



The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Partnership

Building Collaborative Action for Shorebird Conservation

15 February 2018

Mr. Alvin Taylor, Director
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 167
Columbia, SC 29202-0167
TaylorA@dnr.sc.gov

Dear Mr. Taylor,

Congratulations on the acceptance of the expansion of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) site that is now called the Cape Romain – Santee Delta Region. Inclusion of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) properties in the WHSRN site designation (Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center Heritage Preserve, North Santee Bar Seabird Sanctuary, Santee-Delta Wildlife Management Area, Santee Coastal Reserve Wildlife Management Area and Capers Island Heritage Preserve) truly makes this site one of the most astounding area for shorebirds in North America, providing more 50 miles of mostly undeveloped Atlantic coastal habitat. As noted in the nomination, the site's International WHSRN designation is due to it supporting more than 100,000 shorebirds per year. In addition, approximately 2,000 American Oystercatchers winter in the area (representing about 15% of the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf coast population), and a similar percentage of the flyway population of Short-billed Dowitcher occurs there. It is also likely that more than 10% of *rufa* Red Knot and Semipalmated Plover populations use the site.

Expansion of the site is testimony to SCDNR's conservation legacy and foresight in providing high quality coastal habitat for shorebirds and other waterbirds, cooperation and collaboration with other landowners to achieve conservation results, and understanding of the urgent need for shorebird conservation. In addition to your leadership, we commend SCDNR's property managers and shorebird staff that recognized the importance of the area, at an international scale, and continually promote its conservation.

The WHSRN was established in 1985 and today serves as a voluntary, non-regulatory network of public and private partners working to protect the most important breeding and nonbreeding habitats for shorebirds throughout the Americas. The mission of WHSRN is to *conserve shorebird species and their habitats across the Americas through a network of partners at key sites designated and managed effectively for shorebirds*. To help achieve this mission, the WHSRN-US Committee was formed to support WHSRN site partners in the USA, identify new WHSRN sites and promote the Network among site partners. We have recently reinvigorated the WHSRN-US Committee and offer assistance to you, SCDNR staff, and other site partners to help achieve effective shorebird conservation at the Cape Romain – Santee Delta Region site.

We welcome you into the network and look forward to working together to achieve shorebird conservation in South Carolina and throughout the hemisphere. Please direct any inquires to me (rpenner@tnc.org) or Brad Andres, National Coordinator, U. S. Shorebird Conservation Partnership (brad_andres@fws.gov)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert L. Penner II".

Chair, WHSRN-US
U.S. Shorebird Conservation Partnership Council

Avian Programs Manager, The Nature Conservancy
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