

“Conservation efforts... often require cooperation among a variety of local, state, and federal government agencies, elected officials, nonprofit advocacy groups, and engaged citizens.”

-Angela Halfacre, *A Delicate Balance*

Environmental Awareness

Pollution and irresponsible urban growth are threats to the natural environment. Without access to open land, clean water, and fresh air, humans limit their own opportunities to enjoy life and exercise social responsibility. Environmental education, conservation, and stewardship are the keys to protecting our invaluable natural resources.

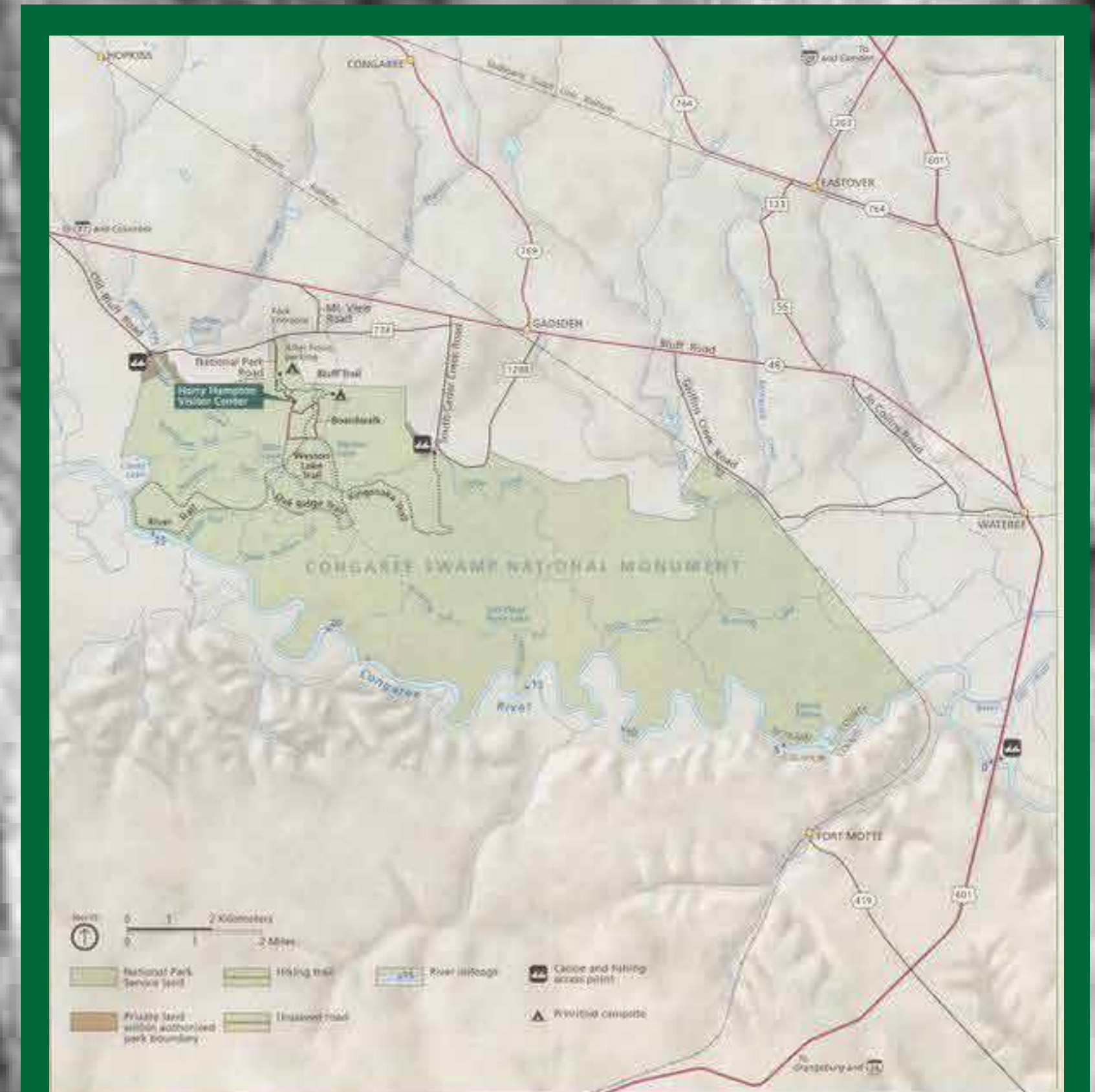
Literature and Art

The beautiful and variable landscape of South Carolina has captured the eye of artists for 350 years. Mark Catesby recorded the incredible flora and fauna that he encountered during his travels in the Carolina Colony in the 17th Century.

At fifteen years old, Langdon Cheves III compiled and illustrated a list of birds he had hunted in the mid-1800s. Growing up on the coast of South Carolina, Cheves enjoyed both hunting and illustrating the area's wildlife.



