

A Tale of Two Programs

Over two decades of land conservation successes in Beaufort County



Photo Credit: Juliana Smith

Rural and Critical Lands Program

Photo Credit: Juliana Smith



**The County's 1st land
conservation program**




Established in 2000



**Approved by a successful
bond referendum**



**Funds generated
through property taxes**



“Beaufort County has experienced a very high rate of growth and the Beaufort County Council recognizes the need to preserve land that has scenic, natural, recreational, rural, and open space character which is deemed essential to the County's quality of life to provide for and protect natural areas and open space.....to protect water quality from harmful effects of over-development, to preserve land for recreational activities, to preserve farm and forest land, to preserve the rural character of Beaufort County, and to protect other environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, marsh lands and headwater areas.”

2018 Bond Referendum Resolution

Sustained Support

**Nov
2000**

**Nov
2006**

**Nov
2012**

**Nov
2014**

**Nov
2018**

73 % Yes Vote
\$40,000,000
Approved

76 % Yes Vote
\$50,000,000
Approved

63 % Yes Vote
\$25,000,000
Approved

73 % Yes Vote
\$20,000,000
Approved

70 % Yes Vote
\$25,000,000
Approved



24 Years and Counting



\$160,000,000 Collected



121 Projects Funded



29,251 Acres Protected

All Beaufort County-owned
Fee Simple RCL Properties are
managed by the Passive
Parks Department



