

FOR LAND'S SAKE

2026 Volume 2



MAJOR MILESTONE FOR STORE CREEK CORNER

Behind the scenes, big things are happening at the Store Creek Corner property. At the beginning of the year, we applied for two major grants to pay off the commercial loan we took out to purchase this iconic property to create an Edisto community space and EIOLT's future home. We are proud to announce that we received funding from both the Charleston County Greenbelt Program and the South Carolina Conservation Bank! Thanks to these grant funds and a number of contributions from wonderful donors, we fully satisfied our loan and are debt free!

It is now time for us to roll up our sleeves and move into the next phase to stabilize and revitalize the two historic buildings (Bailey House & Bailey Store), while also beginning to explore the best way to convert the Old Post Office Restaurant space into a combination office space for the land trust and a multiuse community space.

Thank you to everyone who attended our January Open House and/or has shared their ideas for what they would like to see at the site. We have a great start on creating the vision for the future uses of the Store Creek Corner. Our two highest priorities for the use of the site are a future home for EIOLT, and a shared community space that offers myriad opportunities for locals and visitors to enjoy this historic location for generations to come...*continued on pg. 7*



103 ACRES PROTECTED ALONG SPRING GROVE ROAD

This April, the Edisto Island Open Land Trust had the honor to help protect the Preachers Pond tract, 103 acres of land along Spring Grove Road in the Osborn community, north of Highway-17 between Ravenel and Jacksonboro. Yet, the future of this property was not always so certain nor bright. In the 1990s it was purchased as part of a larger tract to become a landfill. After a long legal battle that plan was ultimately defeated by the community. This biodiverse and historically significant land was spared eminent destruction, and now is protected for the benefit of all.

The Preachers Pond tract is situated within a major conservation corridor which connects Edisto Beach all the way to the outskirts of Summerville. The property was originally a part of Encampment Plantation, a property that played an important role in the Revolutionary War for the defense of the Jacksonboro Assembly in 1782 whilst the British occupied Charleston. The tract's pine savannas and historic rice fields support many of species of conservation concern and nesting habitat for a wide array of migratory birds. Thanks to the generosity and foresight of Bill & Coy Thomas, landowners, this important property is protected from development, forever.

Bill Thomas, easement donor, wanted to share the following,

"I have completed several conservation easements in my life and the team at EIOLT were by far the most detailed in documenting the varieties of birds, trees and vegetation on our property. This truly furthered the excitement that my wife and I felt about our purchase of the property. This detailed and thorough attention to our property truly showed us that EIOLT wanted us to understand what our land and easement represents for the future generations. I have never had that amount of detail provided before."

The Thomases' easement marks EIOLT's most northern conservation success to date within the ACE Basin. As threats to our natural resources continue to inch further south towards Edisto Island, EIOLT is directing effort north to conserve threatened lands close to home. To protect Edisto forever, we also need to protect land beyond the Dawhoo in Osborn, Adams Run, Meggett, Hollywood, and Ravenel. EIOLT must look at the bigger picture and extend our 30-year record of success to the bigger East Edisto community.

INDIGO BUNTING



As Bill sees it,

"With the development growth we are seeing throughout this southern portion of Charleston County, I certainly feel very confident the EIOLT can work with any size property owner who wants to consider an easement. EIOLT showed me a great opportunity within the Charleston County Greenbelt Program in which I could not only gain long term tax benefits but capital to support my property land management plans and operations."

The Charleston County Greenbelt Program, funded through the half-cent Transportation Sales Tax, has been a truly awesome force for good within Charleston County and especially on Edisto Island. Over 50% of Edisto Island is protected in no small part thanks to the funding of the Greenbelt Program. Greenbelt provides landowners across Charleston County, no matter their financial situation, an opportunity to achieve a conservation outcome for their land. If you or someone you know owns land on or near Edisto Island, and you wish to see that land protected from harm, EIOLT can help you achieve a lasting conservation legacy for your land, your family, and the ACE Basin.

BILL & COY THOMAS



RED-HEADED WOODPECKER

ADVENTURES AT GREEN RIVER PRESERVE

Our Young Naturalists once again spent two unforgettable weeks at Green River Preserve Camp, and from all the stories we've heard, they had an incredible experience!

