

# Coastal Conservation League

## To Dredge or Not to Dredge

*The Savannah River will be placed on mechanical respirators if a 38-mile deepening proposal is approved.*

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## Port Planning in Need of Adult Supervision

**T**he question of whether to deepen the Savannah River to 48 feet is straightforward. The dredging will cost at least 625 million dollars; it will destroy significant habitat in the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge; it will threaten the drinking water supply for more than a million people living on both sides of the river, and it will not provide the enormous ships it's supposed to serve safe and efficient access to the Port of Savannah.



It would be hard to conceive of a bigger waste of money, even leaving aside the environmental damage.

Georgia is motivated to deepen the river by the opening of a wider Panama Canal in 2014. This will allow much larger ships, termed "post-Panamax," to call on East Coast ports. In the existential battle to claim bragging rights for moving more Chinese products through their gates, ports are fighting for federal funds to deepen their channels to accommodate these enormous vessels.

Savannah, Charleston's arch-nemesis, is now the second busiest port on the East Coast. They have a leg up on Charleston, having obtained federal funds for a deepening study and completed an Environmental Impact Statement on the project. Because of Senator Jim DeMint's categorical (and laudable) objection to earmarks, Charleston has not received the necessary \$400,000 in funding to begin their own deepening study.

The problem with the Savannah dredging is that the river is simply too long, too narrow, and the ocean offshore too shallow for post-Panamax ships to safely traverse it, dredged or not. In a world where facts and objective analysis mattered, Congress would decide which ports were the most suitable for the larger ships and direct deepening funds there. The reality is that Charleston, whether we like it or not, is far more suitable as a post-Panamax port, at least on the water side.

But Congress is not particularly impressed with facts and analysis. They are driven by political influence and deal-making, and are unwilling to confront the inconvenient truth that some ports are better for large ships than others. Like the S. C. General Assembly, Congress operates under the fiction that resources are unlimited and that we can do it all – deepen Savannah, deepen Charleston, deepen Jacksonville . . .

What we need is adult supervision of port projects, above the level of the states and without the politics of Congress. The model is the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC), which was established in the 1990s to decide which military bases should be maintained and which should be closed. During that exercise, Charleston leaders sent delegations to Washington with reams of data irrefutably demonstrating that closing the Navy Base would destroy the regional economy. The BRAC was not convinced, the Navy Base was closed, taxpayer money was saved, and three strip clubs on Spruill Avenue shut down.

It is popular wisdom that government closest to the people is best for the people. However, we arguably have the worst of both worlds, where huge sums of tax dollars are mobilized federally and then deployed by local, parochial, shortsighted politicians. The stimulus bill was a classic example. The State Transportation Infrastructure Bank (which has committed every last dollar it can borrow to building two new bridges to John's Island) is another.

The Savannah River dredging debacle could provide just the example we need to begin to reform these corrupt funding processes. It is up to us to realize that opportunity.

*Dana Beach*



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**Assistant Director** *Megan Desrosiers*

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**Project Manager** *Reed Armstrong*

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**Legislative Lobbyist** *Cathy Warner*

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### Advisors and Committee Members

*Paul Kimball*  
*Hugh Lane*  
*Jay Mills*

### Newsletter

**Editor** *Virginia Beach*  
**Designer** *Julie Frye*

P.O. Box 1765 ■ Charleston, SC 29402  
 Phone: (843) 723-8035 ■ FAX: (843) 723-8308  
 Email: [info@ccccl.org](mailto:info@ccccl.org)  
 website: [www.CoastalConservationLeague.org](http://www.CoastalConservationLeague.org)

P.O. Box 1861 ■ Beaufort, SC 29901  
 Phone: (843) 522-1800

1001 Washington Street, Suite 300 ■ Columbia, SC 29201  
 Phone: (803) 771-7102

P.O. Box 603 ■ Georgetown, SC 29442  
 Phone: (843) 545-0403

## Coal Ash Landfill Defeated in Colleton County

Meanwhile, ash disposal remains a serious problem for South Carolina, as long as we continue to depend on coal combustion for so much of our power.

Coal ash is the waste product left over from coal combustion, the process of burning coal to produce electricity. It is an especially dirty method of power production that poses myriad challenges to our environment and public health. Typically, coal ash is disposed of in surface ponds and landfills.

Most people didn't know much about coal ash until December 2008, when a coal ash disposal pond in Kingston, Tennessee broke, sending one billion gallons of contaminated material into the adjacent river valley. The deluge covered some 300 acres with toxic sludge, destroying homes and livestock, and poisoning two rivers. Two years later, the effects of this disaster are still being felt and the contamination persists.

The toxic content of coal ash varies, but is known to contain arsenic, lead, cadmium, chromium and selenium, some of the world's deadliest metals – metals that can cause cancer and neurological damage in humans, and kill fish and wildlife. Despite these health threats, coal ash is not regulated as hazardous waste in the U.S.; it is treated as household garbage, or what the industry calls “solid waste.”

The danger from coal ash comes from slow leakage from disposal sites. When



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**Deadly Metals** – A wet ash pond at SCE&G's power plant in Canadys, S.C. The toxic content of coal ash varies, but is known to contain some of the world's deadliest metals.

coal ash comes into contact with water, the toxins “leach” or dissolve out of the ash and percolate through the water, both at the surface and underground. These toxins can persist for more than 50 years. Coal ash is also dangerous if inhaled. Once airborne, fugitive coal dust, which is made up of tiny toxic particles, will enter the lungs and pass into the bloodstream. Workers and residents living near an ash landfill are particularly impacted.

Last year, the Environmental Integrity Project and Earthjustice identified 31 coal ash contamination sites across the nation, in addition to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) identification of 70 “proven and potential” damage sites. Three of the sites are in South Carolina, with two being SCE&G facilities – the Urquhart Station in Beech Island and the Wateree Station in Eastover.

At the Urquhart Station, arsenic and nickel concentrations were significantly higher than state drinking water standards. At the Wateree Station, groundwater around the coal ash

Coal Ash  
continued on page 20

The toxic content of coal ash varies, but is known to contain arsenic, lead, cadmium, chromium and selenium, some of the world's deadliest metals – metals that can cause cancer and neurological damage in humans, and kill fish and wildlife.