Established 2018



Managing 14,161 acres



**16 public passive parks
totaling 5,522 acres**



**Future parks in
development**

Beaufort County Passive Parks

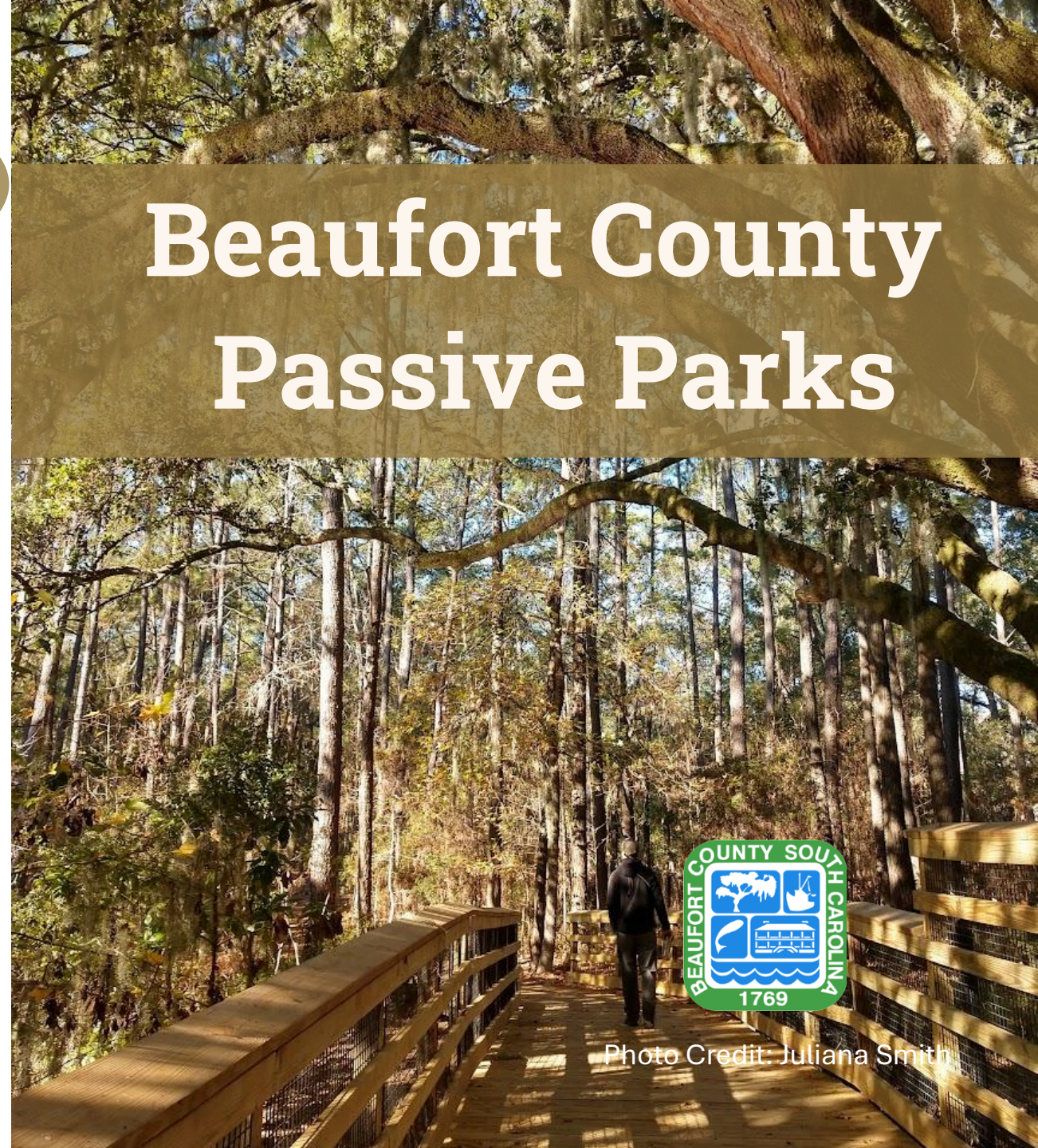


Photo Credit: Juliana Smith

Green Space Program



Photo Credit: Juliana Smith



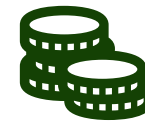
**The 1st of its kind in
South Carolina**