Throughout their time in the North Carolina mountains, the students embraced every opportunity to explore the outdoors. Some challenged themselves with a two-week backpacking expedition, carrying everything they needed as they hiked through the beautiful wilderness. Others experienced their first overnight camping adventure, discovering just how rewarding it can be to step outside their comfort zones.

Each morning begins with mentor hikes, where campers connect with nature while learning from experienced naturalists. Their days are filled with kayaking, exploring mountain streams and forests, creating art, building lifelong friendships, and discovering strengths they never knew they had.

One of the most unique aspects of Green River Preserve is that campers spend their entire two-week session without electronics. Without phones or tablets, they immerse themselves fully in the natural world, build meaningful relationships, and gain confidence through real-life experiences that will stay with them long after camp ends.



As we celebrate this year's campers and the adventures they experienced, we also take a moment to remember one of our own, Lydia Woods. Last month, our Young Naturalist family experienced a heartbreaking loss when Lydia tragically passed away following an accident.

Lydia was one of the first Young Naturalists we had the privilege of sending to Green River Preserve four years ago. Watching her flourish during her time showed us just how life-changing this experience could be. She returned home more confident, joyful, and deeply connected to herself and the natural world. Her journey inspired our commitment to making camp possible for as many children as we can.

While Lydia is deeply missed, her legacy lives on in every Young Naturalist who embarks on this adventure. Every camper exploring a mountain trail, paddling a kayak, or discovering something new about themselves is a reminder of the lasting impact these experiences can have. We are incredibly grateful to everyone whose support continues to make these opportunities possible.

As we welcome this year's campers home, we know they will return with stories, friendships, and memories that will stay with them for a lifetime—just as they did for Lydia. Her adventurous spirit will always remain a part of the Young Naturalists program.





YN Director Krystal Parsons with GRP Executive Director Catherine Schenck and a few of our GRP CAMPERS



LYDIA WOODS

HUTCHINSON HOUSE MUSEUM UPDATE

During the last week of May through the first week of June, we made major headway towards the museum production at The Hutchinson House!

Interpretation team members from VZBLYF alongside their crew spent an incredible two weeks at the site fabricating, painting, designing, and installing beautiful masterpieces to showcase the Hutchinson Family and Clark Community history. Together, we can proudly claim that essentially all the museum installations were fabricated on site or locally--a feat that is very uncommon for museums and a testimony to the dedication and craftsmanship of our team.

Of course, there is still more work to do before opening to the public and later this month the crew is returning to continue this great progress! As we prepare to welcome the public, only a few essential infrastructure projects remain. To ensure a safe and accessible visitor experience, we must complete a permanent parking area, visitor restroom facilities, and exterior lighting. These final improvements are critical to opening The Hutchinson House and sharing this treasured landmark with the community.

Lastly, we'd like to extend gratitude for everyone's patience and support throughout this journey, and for your commitment to preserve this important Edisto Island landmark. We hope you consider a contribution to help us open the Hutchinson House to the public.

[Hutchinson.Givesmart.com](https://hutchinson.givesmart.com)

Together, we are ensuring that this historic place will educate and inspire generations to come.

HH Intern Jayne Flynn & VZBLYF
Project Manager Shante Cozier



HAPPY 250TH INDEPENDENCE DAY!

As we celebrate the United States' 250th anniversary of national independence this July, we hope that you contemplate what it means to be free in the U.S. and the variety of experiences people of all backgrounds have endured since the founding of our nation. At the future Hutchinson House museum, the question "[What is Freedom?](#)" is used as our central query for visitors to think about, particularly through the lens of the Hutchinson Family, Clark Community and greater Sea-Island settlement communities.

EIOLT volunteer extraordinaire, Bob Hare discusses exhibit building with J.E. Azmi, Creative Director of VZBLYF.