# TO *Dredge* OR *Not*

*The Future of the Savannah River  
in a Post-Panamax World*



**Big changes** could be coming to the Savannah River if the Georgia Ports Authority gets its way. Port officials have applied to the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for a permit to dredge 38 miles of the river to a depth of 48 feet – six feet deeper than the current shipping channel and four times the river’s natural depth. From Tybee Island all the way to Garden City, it will be a trench so deep it could swallow a four-story building.

**Wetlands Threatened by Deepening**  
*Tidal freshwater wetlands along the Savannah River provide rare and irreplaceable habitat for many breeding, wintering and year-round wildlife species.*

The purpose of the channel deepening is to accommodate the giant ships that will pass through the Panama Canal once the canal’s expansion is complete in 2014. These ships are the largest ever, capable of carrying between 8,000 and 12,000 containers each – three times more cargo than the normal container vessel.

The Panama Canal is the path traveled by most trade between China and the eastern United States. Ports up and down the East Coast are racing to deepen channels and expand facilities in order to gain a share of the anticipated increase in cargo once the new super-sized container ships can fit through the enlarged canal.



*Andrea Malloy*

# to Dredge



USFWS/Kirk Rogers

## Region's Freshwater Supply Threatened

The Savannah River provides more than 1.4 million Georgians and South Carolinians with their daily freshwater needs, and accommodates a total of 43 industrial outfalls. Water officials and industrial users along the river question the modeling and analysis that the USACE used for its draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS) released last November. Experts say that channel deepening will substantially raise the level of saltwater in the river, triggering a chain of negative consequences that the USACE analysis fails to account for.

Obviously, salt compromises the suitability of water for drinking and industrial use. Salt also corrodes pipes, leaching dangerous lead and copper into the water. And if climatologists are correct in their predictions of increasing periods of drought for the Southeast, Savannah River water users could find themselves facing serious freshwater shortages.

“We did not find the assurances we had hoped for in the draft EIS for the continued safety of our drinking water,” states Andrea Malloy, Interim Director of the Coastal Conservation League’s Beaufort office. “We know for a fact that the saltwater in the Savannah River will definitely move farther upriver if the channel is dredged to 48 feet. Our drinking water should not be up for experimentation.”

The Conservation League, along with several other environmental groups, fears that channel deepening could also affect the Upper Floridan Aquifer, which lies below the entire length of the 38 miles to be dredged. Thousands of people in rural communities (on both sides of the river) who draw their drinking water from wells could be affected, as saltwater intrusion lowers the freshwater table of the aquifer.

In fact, the Upper Floridan Aquifer has been gradually dropping for years, due to decades of over-pumping in order to accommodate increasing populations and water use along the coast. As water levels drop in the aquifer, communities are having to rely more and more on surface water from the Savannah River, making any impacts from dredging that much more critical.

## Environmental Costs Defy Calculation

**W**hile the dredging is estimated to cost some \$625 million, it is no exaggeration to say that the environmental costs of this massive alteration to the Savannah River are beyond calculation. Paradoxically, by attempting to create a deeper channel and greater water flow for these giant ships to pass through, the Georgia Ports Authority will be jeopardizing the drinking water supplies for more than a million residents living on both sides of the river.

Furthermore, the proposed deepening of the Savannah River will destroy 337 acres of tidal freshwater wetlands, an increasingly rare type of wetland that is far too complex to be replicated by man. Once lost, tidal freshwater wetlands can never be restored.

Already, freshwater wetlands have declined in the estuary from 12,000 acres to a current acreage of 3,000, due to more than a century of dredging. Though on a much smaller scale, the threats to the Savannah River from this latest deepening proposal could produce a similar situation to that of the Mississippi River, where massive dredging has wreaked untold havoc on the river’s water supply and natural flood control systems.

## A River on Respirators

Not only will the proposed deepening compromise drinking water supplies, it will also lower oxygen levels in the river. Less oxygen will harm wildlife populations and create a domino effect through the food chain and river system, even creating dead zones, according to Jim Murphy, attorney for the National Wildlife Federation.

Given the expected damage from lower oxygen levels after dredging, the USACE proposes to put the Savannah River on mechanical respirators that inject oxygen into the river to prevent harm to river life. The Environmental Protection Agency has already vetoed a similar type of “fix” proposed for the Mississippi River.

Sometimes called “bubblers” or “iron lungs,” the proposed two-story mechanical respirators remain unproven and are roundly dismissed by scientists. In spite of this, USACE is recommending ten mechanical respirators, and maybe more, to be placed in the Savannah River as mitigation for anticipated oxygen depletion.

Endangered species in the river that depend on reliable levels of freshwater and oxygen, such as Shortnose sturgeon, are of particular concern. In response, USACE has proposed “fish ladders” to encourage sturgeon to move farther upriver to reach freshwater. While fish ladders have proven successful for other species of fish, they have never worked for shortnose sturgeon.

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## The National Wildlife Refuge

Sitting directly across the river from the Port of Savannah is the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge. Its 29,000 acres of freshwater marshes, tidelands and bottomland hardwoods were designated a federal refuge in 1927, making it one of the oldest in the nation. Endangered species on the refuge include shortnose sturgeon, wood stork and South Indian manatee.

The proposed dredging will result in a loss of 10% of the refuge’s tidal freshwater wetlands, a type of wetland that has a very specific elevation and tidal range that cannot be replicated or restored by man. “Once tidal fresh marsh is gone, it’s gone,” says Chuck Hayes, supervisory wildlife biologist at the refuge. “The Corps has asked us repeatedly where they can go to create more marsh and the answer is nowhere.”

Moreover, hundreds of species of wildlife depend on the freshwater wetlands of the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge, according to Will Berson, formerly with the Georgia Conservancy. If saltwater intrudes on the refuge, Berson says, “It’s basically the difference between an oasis and a desert.”



