



Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge, located along the Waccamaw, Great Pee Dee and Little Pee Dee Rivers, encompasses a diversity of habitat including a black water river swamp, alluvial river floodplain, forested wetlands, longleaf pine ecosystems, and tidal and managed historic ricefields.

Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge

Welcome to Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge, one of over 540 national wildlife refuges that form a network of United States lands and waters managed specifically for wildlife. Refuges provide habitat—food, water, cover, and space—for millions of migratory birds, over 70 endangered species, and thousands of other species of native plants and animals.

Waccamaw Refuge was established in 1997. The purposes for which the refuge was established are

- to protect and manage diverse habitat components within an important coastal river ecosystem for the benefit of endangered and threatened species, freshwater and anadromous fish, migratory birds, and forest wildlife, including a wide array of plants and animals associated with bottomland hardwood habitats; and
- to provide compatible wildlife-dependant recreational activities including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, and environmental education and interpretation for the present and future generations.

The refuge acquisition boundary spans over 49,500 acres and includes large sections of wetlands associated with the Waccamaw and Great Pee Dee Rivers and a smaller section along the Little Pee Dee River. Presently, the refuge lands total approximately 11,000 acres.

Habitats within Waccamaw Refuge’s acquisition boundary include 6,166 acres of upland forest, located primarily on Sandy Island, and the remaining balance made up primarily of jurisdictional wetlands. The wetland diversity of this refuge is what sets it apart from most others found along the east coast.

Wetland habitats range from historic, broken and actively managed tidal ricefields, to black water and alluvial flood plain forested wetlands of the Waccamaw and Great Pee Dee Rivers. These tidal freshwater wetlands are some of the most diverse freshwater wetland systems found in North America and they offer many important habitats for migratory birds, fish and resident wildlife. Species such as the swallow-tailed kite, osprey, wood stork, white ibis, prothonotary warbler, and many species of waterfowl can be observed on a seasonal basis.

Over 400 species of animals are supported by the variety of habitats on the refuge, including four endangered species. Most notable, the refuge area supports the highest density of nesting swallow-tailed kites in South Carolina and is the northernmost documented nesting for this species within its range. Additionally, these wetlands play a critical role in the filtration and storm water retention of the primary drinking water resource for the greater Grand Strand region.

Facilities

A temporary headquarters is located in Georgetown at 1601 N. Fraser Street (Highway 701); telephone 843/527 8069. Plans for a refuge headquarters/visitor center are currently underway. This facility will be located on Highway 701, midway between Georgetown and Conway at Yauhannah Bluff, overlooking the Great Pee Dee River and Yauhannah Lake. The facility will offer opportunities for environmental education to local schools and communities as well as interpretation and information on the Waccamaw Refuge.

Activities

Permitted activities are allowed only in designated public use areas. Activities which are not specifically permitted are prohibited, including collecting of all plants, animals, and artifacts.

Additional information concerning recreational activities is available at the refuge headquarters.

Permitted Activities

Boating, canoeing, and kayaking in the rivers and creeks throughout the refuge.

Freshwater fishing opportunities are available year-round. Contact refuge office for additional information.

Hunting for deer, turkey, hog, squirrel, and waterfowl are permitted during the refuge hunt season. A hunting brochure is available at the refuge office.

Hiking is permitted along Great Pee Dee River and Bull Creek at the Highway 701 bridge just north of Yauhannah Lake. Excellent opportunities for wildlife observation and photography can be found by boating through Big and Little Bull Creeks.

Environmental Education. The refuge hosts Earth Stewards, a partnership between local schools, the SEWEE Association and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide a structured nine week environmental education curriculum for fifth graders.

All pets must be on a leash.

Prohibited Activities

Camping. Campgrounds are located in nearby State Parks and on the Francis Marion National Forest.

Fires of any type.

Feeding, enticing or disturbing wildlife.

Cutting of timber.

Firearms or weapons of any type, except approved firearms used in conjunction with the refuge hunts.

