

CONGAREE LAND TRUST

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Congaree Land Trust Announces Conservation of over 655 Acres *Properties preserve a family's legacy of land stewardship while supporting S.C.'s military mission*

COLUMBIA, SC—Over 655 acres in Richland and Sumter counties—consisting of three different tracts of private land—are now conserved, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Congaree Land Trust (CLT), The Conservation Fund, and the properties' owners. Now under conservation easement, these three properties—Seay Farms LLC and the Rye Tract (Richland) and the Britton Family Farm (Sumter)—will permanently protect land of conservation priority while providing a buffer for two important military bases in central South Carolina.

“Conservation partnership with The Conservation Fund and the military has allowed us to conserve significant areas of land between Fort Jackson and Shaw Air Force Base, very close to the Wateree River,” remarks Mary Crockett, CLT Land Protection Director. “We are honored to be able to work with our partners to deliver impactful conservation outcomes that support our community and our military. With these recent easements, we’ve also been able to grant the wishes of our landowners to preserve a legacy of stewardship they’ve envisioned for their land.”

“My late husband, John Britton, had a lifelong passion for preserving the natural beauty of South Carolina,” says Elizabeth Britton, conservation easement donor of Britton Family Farms. “His passion became my passion. When we acquired this land, we worked hard to preserve and enhance it as a wildlife habitat for the enjoyment of future generations. I am thankful that the Congaree Land Trust has given me the opportunity to carry out the vision John and I shared.”

The conservation of these lands was made possible in part by a grant from the United States Department of Defense in support of the Midlands Area Joint Installation Consortium (MAJIC). MAJIC seeks to promote the cooperative use of land, air and water resources in the Midlands while effectively supporting the military's training facilities in the area. As a MAJIC partner, Congaree Land Trust has collaborated with The Conservation Fund and DOD/REPI since 2008 to conserve over 20,400 acres through 25 conservation easement projects.

“The Conservation Fund is excited to continue our work with Congaree Land Trust and the other members of the MAJIC group to protect properties in Sumter and Richland counties,” said Jason Johnson, The Conservation Fund's South Carolina Director. “These three conservation easements will simultaneously accomplish goals of many of our partners – protect quality habitat in and around the COWASEE Basin, maintain traditional recreation and economic uses of the land, and limit incompatible development to maintain military mission at the five Midland military installations. We thank U.S. Senators Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott and U.S. Representatives James Clyburn, Ralph Norman, and Joe Wilson for the critical federal funding from the DoD's REPI Program. However, I am most grateful to the landowners for their long term care of their properties and their generosity.”

“I am gratified by the opportunity to preserve a unique ecosystem,” says Frank McLeod, Seay Family Farm owner. “The property has a lot of history and I have been looking forward to protecting it for some time.”

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About Congaree Land Trust: The Congaree Land Trust (CLT) is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization committed to conserving the natural and scenic lands in central South Carolina. Since 1992, CLT has conserved a total of **89, 273.89** acres, representing **197** properties across **14** counties. Conservation easements help protect the natural areas that fuel our state’s natural resource-based economy and define our way of life. Learn more about CLT’s work at <https://congarzelt.org>.