Purple Gallinule

USFWS/Pope-Johnson Video



Ring-Neck Ducks

USFWS/Kirk Rogers

## If Not Savannah River, Where?


Of the Southeast ports, only the Virginia Ports Authority is ready for the post-Panamax ships. It's Norfolk port has had a depth of 50 feet since 2005. Charleston, which currently has a 45-foot channel, wants to deepen theirs to 50 feet. Port Everglades in Ft. Lauderdale and the Port of Miami are also aiming for 50. Meanwhile, Jacksonville is vying for a 48-foot channel, just like Savannah.

All of these port deepenings require hundreds of millions of federal dollars. Just the draft EIS to study the Savannah project took 14 years. At \$40 million, it was the costliest government study ever done on a proposed deepening of a U.S. harbor. The estimated cost of the Savannah dredging itself comprises 1/5 of the total USACE annual construction budget for the nation.

Certainly, the Southeast doesn't need six post-Panamax ports. With so many taxpayer dollars at stake, it would make sense for the federal government to compare all the East Coast ports and determine which would be the most cost effective and least environmentally damaging to deepen. Naturally, each state and locality is going to lobby hard for the tax monies, whether their option makes the most sense for the region or not.

Furthermore, many observers contend that the Savannah River is simply too long, too narrow, and the ocean offshore too shallow for post-Panamax ships to safely navigate, dredged or not. "In light of the questions being raised regarding the ability of the proposed channel to safely accommodate fully loaded post-Panamax ships, the stated rationale for this project is greatly diminished," says Chris DeScherer,

senior attorney for the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC), "especially when weighed against the substantial economic costs and environmental impacts."

The Conservation League, together with SELC, coordinated a review of the draft EIS by expert consultants. Their conclusion: "The Corps has simply failed to consider a sufficient range of alternatives for accommodating the anticipated larger class of container ships. The refusal to consider whether the federal government could deepen a different port in the Southeast more cost effectively and with fewer impacts on the environment is deeply troubling, especially in these difficult economic times when federal dollars are in short supply." 

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Go to [www.PortBarrel.org](http://www.PortBarrel.org) to follow the latest news and reports on the dredging proposal.

"Like" the South Coast CCL Facebook page for news updates.

Write a letter to the editor to express your concerns.

Write or call your federal representatives and let them know that the deepening is a fiscally irresponsible use of your taxpayer dollars.



Sustainability Institute/Renee Patey

Energy Conservation Corps – *The Sustainability Institute's "green labor force" has retrofitted a total of 40 houses in the Charleston area with energy efficiency upgrades.*

## Charleston's One-Stop Shop

The Coastal Conservation League is collaborating with the City of Charleston, the Sustainability Institute of South Carolina and the S. C. Energy Office to develop a cutting edge approach for offering residents and business owners access to the capital and contractors they need to make their homes and business buildings more energy efficient.

Buildings represent a major source of energy demand and South Carolina is currently one of the least efficient states in the country. Creating a kind of "one-stop shop" that provides financing, access to contractors and incentives, and easy energy improvement opportunities is critical to achieving a secure energy future for Charleston and South Carolina.

The City of Charleston will launch its one-stop shop, called CharlestonWISE (Worthwhile Investments Save Energy), later this spring. It is an energy efficiency improvement program that will provide easy access to the tools that property owners need for improved efficiency – tools such as building energy assessments, low-interest rate financing, incentives and rebates, information and expertise on the latest products and technology, and coordinated service delivery and product installation.

## Energy Assessments & Improvements

Charleston is one of 13 cities in the Southeast to receive funding through the Southeastern Energy Efficiency Alliance (SEEA) to determine the best and most cost-effective means to increase energy efficiency in the region. The SEEA funding, combined with generous grants from The Home Depot Foundation and Living Cities, will fuel the successful launch of CharlestonWISE.

By demonstrating the viability of this approach to energy efficiency in Charleston, the stage will be set for expanding a new template for energy savings and job creation across the Palmetto state. Leaders of the program envision thousands of South Carolina homes a year undergoing retrofits.

"Charleston is the perfect laboratory," comments Brian Sheehan, Charleston's first ever Director of Sustainability. "We have the know-how and the technology. Now it's time to deploy them. And the beauty of CharlestonWISE is that it's about delivering market driven solutions to a big problem, instead of more government regulations."

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## The "GreenHouse" at Park Circle

For homeowners looking to learn the nuts and bolts of how to make their houses energy efficient, a stop at the GreenHouse at 1441 East Montague Ave. in North Charleston is a must. The GreenHouse is ground zero for the latest techniques, technology, and expertise in energy efficiency and savings. Owned and operated by the Sustainability Institute, the GreenHouse is a 1940s era, attractive wood frame home, typical of North Charleston's Park Circle neighborhood.

Sustainability Institute/Renee Patey



The Institute trains hundreds of homeowners each year, and since 2003, has helped them to realize more than \$1 million in home energy savings.

### The GreenHouse at Park Circle

*The GreenHouse Learning Center in North Charleston is where homeowners can learn the nuts and bolts of how to make their houses energy efficient.*

There's blown cellulose inside the walls for insulation and low flow water fixtures in the kitchen and bath. A tankless water heater and LED lighting add to the home's overall efficiency. These and other improvements have reduced the GreenHouse's electric bill from \$276 a month (before retrofitting) to \$47, representing an annual savings of \$2,748.

"It's as much about what you don't see, as what you do see," says Renee Patey, who manages the Green Cities Initiative Program for the Institute and is working closely with the City of Charleston on their CharlestonWISE launch. The Institute trains hundreds of homeowners each year, and since 2003, has helped them to realize more than \$1 million

in home energy savings. "With even the simplest of retrofits, we can easily lower a homeowner's electric bill by 30%," explains Renee.

In addition to energy conservation workshops for homeowners, the Sustainability Institute also conducts energy conservation repairs for low-income households, performing 75 to 100 upgrades a year. And in partnership with AmeriCorps, the Institute has established a S.C. Energy Conservation Corps, which Renee calls their "green labor force." To date, this group of young workers has retrofitted a total of 40 houses in the Charleston area.

