

South Carolina Conservation Bank
Mark Robertson, Executive Director
The Nature Conservancy of South Carolina
November 13, 2012

- Established in Title 48, Chapter 59, SC Code.
- Passed by the General Assembly in 2002, and funding began in 2004.
- Funded by a portion of the state's deed recording fee, deposited in a special trust fund.
- Funding is granted to qualified state agencies, non-profit land trusts and municipalities for the fee-simple purchase of land, or purchase of conservation easements.
- The Conservation Bank uses a competitive grants process to determine which proposals to fund. Three sets of criteria are used to evaluate proposals, based on the legislation:
 1. Conservation value of the project (environmental, agricultural, historic, cultural)
 2. Degree of public use on the property
 3. Financial leverage of the project: extent of funds from other sources or donated value from the landowner (seller)
- The Bank is governed by an appointed board, whose members are selected by the Governor, the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tem of the Senate for four-year terms. There are board members representing each congressional district, and at-large members. The board votes on every project funded by the Conservation Bank. SC-DNR, SC-PRT and SC Forestry Commission are non-voting, ex officio members of the board.
- Accomplishments:
 - From 2004 to July 2012, the Conservation Bank has awarded \$84.14 Million in competitive grants to conserve 162,926 acres statewide: working farmland and forestland, public parks, historic sites, state wildlife management areas, wetlands, and riparian areas along rivers and streams.
 - The average cost to the Conservation Bank for the land projects it funds is \$516 per acre, due to the high degree of leverage of other funding sources and donated value from landowners. This reflects the competitive nature of the Bank's grant-making process.

For more information:

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<http://sccbanc.sc.gov/>