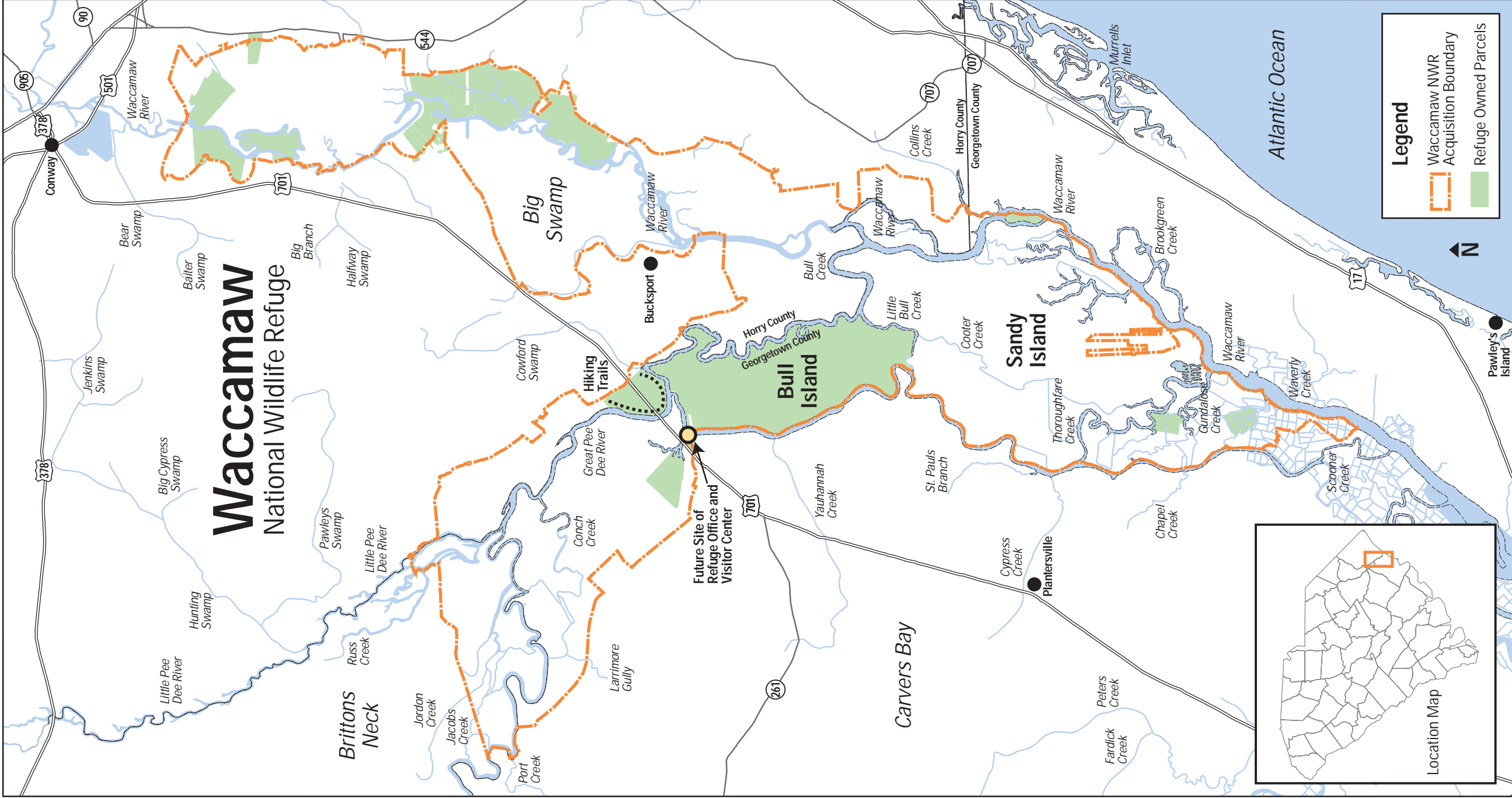
Littering

Entry into areas posted as closed.

All photos are courtesy of Karen Beshears.



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 Website <http://southeast.fws.gov/waccamaw>
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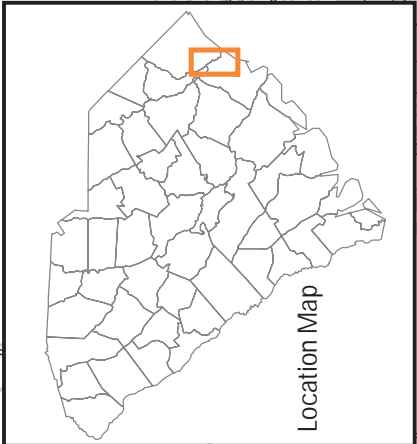


Waccamaw

National Wildlife Refuge

Legend

- Waccamaw NWR Acquisition Boundary
- Refuge Owned Parcels



Location Map