## CharlestonWISE Impact Project

To better understand the energy efficiency marketplace, CharlestonWISE is conducting an Impact Project to gather data on single-family homes and their associated energy usage. Selected participants will receive a home energy assessment at no cost. A number of participants will also qualify for free energy improvements.

For information on how to participate in the CharlestonWISE Impact Project please contact Betsy Kleinfelder at the Sustainability Institute at 843-529-3421 or at [Betsy@SustainabilityInstituteSC.org](mailto:Betsy@SustainabilityInstituteSC.org).

## CharlestonWISE Home Energy Makeover Contest!

Beginning in April 2011, Charleston residents are eligible to win a Home Energy Make Over. Two lucky winners will receive up to \$10,000 in energy improvements. For more details on timing and how to enter the contest, please go to [www.CharlestonWise.com](http://www.CharlestonWise.com).

# GREEN PLANET = GREEN JOBS

*Pro Environment/Pro Economy Legislation Makes Its Way Through the General Assembly*

## Clean Water for a Healthy Economy

Clean water supports tens of thousands of jobs in South Carolina. Our commercial fishing industry alone is valued at \$34 million annually. More than 58,000 jobs are tied to fishing, boat manufacturing and outdoor recreation. The Conservation League and its partners are backing two clean water bills that contain no cost to the taxpayer.

### Three Strikes Polluter Bill

Representative Mike Pitts (R-Laurens) has introduced H.3617, which protects public health from exposure to untreated or partially treated sewage spills. Sewer plant

overflows are a chronic problem in South Carolina. This bill will require any sewage utility or plant operator with three spills (of over 5,000 gallons each) in a 12-month period to undergo a comprehensive audit.

The audit will determine what caused the spill and how to fix it. The sewage operator will then be required to implement the remedy recommended by the audit. Such legislation will ensure that chronic sewage overflow violators make the necessary plant upgrades to protect human health and the environment from excessive levels of e. coli and fecal coli form bacteria.

*Clean Water  
continued on page 20*

## No Opportunity Wasted

Legislation that mandates and incentivizes statewide recycling has been introduced in both the House and the Senate. The Senate bill (S.461), introduced by Sen. Ray Cleary (R-Georgetown), provides funding to implement statewide recycling at bars and restaurants that serve alcoholic beverages. The House bill (H.3590), introduced by Rep. James Smith (D-Richland), calls for a bottle deposit on all glass beverage containers.

The costs of hauling, disposing and storing waste is essentially an un-metered “utility” – a misplaced and wasteful burden borne by cash strapped counties and municipalities. With the increasing public demand for recycling and the growth of the recycling industry, Sen. Cleary’s and Rep. Smith’s proposed legislation will provide a sustainable stream of recyclable material to fuel this emerging sector of the economy.

The benefits of recycling for South Carolina are an opportunity too good to waste: fewer landfills despoiling our lands and waters; less incineration fouling our air; new revenue streams for counties and municipalities, and new business opportunities and jobs for our citizens.

Patrick Moore



**Water Matters** – More than 55 people representing some 30 public interest groups in South Carolina gathered at the first, state-wide Water Matters meeting at Congaree National Park on February 3rd.

## Energize South Carolina

Conservation League Energy and Climate Director Hamilton Davis serves on the Energy Advisory Review Committee (PURC). This advisory council has been tasked with making recommendations for a comprehensive energy policy for South Carolina. By reforming the state's energy efficiency policies, the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy predicts we can create 22,000 new jobs by 2025, the equivalent of six new Boeing plants.

In particular, the PURC Advisory Council is working closely with state legislators and interested stakeholders to develop energy legislation that will promote renewable energy and energy efficiency in South Carolina.

### Energy Building Codes

One focus of the PURC Advisory Council is evaluating legislation that establishes a procedure to automatically update South Carolina's building codes every three years to reflect International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) standards.

Automatic updates of state building



**Solar Tracker** – IMO USA has built and installed a giant “Solar Tracker” next to its plant in Summerville, S.C. The Solar Tracker powers 40% of the factory's building operations (excluding production machinery) by rotating to face the sun's brightest spot and then pumping electricity into the adjacent warehouse.

codes will ensure that South Carolina builders are meeting baseline requirements when it comes to energy efficiency and conservation. Reductions in electricity bills will offset the additional construction costs related to more efficient buildings and provide a net positive economic benefit to new home buyers.

### Solar Tax Credits

Representative Dwight Loftis (R-Greenville) has introduced H.3346,

a bill that would allow a 35% state tax credit for the installation of solar energy equipment for both residential and commercial purposes placed in service in taxable years after 2010.

Not only will the legislation promote renewable energy, it will also provide a vital incentive for the emerging renewable energy industry in South Carolina. This new economic sector has enormous potential for growth and job creation in the Palmetto state.



Adrienne Levy

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Join conservationists from across the state for the **8th Annual Conservation Lobby Day** on **Tuesday, May 3rd** in **Columbia**.

Visit the following websites and get connected with what's happening at the State House:

[www.CoastalConservationLeague.org](http://www.CoastalConservationLeague.org)

[www.ConservationVotersofSC.org](http://www.ConservationVotersofSC.org)

[www.SCStateHouse.gov](http://www.SCStateHouse.gov)

# Cruise Ship Regrets

## 3 common mistakes that communities make when it comes to cruise ships

Dana Beach

There is no question that Charleston is one of many cities experiencing a dramatic increase in cruise business, along with the associated effects. Researching what other locales have gone through gives Charleston the opportunity to learn from some common misconceptions and mistakes.

### 1 Investing in Bigger, Newer Terminals

No doubt about it—the cruise industry is fickle. As San Diego reporter Tom Fudge recently pointed out, cruise ships are “very big, very mobile, and if business is not good around here, they’ll just go some place else.” San Diego lost both of its Carnival cruise ships (nearly 50% of its cruise business) after investing \$28 million in improving the Broadway Avenue pier.