Long billed birds painted on wallpaper by Langdon Cheves III
South Carolina Historical Society collection



Map of Congaree Swamp National Monument, *Library of Congress*

Changing Ways

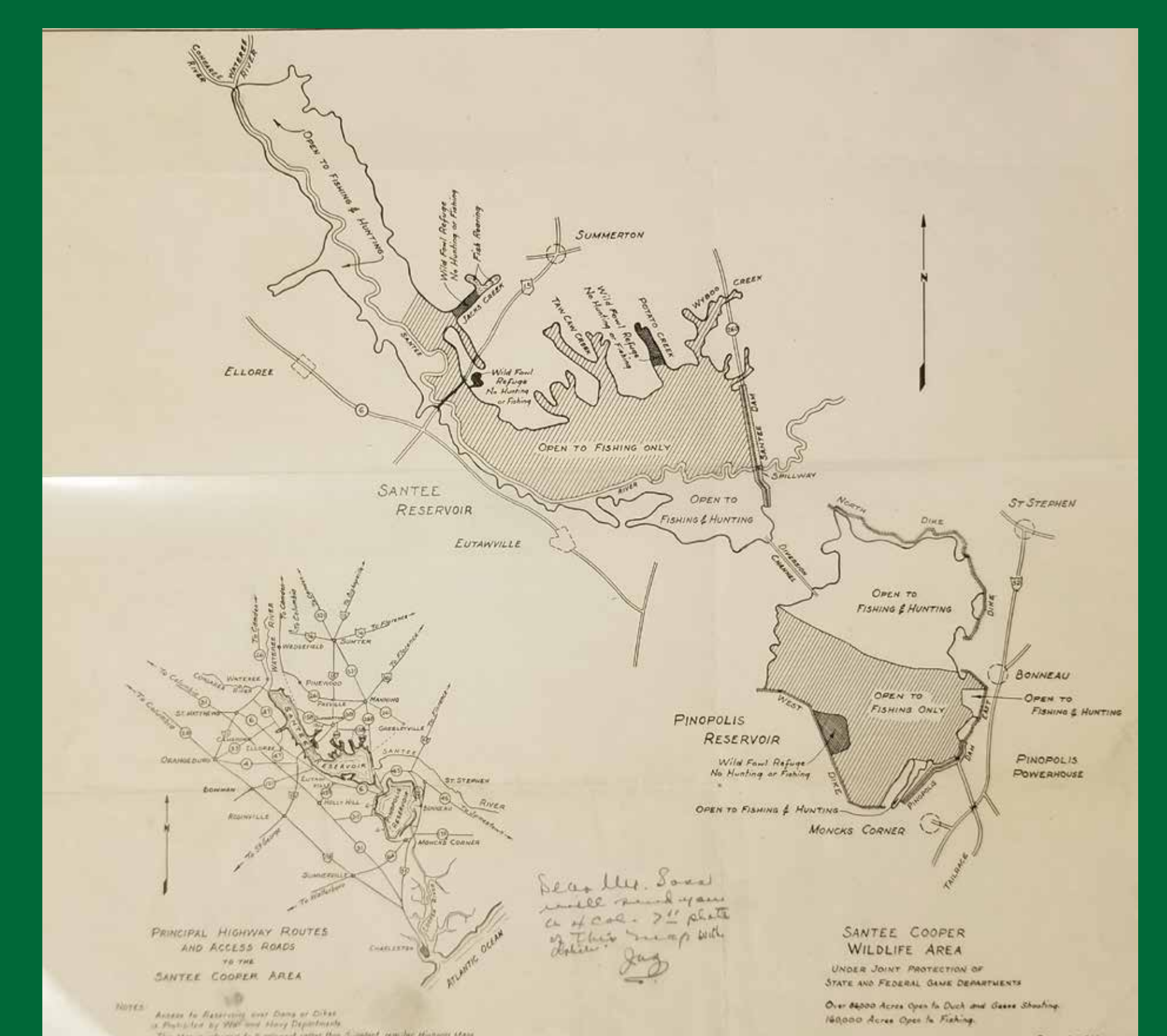
In the late 1890s and early 1900s, Francis Beidler's Santee River Cypress Company harvested large quantities of lumber. However, Beidler ran into problems with the climate, flooding, and malaria outbreaks. In addition, some cypress logs were so heavy that Beidler simply could not float them down river, leaving wasted lumber behind to rot. By 1915, Beidler's company had abandoned Congaree, leaving more than 10,000 acres untouched. Nevertheless, he held onto the land knowing that one day the demand for lumber would return.

In 1969, the family started logging again because, as Beidler predicted, the price for timber had increased and the demand had returned. However, the family agreed to harvest the forests on a sustainable-yield basis.

Protecting the Land

Growing up in Columbia and Charleston in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Harry Hampton explored the wilderness of South Carolina. As a reporter for "The State" newspaper in 1931, he covered the campaigns to form state commissions and create legislation to protect the land and wilderness that he called home. From these campaigns rose the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, of which Hampton became president in 1952.

