

**CONSERVATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA:  
Achieving Maximum Effectiveness**

A Brief Survey of the South Carolina Conservation Community  
and the Business of Environmental Advocacy

By J. Matthew Whitehead

Environmental Law of South Carolina

University of South Carolina School of Law

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

This paper will review and assess community-based environmental advocacy in South Carolina. Various environmental organizations operate continually within South Carolina and are often more prominent in their environmental advocacy efforts than grassroots, community-based groups that may form solely to advocate a particular stance on a singular, community issue. This review will attempt to survey environmental advocacy in South Carolina by considering and discussing: (1) organizational background of several environmental groups; (2) issues addressed; (3) strategies and tactics employed by such organizations; and (4) successes and failures within the recent past, including possible external issues that factor into their abilities.

The review will cover national environmental groups with a presence in South Carolina, as well as discussion regarding how these organizations capitalize on cooperation with South

Carolina based community interest groups. Among the various groups addressed are: (1) the South Carolina chapter of the Sierra Club; (2) South Carolina Wildlife Federation; (3) Coastal Conservation League; and (4) South Carolina Environmental Law Project. Part II of this paper will briefly address the initial issue of standing that individuals and organizations must overcome in order to seek judicial relief.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, this part will address the legal requirements to establish standing for both individuals and for organizations. The purpose of including a discussion of doctrinal standing issues is to briefly illustrate some of the difficulties that environmental advocates must face when seeking to take legal action. Such constraints on judicial enforcement mechanisms are demonstrative of the necessity of alternative strategies to advocate environmental issues. Due to the often difficult legal hurdles, as well as the secondary effects of litigative advocacy, many environmental interest groups pursue advocacy through the political realm, public relations and awareness campaigns, and environmental fellowship. Parts of this paper will focus on these viable alternatives.

Part III of this paper will review organizational structure and strategies. Within Part III, general organizational structure will be discussed, including membership, use of lobbyist, funding, mobility, and demographics. Additionally, Part III will look at some of the specific issues addressed by the various environmental interest groups and gauge the organizations' successes. This review will discuss available strategies and tactics to advocate these issues and how such issues may be prioritized. It should be noted that I have taken some liberties in conjecturing on certain cause and effects, as well as proposing various ideas. I do this, while admittedly not an authority on these subjects per se, but as someone who has taken time research

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<sup>1</sup> It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide a detailed analysis of constitutional standing issues. However, it is intended that Part II covers standing sufficiently to describe the general and current status of the law in this regard.

these groups and given at least preliminary thought on the subject matter. It is my hope that the reader will take the facts included herein as a guide, and realize the current state of environmental advocacy in South Carolina. With this, maybe instead of focusing all efforts on advocacy itself, greater reinvestment can be made into the debate of how to strengthen and grow the tools that exist used for advocacy within South Carolina.

## II. STANDING

The issue of constitutional standing has long been developed and interpreted by the federal courts and the United States Supreme Court. This is legal test that must initially be satisfied by any party seeking judicial action on a constitutional claim. “Due to a major 1992 Supreme Court case, *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*, the once routine issue of whether an environmental advocacy group or a citizen has legal standing to sue under a federal environmental statute is now an intensely factual battle.”<sup>2</sup> Previously, organizational standing was generally presumed; however, “[n]ow, proof of standing is a rigorous and often difficult hurdle for environmental groups and citizens, and discovery as to the plaintiff’s standing can win a case for a defendant long before the environmental issues are ever examined.”<sup>3</sup>

### A) Standing Defined

“Standing,” as defined by Black’s Law Dictionary, is “[a] party’s right to make a legal claim or seek judicial enforcement of a duty or right.”<sup>4</sup> However, an understanding of the “standing to sue doctrine” requires more than simply referring to the dictionary’s definition.

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<sup>2</sup> 35 AM. JUR. 3D 393 *Proof of Facts* § 1 (2004) (footnote omitted).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> BLACK’S LAW DICTIONARY 1413 (7th ed. 1999).

Standing “is a legal concept meaning essentially that the one bringing a lawsuit must have a sufficient personal and direct stake in the controversy to obtain a judicial resolution of it.”<sup>5</sup>

“Standing is therefore a kind of entrance examination one must pass before getting to present a legal issue to a court for resolution.”<sup>6</sup>

## **B) Individual Standing**

The standing issue in environmental citizens suits is often a difficult one because of the nature of the harm, meaning that this is frequently a public harm, affecting a broad base of citizens equally.<sup>7</sup> The issue of such standing was addressed in *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*.<sup>8</sup> The United States Supreme Court in *Lujan*, developed the current test for which a plaintiff must establish standing.<sup>9</sup> The test thus laid out requires that: “First, the plaintiff must have suffered an ‘injury in fact’ - an invasion of a legally protected interest which is (a) concrete and particularized, and (b) ‘actual or imminent, not conjectural or hypothetical.’ Second, there must be a causal connection between the injury and the conduct complained of - the injury has to be ‘fairly . . . trace[able] to the challenged action of the defendant, and not . . . th[e] result [of] the independent action of some third party not before the court.’ Third, it must be ‘likely,’ as opposed to merely ‘speculative,’ that the injury will be ‘redressed by a favorable decision.’”<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the plaintiff must establish, “first, that the plaintiff ‘has suffered an injury in fact,’ . . .