Norfolk, Virginia lost Royal Caribbean after opening its \$36-million Half Moone Cruise and Celebration Center next to Nauticus. This March, Mobile, Alabama learned with no advance notice that Carnival is leaving their port after seven years of voyages with ships filled to capacity. Mobile is left with no direct revenue to pay off millions in debt taken on to build the Carnival cruise terminal.

Meanwhile, the S.C. State Ports Authority (SPA), a public agency, has already let bonds for \$35 million for a new cruise terminal in Charleston. SPA has also asked Charleston residents to trust the cruise industry’s promises, despite the recent negative experiences of other port cities. On the contrary, Charleston should not naively presume that they will be treated any differently than Mobile, San Diego or Norfolk. The industry’s word is not necessarily its bond. We must demand the standards we deserve, and codify our expectations of the industry now.

### 2 Believing Shoreside Power Can Never Happen

We hear a lot about new, stringent international regulations to reduce air pollution from ships. Burning cleaner fuel, for example, is a great step towards lessening the dangers of fine particle pollution, but the cruise industry is not a fan. The CEO of Carnival United Kingdom recently identified cleaner fuel standards as the single largest threat to the cruise industry.

While rumors abound that ships plugging into shoreside power is a complicated and expensive option, it is important to remember that shoreside power is becoming a popular, feasible, and effective method for reducing pollutants due to ships idling in port. Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Brooklyn, Juneau and Seattle all offer shoreside power for cruise ships. A ship that frequently calls on a particular port benefits most from shoreside power. The Carnival Fantasy will dock in Charleston 68 times in 2011.

### 3 Relying on the Promise of Economic Returns

Many port cities are told that increased cruise business means large boosts to the local economy. But many port cities have regretted such reliance upon the cruise industry. In Bermuda, hoteliers lament the direct competition they face as more cruise ships visit every year. Other business owners worry that regular tourists are avoiding the area as cruise passengers overwhelm island services, dispelling the myth of “bigger is better.”

Key West business owners echo these same concerns, and a comprehensive study of Key West’s economy determined that cruise passengers spent only a few dollars in town each day, compared with other tourists booking local hotels and eating in restaurants three times a day. Charleston should not drive away a traditional tourism market in order to accommodate the needs of cruise lines, particularly in light of a recent *New York Times* report that states for “the last five years, the Carnival Corporation has paid total corporate taxes—federal, state, local and foreign—equal to only 1.1% of its cumulative \$11.3 billion in profits.”

## Highway Robbery

Proposed Interstates I-73 and I-526 will consume vast sums of state and federal monies that are better spent elsewhere.

### I-73 vs. Existing Road Network

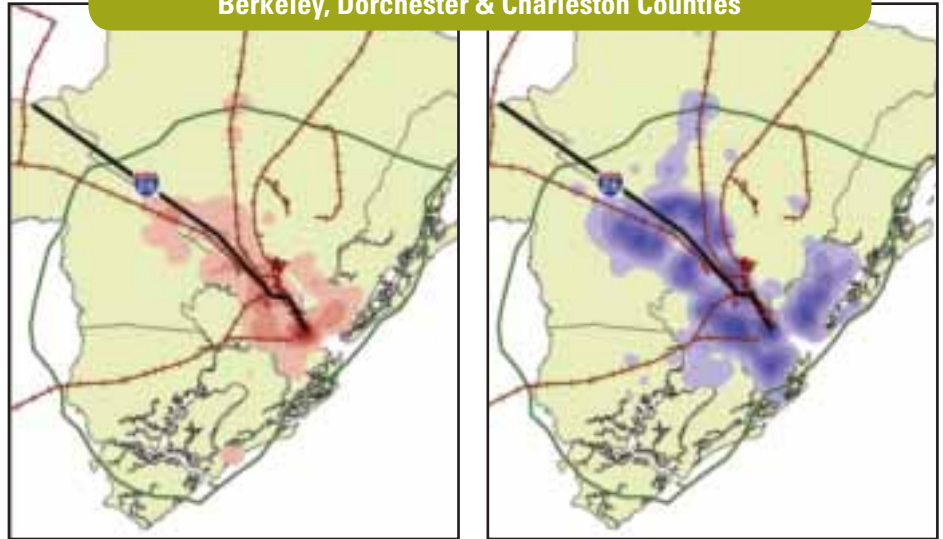
Interstate 73 is a 2.4-billion-dollar highway project considered the number one road building priority by many of South Carolina's tourism leaders and politicians. The new interstate would originate in Michigan and end near Myrtle Beach, after crossing through the state's Pee Dee region and its extensive swamps, farmlands and forests.

Interestingly, once east of I-95, the new interstate would run parallel to an already existing, partially built Interstate 74 that ends on the same coast, just 50 miles north of Myrtle Beach. So, one section of I-73 crosses through one of the most rural and least transportation needy places in South Carolina, and the other runs parallel to another interstate that is  $\frac{2}{3}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  complete and goes to the same general location.

Is this highway truly "critically important" to our state, as its proponents have claimed? For the last eight years that I-73 has been on the drawing board, the Coastal Conservation League has consistently argued that South Carolina could more cheaply and easily upgrade existing roads to Myrtle Beach, instead of constructing a new 75-mile-long, 2.4-billion-dollar interstate. Improving the existing road network would be much more cost-effective and much less environmentally damaging.

The debate over I-73 may be moot, however, since construction of the interstate will almost certainly depend upon federal earmarks, something our current Congress and President are loathe to do.

### Berkeley, Dorchester & Charleston Counties



Kate Parks

**Where People Work** – Based on 2008 census data, this diagram depicts where most of the people who live within the green boundary line shown on the map actually work. The darker shades of red indicate higher densities of jobs per square mile. As you can see, higher concentrations of jobs are centered along the I-26 corridor.

**Where People Live** – Based on 2008 census data, this diagram depicts where most of the people who work within the green boundary line shown on the map actually live. The darker shades of blue indicate higher densities of residences per square mile. As you can see, a higher concentration of the population is centered along the I-26 corridor.