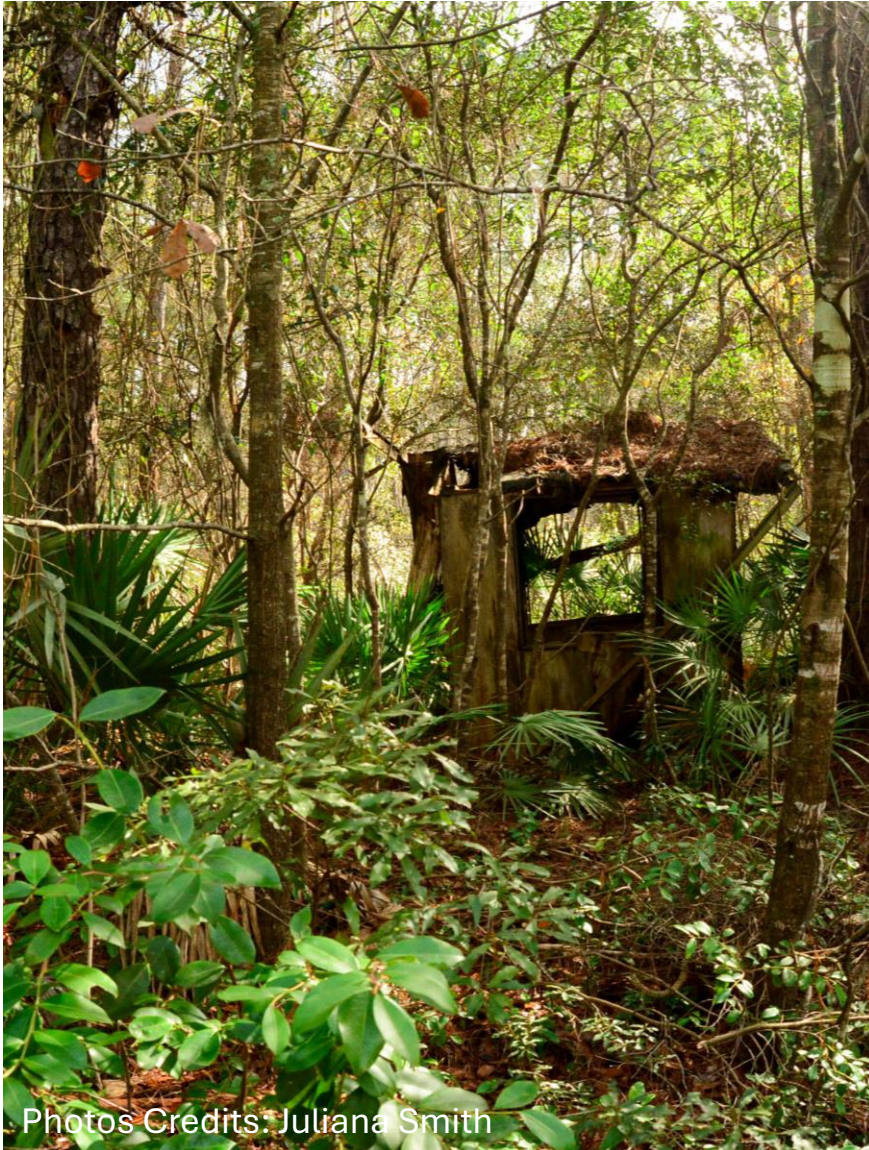
Established in 2023



**Approved by a successful
referendum**



**Funds generated
through 1% sales tax**



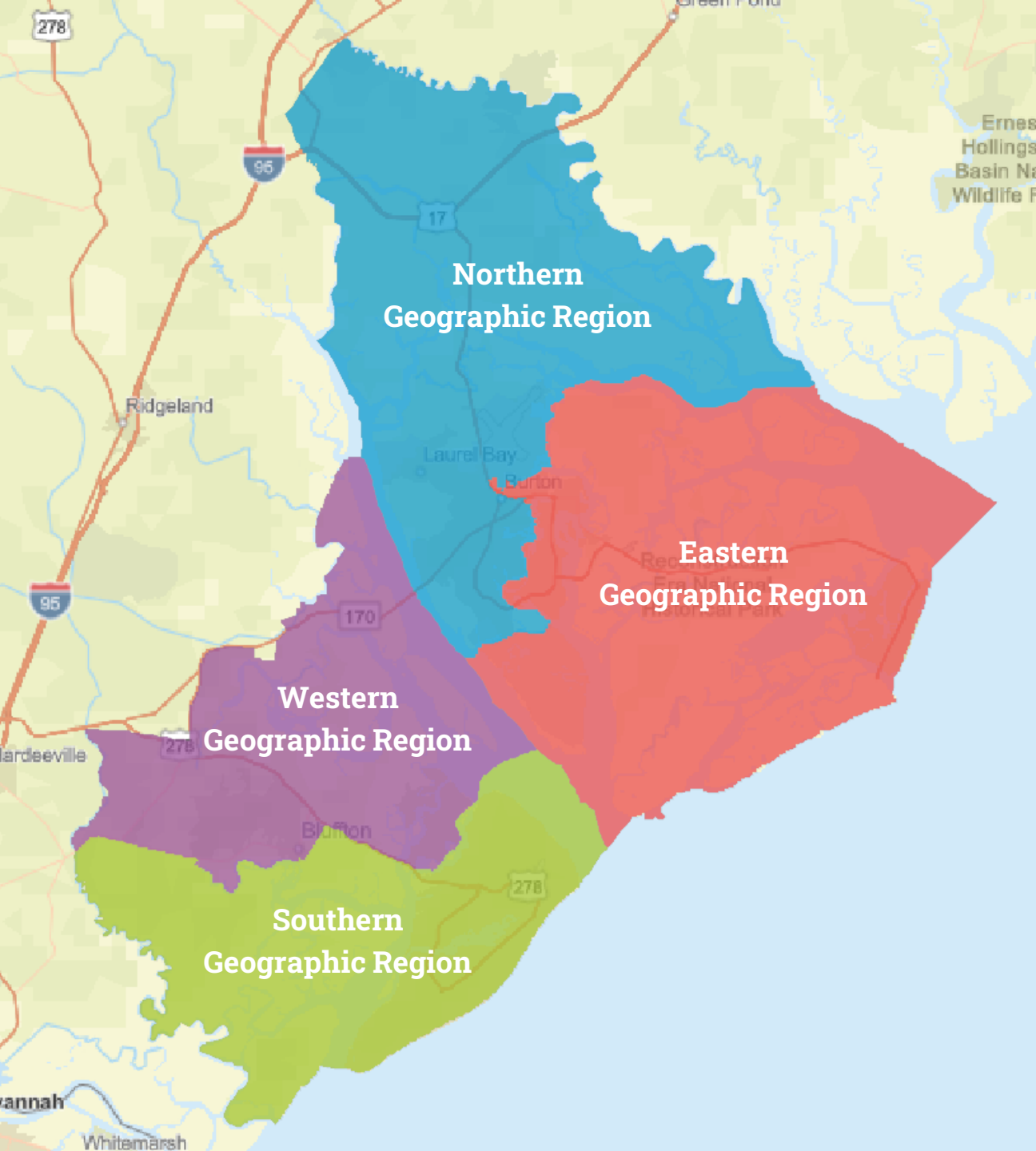
Photos Credits: Juliana Smith



PROJECT TYPES

- 1. Conservation Easements**
- 2. Fee Simple Purchase**
- 3. Farmland Preservation**
- 4. Corridor Preservation**
- 5. PUD Buydowns**





ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. One member of County Council
2. One member of Beaufort County Legislative Delegation
3. One member who is knowledgeable about the geography and condition of Beaufort County's land
4. One citizen member representing the Northern portion of the County
5. One citizen member representing the Southern portion of the County
6. One citizen member representing the Eastern portion of the County
7. One citizen member representing the Western portion of the County

Program History

Photo Credit: Juliana Smith

**May
2022**

State Adopts
County Green
Space Sales Tax
Law

**Oct
2022**

Beaufort
County
prepares for
Penny Sales
Tax Voter
Referendum
(Ord 2022/39)

**Nov
2022**

Voters approve
Green Space
Penny Sales Tax

**May
2023**

First Meeting of
Advisory
Committee is
held

**Aug
2023**

Program Criteria
and Application
Process is adopted
(Ord 2023/34)

**Dec
2023**

Advisory
Committee
reviews first set
of Applications,
including
Gregorie Neck

**Mar
2024**

Gregorie Neck is
the first project
funded by the
Green Space
Program
(Res 2024/06)



Gregorie Neck Protected!

- **4,400 acres**
- **In Jasper County**
- **Partnership approach**
- **Leveraging funds**
- **Holistic Port Royal Sound Benefits**

BENEFITS



**Reduced Demand
on Services**



**Preserved Critical
Habitat**



**Protected Water
Quality**



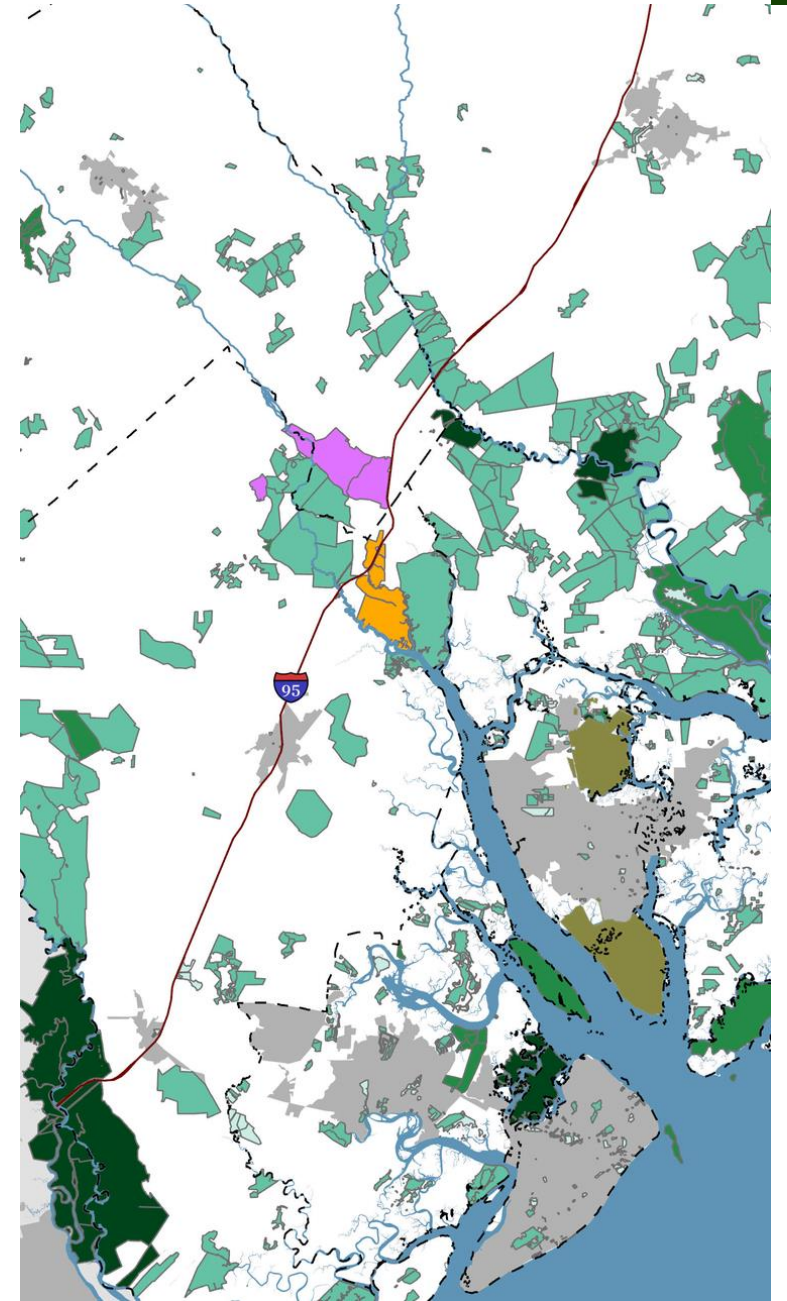
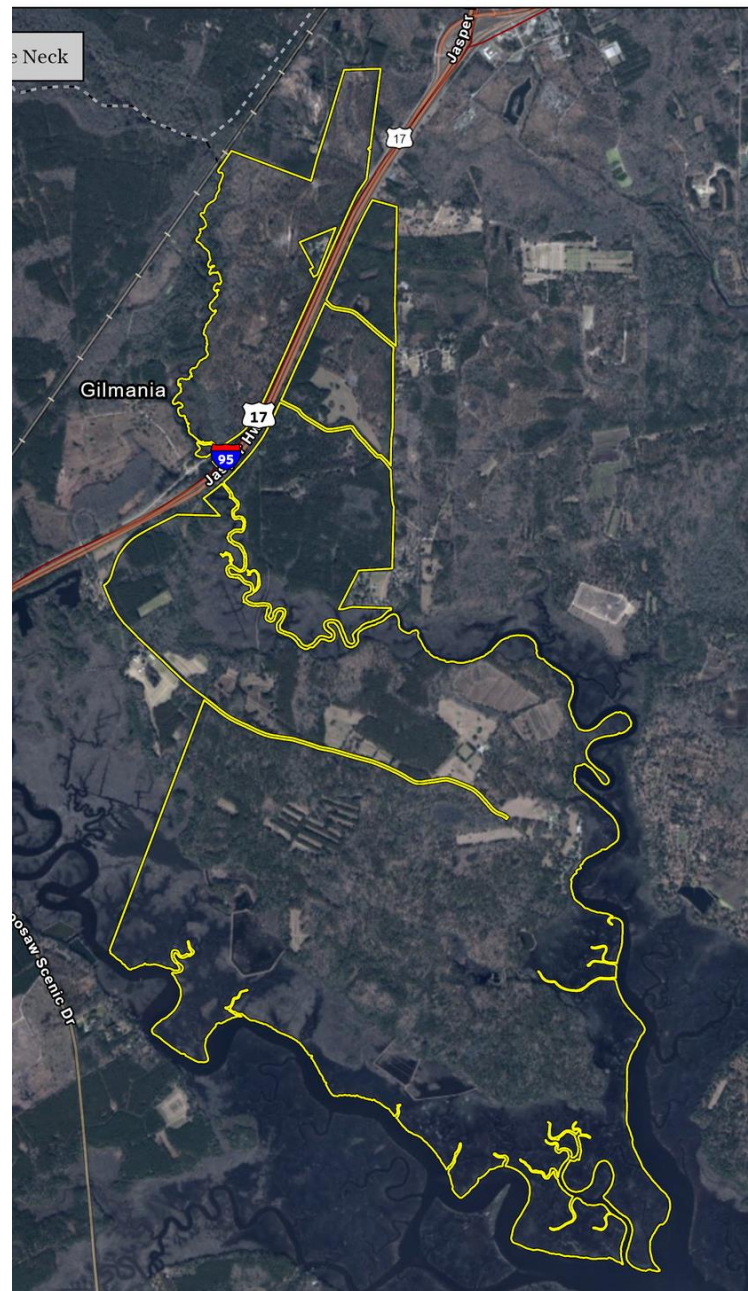
**Bolstered
Resilience**



**Preserved Historical
Importance**



**Protected Military
Mission**



THANK YOU



Photo Credit: Juliana Smith