was approximately 414 people. From 2000 to 2010, the Edisto Beach town population growth percentage was -35.5% (or from 641 people to 414 people). 3.4% of the Edisto Beach town residents were under 18 years of age. Census 2010 race data for Edisto Beach town include the racial breakdown percentages of 1.0% black, 0.0% Asian and 0.5% Hispanic. Also, there were 2,181 housing units in Edisto Beach town, 10.6% of which were occupied housing units.

Coal Ash Update

SCE&G has appealed the decision of the Colleton County Board of Zoning Appeals not to allow the siting of a coal ash landfill on Round O Rd. near the Canady’s generating plant. A judge has been assigned, but no date or venue set. The Southern Environmental Law Center has joined the suit on behalf of the SC Coastal Conservation League and the Citizens for Colleton County, a group which led the opposition to the proposal. EIPA remains concerned about both current and future disposal of coal ash upriver from our island. We have studied the issues and followed the proceeding leading to the decision of the Colleton County Board of Zoning Appeals, but EIPA has not sought to be admitted as a party to the appeal.

EIPA Urges Your Support

Botany Bay Plantation Heritage Preserve and Wildlife Management Area



If you love history or nature, Botany Bay Plantation Heritage Preserve and Wildlife Management Area near Edisto Beach has it all. Located in the ACE (Ashepoo, Edisto, Combahee) Basin, one of the most distinctive wetland ecosystems along the Atlantic Coast, Botany Bay provides valuable habitat to numerous wildlife species and protects unique historical sites. While visiting you can see special structures on the National Register of Historic Places, walk on an undeveloped beach and observe a unique natural world.

Your tax deductible contribution to help manage Botany Bay Plantation will ensure its future as an extraordinary public wildlife area. To make a donation, please mail your check to:

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Attn: Chantal Rice
PO Box 12559
Charleston, SC 29422
Subject line: Botany Bay Donation



DNR

For tax deductible donations

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Botany Bay Plantation Heritage Preserve and Wildlife Management Area Donation

\$ _____ Date _____