### I-526 vs. I-26

Funding for I-526, on the other hand, depends on an entity known as the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank (STIB), a state agency set up in 1997 to pay for major transportation projects of high importance to the state. STIB has committed \$420 million to the nine-mile connector from I-526 to James Island – draining all of the bank's remaining funds. It will be 2016 or later before STIB can commit any further monies for transportation projects in South Carolina.

Hundreds and hundreds of James and John's Island residents have voiced their opposition to the construction of an interstate highway through their communities. They rightly believe that I-526 will stimulate unwanted sprawl and irreparably degrade their quality of life. Proponents of I-526 claim the interstate connector is needed to move traffic more rapidly around West Ashley and the sea islands. But DOT's own projections conclude that the project will improve commuting times by an average of only two minutes.

Highway Robbery  
continued on page 20

## Believing Peggy & Fred Lincoln



Dana Beach

*Peggy and Fred Lincoln pose with their daughters Afua and Ama. Their son, Kwesi, was at soccer practice, so was not able to be in the picture.*

“Our group was visiting the Kindercare Orphanage, about an hour from Accra, the capital of Ghana. My eye caught the eye of Ama and there was something there that just wouldn’t let go. After a while, I told her I didn’t have a daughter and would she like to be my daughter. And Ama said ‘Yes.’”

There’s a photograph of Fred Lincoln taken a few years ago standing in front of the ruins of the one-room schoolhouse he attended when he was a little boy in the 1950s. Fred is holding a sign with just one word written on it in big letters: BELIEVE.

Even though Fred was unable to save the school that had meant so much to him, he never lost faith in the goodness, promise and hope of his community of Cainhoy. After attending the City College of New York and serving in the Vietnam War, Fred returned to the Cainhoy peninsula in 1980 with his wife, Peggy, a nurse and native New Yorker. In this beautiful tight-knit, rural community – nestled amidst tall pine trees – Peggy and Fred raised their son Kwanza, who is now 30 years old with a wife and child of his own.

“I wasn’t used to letting children just roam free, but my neighbors taught me how,” laughs Peggy. All of Fred’s ten brothers and sisters live in Cainhoy, as well as his 98-year-old father. “The support system is all here, for both young and old. No one has to go it alone,” says Fred.

Fred is a former board member of the Coastal Conservation League and has worn many hats in his community. A retired firefighter, for years he served as chairman of the local fire department and as a member of the Wando-Huger Community Development Corporation. Fred may be best known to Conservation League members as one of the leaders of the successful fight to defeat the State Ports Authority’s proposed Global Gateway – a huge new port terminal that would have destroyed Cainhoy and other communities like it in the area.

These days, Fred and Peggy are carrying on the hope and promise of their community in a whole new way. Back in August, they welcomed into their family three new children – a son Kwesi (age 16) and two daughters, Ama (age 12) and Afua (age 8). Kwesi and his sisters were orphans in Ghana and met the Lincolns when Peggy and Fred were vacationing there and delivering supplies to the orphanage and a school nearby.

Fred remembers their meeting like it was yesterday: “Our group was visiting the Kindercare Orphanage, about an hour from Accra, the capital of Ghana. My eye caught the eye of Ama and there was something there that just

## What's Your Legacy?

*“There are some things in life – like children and animals, for example – that have no money and no power, yet are innately good and must be taken care of. I think of the environment in the same way . . .”*



Young Clement Rivers, LLP

Carol Ervin

**F**irst female partner at Young Clement Rivers, LLP. Equestrian, painter and world traveler. Former board chair of the Coastal Conservation League. Carol Ervin wears all of these hats and more in her very full professional and volunteer life. A graduate of Duke University School of Law and a summa cum laude English literature major at the University of the South, Carol heads up the Employment Law Practice Group at Young Clement Rivers law firm in Charleston.

At Duke, Carol intended to become an environmental lawyer, but found the opportunities for representing plaintiffs were much more limited than they are now. Instead, she became an expert in employment law and has pursued her dedication to the environment as a volunteer, currently serving on the

boards of the Conservation Voters of S.C. and the Lowcountry Open Land Trust.

A native of Cheraw, Carol believes that South Carolinians are particularly attuned to the land and to the environment. “We have a feeling of connectedness here,” she explains. “We live in a beautiful state, and its forests, fields, creeks and marshes are a daily reminder that we are lucky to be here.”

Carol remembers talking with Dana Beach back in 1989, just before he launched the Coastal Conservation League. “It was the beginning of the construction boom along the coast and I was alarmed at how the state was changing so fast,” she explains. “It was a feeling of powerlessness. There was this huge need to protect what we have here; yet, there was no mechanism in place to marshal the resources necessary to defend the Lowcountry.”

Why is Carol a member of the Coastal Legacy Society? She replies, “There are some things in life – like children and animals, for example – that have no money and no power, yet are innately good and must be taken care of. I think of the environment in the same way and am so glad to join with other members of the Conservation League to protect this awesome legacy.”

*[For more information about the Coastal Legacy Society and planned giving options with the Coastal Conservation League, please contact Development Director Courtenay Speir at 843-723-9895 or [courtenays@sccl.org](mailto:courtenays@sccl.org).]*

wouldn't let go. After a while, I told her I didn't have a daughter and would she like to be my daughter. And Ama said ‘Yes.’

“As we were leaving the orphanage, we promised Ama that we would come back for her,” continues Fred. Just then, someone heard a child crying across the room. “We were told the little girl was crying because her sister was leaving her. It was Ama's little sister, Afua. We immediately told her that she could come live with us too.”

“Then someone cried out, ‘Wait a minute. There's a brother!’” explains

Peggy. And that brother was Kwesi. After nearly three years and lots of travel back and forth, the Lincolns were finally able to complete the adoption process and welcome the three siblings to their new home in Cainhoy last August 28th.

And what a welcome it was. As Peggy tells it, “There was a party every week with so many people coming forward with gifts of clothing, computers, even painting and redecorating the children's rooms!”

All three love school. Kwesi is a sophomore at Hanahan High School and wants to become a doctor. Ama

and Afua both attend Cainhoy Elementary School, which Peggy says has been “incredibly nurturing and welcoming.” Ama loves art and fashion, while Afua “loves everything Ma loves,” including playing the piano, says Peggy with pride.