Art Handler, Nick Rypkema
painting exhibit elements



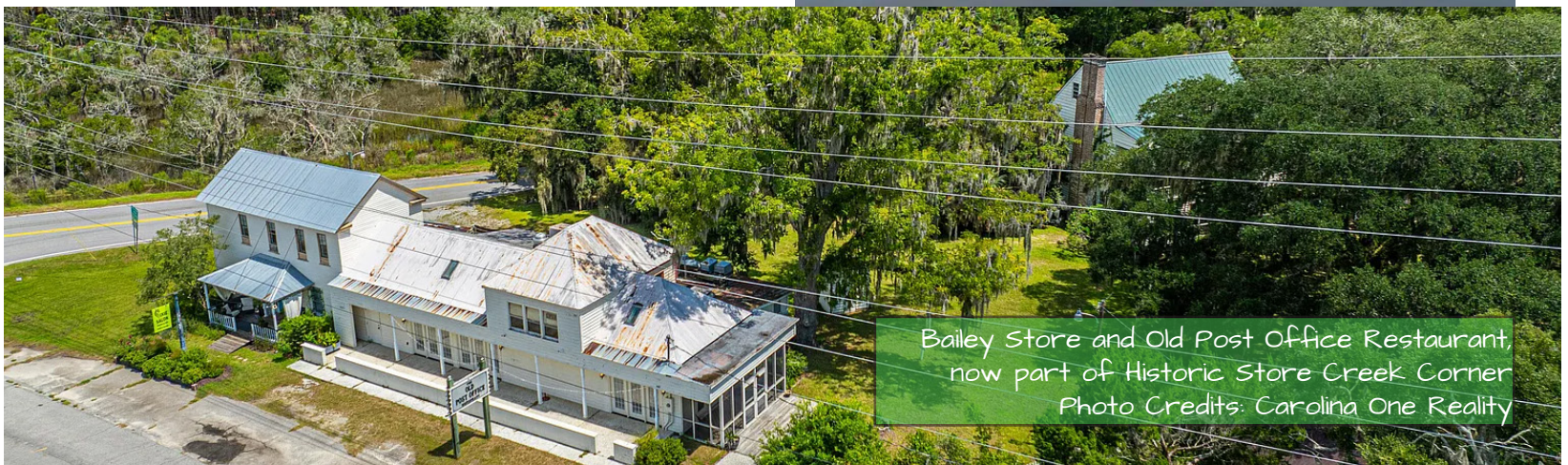
STORE CREEK CORNER CONTINUED

We are currently gathering a team of experts to help us fully understand the structural challenges and preservation needs for these iconic buildings, along with creating a site design to accommodate the various uses. The land trust intends to provide a new community space that we will all be proud of. Davis Architects approached us very early on offering to lend a hand with their expertise at no cost, and they are providing amazing technical assistance and are working to create an exciting design vision for future office space.

For the time being, our offices remain above the Edisto Bookstore and With These Hands Gallery on Highway 174.

The purchase of the historic Store Creek Corner and its historic buildings continues our mission to preserve the rural quality of life on Edisto by protecting lands, waterways, scenic vistas, and culture through conservation and education. We successfully rejoined two adjacent properties, protected one of the most historically significant commercial corners on the island, and are actively protecting the waterway of Store Creek. Two long-forgotten gas tanks remained buried in front of the Bailey Store building; tanks so old, the state of South Carolina did not have a record of them! Upon our acquisition of the property and in conjunction with the SCDES Underground Storage Tank Program and Brownsfields program, we removed the environmentally hazardous tanks, are finalizing the remediation of the soil and groundwater contamination, and are actively testing the water quality in the area. We are also helping restore the creek banks along the property by planting new Spartina grass and allowing the natural marsh edge to reestablish itself.

Thank you for believing in our shared vision for the future of Edisto and continuing to support our conservation efforts. If you are interested in donating specifically towards the improvements at Store Creek Corner, you can designate your gift to "SCC" when you contribute.





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Sign up for our eNews at edisto.org

Our Mission: To preserve the rural quality of life on Edisto by protecting lands, waterways, scenic vistas, and culture through conservation and education.

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SAVE the DATE

EDISTO ISLAND OPEN LAND TRUST
ONLINE AUCTION

Starts
FRIDAY 25
SEPTEMBER

Through
SUNDAY 27
SEPTEMBER

MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW