



# Oconee County Conservation Bank Evaluation Criteria Scoring

Oconee County, South Carolina

**Parcel Name**

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**Owner**

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**Acres**

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**Location**

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**Tax Map[s]**

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**Section I – Conservation Criteria**

**Calculation of Conservation Criteria**

	Score
Environmental Sensitivity	
Sharing Boundary With Protected Land	
Historic or Cultural Features	
Prime or Important Soil Types	
Actively Farmed	
Public Visibility of Property	
Scenic View	
Public Access	
Threat of Development	
Size of Protected Property	
<b>TOTAL SECTION I – Max 100</b>	

**Section II – Financial**

**Scoring of Financial Criteria**

	None 0	Poor 2	Fair 3	Good 4	Excellent 5	Score
Funding Percentage Requested						
Matching or Other Monetary Contributions from Other Agencies or Groups						
Low Cost for Value Received						
Other Financial Benefit						
Other incentives						
<b>TOTAL SECTION II – Max 25</b>						

Total OCCB Scoring Index (OSI):

Comments:

## OCCB "To Do" -

### Draft: "Know What to Expect Form"

- 1. Make sheet listing disclosures and requirements. Perhaps make sheet a part of the intake/statement of interest form.
  - o Should include disclosure that application and qualification will require an appraisal and may require surveys and additional professional work which the landowner is solely responsible to secure. The landowner should sign to understand that they are solely responsible for the costs of securing any work required to complete the application and that the OCCB is not responsible for such costs. While each applicant may apply for a grant to cover, in whole or in part, the costs of such required work, the OCCB is under no obligation to approve any application.
  - o Describe the items they will be required to provide:
    - Detailed information about their property including deed and tax map references.
    - Detailed information about their properties value which will require a detailed appraisal.
    - May require and updated survey.
    - Coordination with a non-profit managed to conserve land and similar resources or other eligible entity as described in the Oconee County ordinance creating the OCCB.
    - Maps, photos and other documentation to support the conservation values of the land.
  - o Note that the application, as presented, represents a binding proposal and that any approval, conditional or final, is contingent upon the Landowner's fulfillment of any and all pledges and proposals as presented in the application.
    - Must be a signed statement incorporated in the Statement of Interest Form.
  
- 2. Make sheet listing "Process" for OCCB projects:

### Draft "Process" Form:

- o A. Landowner and their OCCB eligible "partner" (e.g., a non-profit managed to hold conservation lands, government body or other eligible entity) present a signed "statement of interest" form to the OCCB.
  - Landowner will hear that their land appears eligible to submit a full application to the OCCB. Any such determination of eligibility to apply does not represent approval of the project.
- o B. Landowner and their OCCB eligible "partner" submit full application with substantiation to the OCCB for review.

- OCCB contacts landowner to (i) request add'l information (ii) decline the application OR (iii) schedule a site visit. Note: the scheduling of a site visit does not represent approval of any project.
- C. Landowner provides additional requested information, if necessary.
  - OCCB contacts landowner to (i) decline the application OR (ii) schedule a site visit. Note: the scheduling of a site visit does not represent approval of any project.
- D. OCCB representatives or agents make scheduled site visits to each property in the application cycle deemed appropriate for a site visit. Note: the scheduling of a site visit does not represent approval of any project.
  - After the site visits are completed, OCCB contacts the landowner to (i) decline the application OR (ii) conditionally approve the project. Note: Conditional approval is not final approval and is subject to the landowner's agreement with and satisfaction of all pre-conditions as well as County Council's final approval of the project.
- E. For each conditionally approved project, the landowner and their eligible OCCB must sign a notarized statement stating their commitment to satisfy all pre-conditions and must prove to the OCCB's satisfaction that all pre-conditions have been met.
  - Upon receiving such commitment and satisfaction, the OCCB will prepare any such properties for presentation to the Oconee County Council.
  - **NOTE: Only Oconee County Council can finally approve any project and no project shall be considered approved or final until such final approval is granted. The landowner and eligible OCCB partner remain fully responsible for all expenses and costs associated with application to and interaction with the OCCB throughout the application process. The landowner and eligible OCCB partner will only be reimbursed for those expenses and costs associated with application to and interaction with the OCCB if such reimbursement is sought in the grant application and finally approved by the OCCB and Oconee County Council.**



Posted on Wed, Aug. 01, 2012

## Calhoun County river frontage to be protected

### Land across from Congaree National Park among 19 S.C. conservation projects

By JOEY HOLLEMAN

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Nearly 2.5 miles of Congaree River frontage in Calhoun County across from Congaree National Park is among 19 projects approved for funding by the S.C. Conservation Bank last week.

The 19 projects also include the 61-acre meadow off S.C. 11 often seen in the foreground of photos of Table Rock, four tracts that add 5,400 acres to the Savannah River Preserve in Hampton County and 405 acres in the viewshed of the High Hills Passage of the Palmetto Trail in Sumter County.

In Calhoun County, the High Creek tract, which is about 1,670 acres, is upstream from the 200-acre Congaree Bluffs Heritage Preserve.

Together, they will protect from industrial or residential development the land across the river from a large section of the national park, according to the Congaree Land Trust.

The land trust will administer the easement on the Calhoun County property, along with easements on the 405 acres along the Palmetto Trail near Sparkleberry Swamp in Sumter County and 431 acres of prime waterfowl habitat in Clarendon County.

"We're happy to have these three tracts to protect some of our valuable viewsheds in the Midlands," said Mary Crockett of Congaree Land Trust.

The Conservation Bank's board approved spending money for new easements last week for the first time since 2008, when funding for the agency was put on hold during the recession. The agency received \$2 million last year, and full funding of \$7.5 million was restored this year.

The Conservation Bank is funded by a portion of documentary stamp fees paid on property purchases. While it can purchase property outright, the bank more often works with local groups to purchase conservation easements. With easements, landowners maintain possession of the property but they give up the right to develop the land. That allows protection with minimal cost to the state.



A 61-acre meadow off S.C. 11, in the foreground of Table Rock, is one of 19 projects approved for S.C. Conservation Bank funding.

/PERRY BAKER/S.C. DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM

Conservation Bank

New conservation properties in nine counties were approved for funding by the state agency last week.

Hampton County: Calhoun tract, 1,540 acres; Copeland tract, 634 acres; Hanna tract, 1,404; A.J. Johns tract, 1,853 acres

Oconee County: Lombard tract, 117.89 acres; Ramsay Farms, 130 acres; Shinco-Chauga tract, 482 acres; Ivester Von Leha Farms, 229 acres; Edward Davis tract, 20.2 acres; Marion Powell tract, 75 acres

Pickens County: Grant Meadow tract, 61.05 acres

Greenville County: Riverbend Shoals tract, 580 acres; Swamp Rabbit Trail, 49.2 acres

Calhoun County: High Creek tract, 1,670 acres

Clarendon County: Avins tract, 431.13 acres



The 19 new easements approved last week protected 10,320 acres for \$4.9 million, or about \$438 per acre. The Grant Meadow tract in front of Table Rock was the most expensive easement at \$2,054 per acre.

Last week, the bank board also voted to spend the \$2 million from last year on projects approved before its funding was out of. That includes 122 acres upstream of Chau Ram Park, which will allow expansion of the park in Westminster, according to Dana Leavitt of Upstate Forever.

The funding approval isn't the final step in the process. Landowners still must agree to the easements. Because some of the easements were proposed years ago, some land owners might have changed their minds.

Sumter County: Birchwood Farms, 405 acres; Knowlton Farms, 575.4 acres

Charleston County: Keefe tract, 70 acres; Paik tract, 74 acres

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