As Fred puts it, “There are so many kids in Ghana who need homes. And when they grow up, they can help their families and their country. You know, you see a lot of poverty in Ghana, but you see a lot of hope too.”

Indeed, Fred Lincoln believes.



# QOL

## Oysters, Energy and Alligators.

What more could you ask of a Sunday on Sullivan's?

*"Thank you for a fantastic event - I couldn't believe the endless steaming piles of oysters and the amazingly dramatic, windswept setting - truly memorable!"*

*- Caroline von Nathusius, QOL member*

Thanks to all who joined us on Sunday, January 30th for QOL's first Activate Series event. This family-friendly gathering drew a fabulous crowd of adults and children, who braved the winter cold and were rewarded with delicious oysters, live reptiles, and other delights.

The brief program featured an energy update by CCL's Executive Director Dana Beach and Energy and Climate Director Hamilton Davis, along with a warm welcome from board member William Cogswell.





*"QOL successfully merges the presentation of important issues in our community with enjoyable social events in the beautiful landscapes of the Lowcountry. Nothing beats talking about offshore wind power while getting buffeted by a strong harbor breeze and eating oysters!"*

*- Winslow Hastie, QOL member*



## Special thanks

to hosts Anne Marie and Jimmy Hagood, Emily and Beezer Molten, Kate and Lindsay Nevin, and Leila and Buff Ross; and to the Hagerty family for offering their beautiful home. Thanks also to musicians Whitney Grumhaus and Carl Mabry; to Leslie McKellar for her beautiful photography, and to Tidewater Foods & Catering, LLC for the local oysters! Educational activities were provided by the SC Aquarium.



## To learn more

about joining QOL and adding your voice for conservation, please visit:

[www.QOLonline.org](http://www.QOLonline.org)

All event photos are posted on the QOL website:

[www.QOLonline.org/2010/11/oysters/](http://www.QOLonline.org/2010/11/oysters/)

## Welcome New Board Members

*Goffinet and Ian McLaren join the Board of Directors of the Coastal Conservation League*



**B**orn and raised in Northern Ireland, Goffinet and Ian McLaren bring a refreshing perspective to life in the U.S. and South Carolina. They arrived in Greenville in 1981, following 14 years in Boston, and then retired permanently to Litchfield Beach in 2006. Their son, Moutray, graduated from Furman University and is now a first-year student at the Charleston School of Law.

As Goffinet and Ian will tell you, with gasoline selling for \$9 a gallon in Ireland, electricity at 30 cents a kilowatt (three times the cost in the U.S.), and plastic bags taxed at 25 cents each, the Irish are highly sensitive to the costs of energy and fossil fuels.

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“We are constantly amazed at how little awareness there is of energy expenditures in the U.S. and how little understanding there is of the savings that can be made through very simple changes in an individual’s habits.”

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“We are constantly amazed at how little awareness there is of energy expenditures in the U.S. and how little understanding there is of the savings that can be made through very simple changes in an individual’s habits,” says Ian, who earned a Ph.D. in physics from Queens University in Belfast before emigrating to the U.S. in 1967. “We simply need a proper accounting of the costs.”

As founder and president of Umbro USA, the sports apparel company founded in Manchester, England in 1934, Ian is familiar with measuring costs. Now retired, he is currently exploring a new business opportunity focused on residential energy conservation as a step towards reducing our energy dependence on fossil fuels and their impact on climate change.

Meanwhile, Goffinet, who graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Furman with a B.A. in Political Science and History, is spearheading a new initiative in Pawleys Island and Conway called “Be Plastic Bag Free” – a campaign to persuade local shop owners and individual residents to discontinue use of one-time plastic bags. So far, nearly a dozen shopkeepers have signed the pledge not to use disposable plastic and Goffinet is focused on making sure that the movement will spread.

“My dream is to see an end to the use of disposable plastic,” explains Goffinet. “The accumulation of plastic in our lives is devastating to our health and to the health



**Be Plastic Bag Free** – *Goffinet McLaren (left) recently spoke in Georgetown about a campaign she is leading to discontinue the use of one-time plastic bags. She was joined by the Conservation League's North Coast Director, Nancy Cave.*

of the planet. The potential benefits of being a plastic-free community are enormous.”

Why their commitment to the Coastal Conservation League? “We support all of the work of the Conservation League,” say Goffinet and Ian. “The League is doing a wonderful job of pressuring state and local agencies to do the right thing. And Nancy Cave, as Director of the North Coast Office, is such an asset in every way – diplomatic, a persuasive presenter, and a pleasure with whom to work.”

## Louann Yorke Joins Staff

While Louann has spent most of her life in metropolitan Detroit, after five years of living in Mount Pleasant, she is unabashedly in love with the Lowcountry. A career of working for non-profit and for-profit organizations in a variety of administrative capacities make her ideally suited as the Conservation League's new Administrative Assistant at 328 East Bay Street, Charleston.



Louann and her husband, Chuck, enjoy long walks with their dog at the area's beaches and parks. Fortunately, their two grown children – a son and a daughter – love the Lowcountry too and visit when they can. "I feel very blessed and excited to live here and to work for such an amazing organization," says Louann. "I have especially enjoyed learning about all of the many environmental issues that the League is involved with."

## Thank You, Amanda

Amanda Cole has worked as an intern with the development team at the Conservation League since September 2010. Working closely with Development Director Courtenay Speir, Amanda is assisting with the League's planned giving program, event planning, and multiple outreach projects designed to increase membership.



## Welcome, Abby Grace!



Abigail Grace Moore, daughter of Columbia Office Director Patrick Moore and his wife, Beth, was born on December 29th at 9:48pm.

## Beaufort and the Conservation League Present James Howard Kunstler



League staffers (l-r) Andrea Malloy, Ryan Black and Hamilton Davis welcome James Kunstler (in blue shirt and tie) to Beaufort. Renowned author of such books as *The Geography of Nowhere* and *The Long Emergency*, Kunstler delivered a public lecture at the Technical College of the Lowcountry on February 16th.