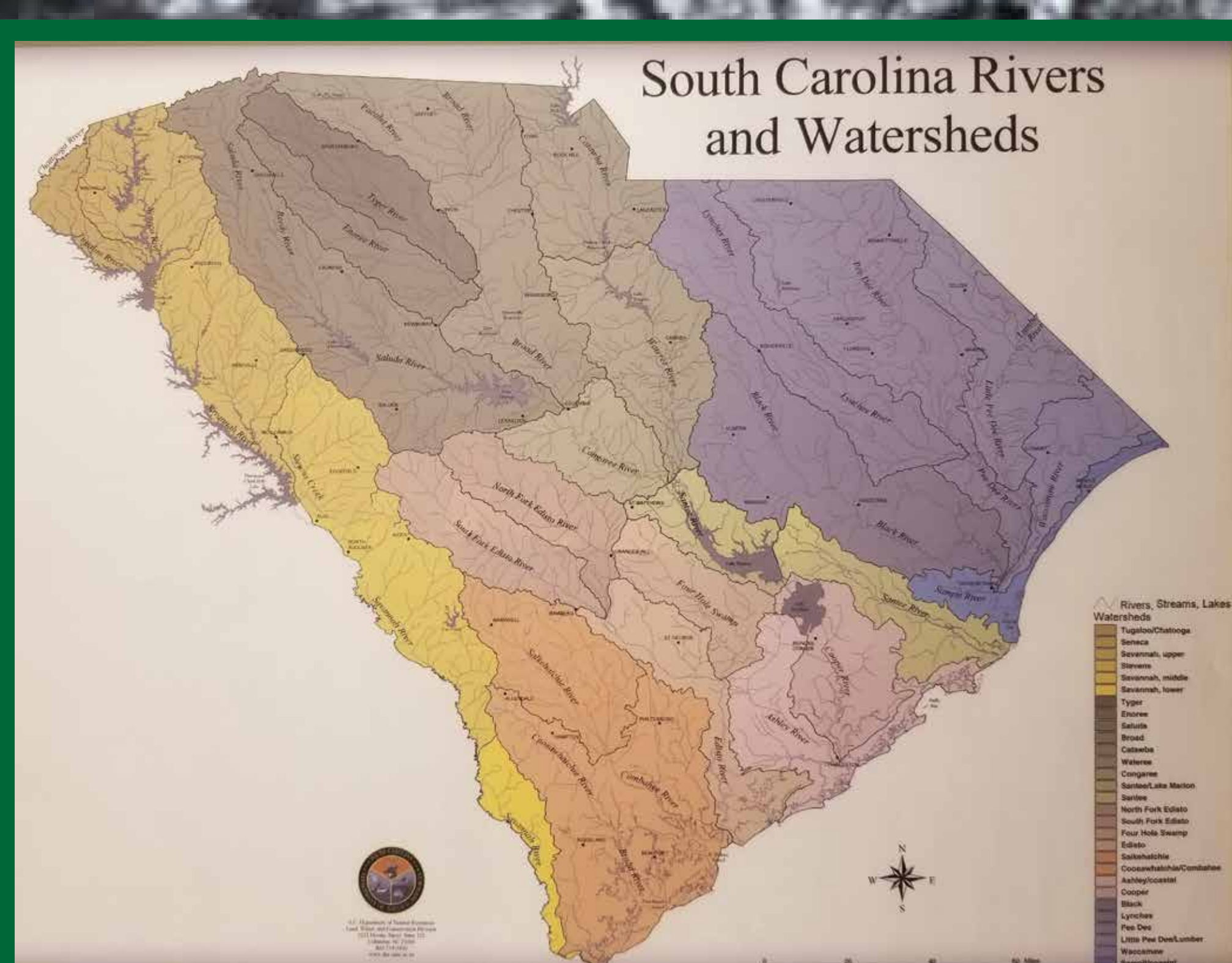
As president, Hampton actively helped bring awareness to areas that needed to be protected, with major successes in 1959 when the National Park Service named the region the "redwoods of the East" because of the massive Cypress trees and in 1976 when he helped designate the Congaree River as a National Natural Monument.



Hand drawn map by J. Lindler of the Santee Cooper Wildlife Area
South Carolina Historical Society collections

Cooperating Agencies

In 1941, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated Santee National Wildlife refuge to compensate for the loss of habitat resulting from the creation of the Santee Cooper Lakes. Of the fifteen thousand acres that make up the refuge, nearly one-third is owned by the Fish and Wildlife Service. The remaining acreage is managed by a cooperative lease agreement with the South Carolina Public Service Authority. The refuge also manages ten conservation easements on private lands.



Department of Natural Resources map of South Carolina Rivers and Watersheds
South Carolina Historical Society collections

Conservation Today

The year 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, however, South Carolinians have been caring for their homeland for hundreds of years. Even when poor choices led to destruction of natural resources or environmental landmarks, the people of the state came together to restore the balance of the land and make laws protecting the environment they enjoy aesthetically, recreationally, and economically.

The South Carolina Wildlife Federation states that since 1931, they have "served as the voice for outdoor enthusiasts of every stripe. Representing hunter and birdwatcher, teacher and backpacker, boater and farmer, gardener and angler, SCWF builds partnerships to ensure everyone can enjoy South Carolina's natural heritage and recreation opportunities for generations to come."