## In Memoriam

### *Harriet Hirschfield Keyserling, 1922 – 2010*

In 1944, New Yorker Harriet Hirschfield Keyserling arrived in South Carolina, the bride of Beaufort native Dr. Herbert Keyserling. As Harriet described herself, she was "a fish out of water at first." But it didn't take long before she found friends and common ground in the town that would become her home for the next 66 years.

After raising four children, Harriet helped start a League of Women Voters chapter in Beaufort and became the first woman elected to County Council in 1974. Two years later, Harriet won election to the state House of Representatives and went on to serve eight consecutive terms (16 years) before she retired in 1993.

She served on the boards of the Coastal Conservation League, Spoleto, the Beaufort Arts Council and the Conservation Voters of South Carolina, to name a few. Harriet championed the causes dearest to her heart – education, the environment and the arts – and served her adopted state tirelessly and courageously. She will be remembered always.

## Coal Ash

*continued from page 3*


impoundments contained levels of arsenic that were 18 times greater than what is allowed by federal regulations. In the face of such an alarming threat to human health, South Carolina's Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) inexplicably agreed to eliminate the arsenic limits that would have governed SCE&G's discharges into the Wateree River.

Furthermore, as EPA considers more stringent regulation of coal ash, DHEC has gone on record opposing federal designation of coal ash as hazardous waste, lobbying to retain state control. DHEC's defense of the status quo makes ash disposal far less costly for South Carolina utilities like SCE&G, whose coal fired power plant in Canadys, S.C. produces 100 tons of coal ash a year and is running out of disposal space.

As a result, SCE&G proposed to build a new, 100-foot-tall, coal ash landfill near the small community of Round O in Colleton County, four miles from the power plant. Residents were incensed and attended public hearings in large numbers, successfully persuading the Colleton County Board

of Zoning Appeals not to grant a zoning exception to allow the landfill.

Living in the heart of the ACE Basin, Colleton's citizens were not about to risk a quality of life they have enjoyed for generations and worked so hard to preserve. They suspect SCE&G wants to secure permits for the landfill before new federal rules on coal ash are put in place. Together with the Coastal Conservation League, the community and its representatives have rejected the current proposal by SCE&G, deeming it unacceptable and wholly inadequate to safeguard local residents and their environs.


While it is likely that the recently defeated Pee Dee coal plant represents the last attempt to ever build a new coal fired facility in South Carolina, as long as the state remains heavily dependent on coal generated electricity, we will continue to have to deal with the ash disposal dilemma. In light of all the negative externalities associated with the operation of existing coal plants, at some point we must develop a strategy to begin shuttering the most out-dated facilities, and replace that generation capacity with non-polluting, in-state renewable resources and energy efficiency. 

## Clean Water

*continued from page 10*

### Phosphate Ban

Representatives Dwight Loftis (R-Greenville) and Mike Pitts (R-Laurens) have introduced H.3467, a bill that bans the sale, manufacture and use of detergents containing more than 0.5% phosphorous. Excessive phosphorous leads to degraded water quality, algal blooms and fish kills in our lakes and rivers. Furthermore, removing phosphorous from wastewater is expensive for water treatment plant operators and rate payers.

Fifteen states have already passed similar legislation around the country, and though this same bill passed unanimously in the S.C. House last year, it became stalled in the Senate. The legislation makes good sense and "cents," since the easiest and least costly way to remove harmful phosphorous from our waters is to not introduce the mineral in the first place. 


## Highway Robbery

*continued from page 13*

Is there another project in the Charleston metro area that would be of significant benefit to the region and state? Without question, a multimodal transportation and land use plan for the I-26 corridor is the answer and long overdue. With the area's population nearing 750,000 and I-26 serving as its primary transportation artery, it is imperative to relieve the current gridlock and plan ahead for the future.

The future is extremely promising in the I-26 corridor, with the Boeing plant

nearing completion, the establishment of a wind power hub in North Charleston, an expanding port, and a quality of life and natural environment that are unsurpassed. Now is the time to invest in road improvements, freight rail lines to serve the wind turbine test lab and port, and a light rail commuter line to connect the growing communities between Charleston and Summerville.

This is a real vision, and one we can all support. 



*Dana Beach*

# Thank You!

Dana Beach



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## You Have the Power . . . with Online Resources

by *Adrienne Levy, Director of Communications*

Every day, there seems to be a new social media tool clamoring for your attention and adoption – website, program, or online system – that begs to be the “best” at sharing your news. But you shouldn’t let the overwhelming marketplace of applications, widgets, platforms, or any other “techie” sounding development throw you a curve ball. If you are unsure of where to start, stick to the new basics and get the most out of what the online world has to offer in terms of communications, support and fun.

If you haven’t ventured into our online world, I encourage you to give it a shot. I think two of the best ways you can support the Coastal Conservation League are by becoming a fan on Facebook and reading our blog on the website. By focusing on these two things, you’ll be the most informed about our news, events, photos, videos and more! Don’t think of it as information overload, but as information that fits your schedule and your style.



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# Mark Your CALENDAR

**Friday, April 22nd:** Earth Day special event—QOL and the Green Fair present a screening of “Ghost Bird” at Marion Square, Charleston. Gates open at 6 pm; movie begins at 8 pm.

**Sunday, May 1st:** QOL Activate Series—A family-friendly beach walk with Kate Parks. Location and time TBA.

**Tuesday, May 3rd:** 8th Annual Conservation Lobby Day! Join CCL and our conservation partners in Columbia for a day of legislative volunteering at the State House, followed by an oyster roast. Details TBA.

**Friday, May 13th:** CCL Spring Festival, featuring Shannon Whitworth at Magnolia Plantation. 6pm - 10pm, all ages welcome!

**Friday, June 3rd – 6th:** River Rally 2011, North Charleston.



P.O. Box 1765 Charleston, SC 29402-1765

*For more information about the Coastal Conservation League, check out our Web site at [www.CoastalConservationLeague.org](http://www.CoastalConservationLeague.org)*

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