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<sup>5</sup> 35 AM. JUR. 3D 393 *Proof of Facts* § 1 (2004).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*, 504 U.S. 555 (1992).

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at 560-61.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* at 560 (internal citations omitted) (alterations in original).

second, the plaintiff must establish causation, . . . and lastly, there must be redress ability . . . .<sup>11</sup>

This case has helped cause the issue of legal standing to become more of a factual battle for environmental groups or interested individuals seeking to sue under federal environmental statutes. *Lujan* has created a significant hurdle that may keep many parties out of the court regardless of the environmental substantive issues at dispute.

### **C) Organizational Standing**

The issue of organizational standing is of significant relevance in the world of environmental advocacy. This is because many organizations, such as those discussed herein, seek to bring legal actions to enforce various environmental laws. Therefore, it is necessary that these environmental organizations establish sufficient standing so that they can pursue judicial enforcement. It is not necessary that the organization suffer any injury itself, per se, as it may represent and assert the rights of its membership if: “its members would otherwise have standing to sue in their own right, the interests at stake are germane to the organization's purpose, and neither the claim asserted nor the relief requested requires the participation of individual members in the lawsuit.”<sup>12</sup>

The doctrinal prerequisite of constitutional standing may present some difficulty for environmental advocacy. Additionally, time, money and other resources are significant considerations that must be weighed in the decision of whether to pursue legal action. This may boil down to the concept of access to the legal process, however, other viable alternatives exists

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<sup>11</sup> 35 AM. JUR. 3D 393 *Proof of Facts* § 1 (2004).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.* See *Hunt v. Wash. State Apple Adver. Comm'n*, 432 U.S. 333 (1977). *But see* Michael J. Wray, *Still Standing?: Citizen Suits, Justice Scalia's New Theory of Standing and the Decision in Steel Company v. Citizens for a Better Environment*, 8 S.C. ENVTL. L.J. 207 (2000) (discussing a more stringent standing requirement).

to pursuit of such legal advocacy. For example, much can be accomplished through the channels of the political process, the legislative process, as well as public awareness campaigns. Parts III and IV will consider how such options to advocacy are implemented by various groups. Furthermore, this paper will discuss the importance of remaining dedicated and investing in all of the instruments of environmental advocacy.

### **III. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ANALYSIS**

#### **A. The Sierra Club, South Carolina Chapter**

##### **1) General Overview**

The South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club received its charter for existence from the National Sierra Club and was founded on June 24, 1978, as a private, 501(c)4 non-profit organization.<sup>13</sup> As a 501(c)4 non-profit, donations are not tax deductible; however, the Sierra Club does allow for donations to its 501(c)3 national foundation which are tax deductible.<sup>14</sup> The South Carolina Chapter maintains a website at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org>, and has an office located in Columbia, South Carolina.<sup>15</sup> Currently, the Sierra Club of South Carolina has approximately 5,000 volunteer members throughout nine local groups.<sup>16</sup> While no precise

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<sup>13</sup> South Carolina Sierra Club Fact Sheet, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/SC%20Facts.html> (Apr. 27, 2005).

<sup>14</sup> *See id.*

<sup>15</sup> Sierra Club South Carolina Chapter, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/> (Apr. 27, 2005).

Sierra Club of South Carolina

Post Office Box 2388

Columbia, SC 29202

<sup>16</sup> South Carolina Sierra Club Fact Sheet, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/SC%20Facts.html>

number is available, approximately 15 to 20 percent of the chapter's 5,000 members are active (defined by voting) members.<sup>17</sup> However, as one might expect, the membership tends to be really motivated on environmental issues.<sup>18</sup> Nationally, the Sierra Club is comprised of some 750,000 members, with 65 chapters and over 400 local groups.<sup>19</sup>

Such a great constituency may correlate in the Sierra Club's ability to carry out multiple programs on behalf of its members. The fact that 5,000 South Carolinians belong to the organization, and perhaps many more align their environmental views with the club, there is likely to be significant political weight that the Sierra Club can exert in South Carolina's policy making. In addition, this gives the Sierra Club a larger voice and the ability to connect with local, community groups that may desire to take on certain environmental or conservational campaigns in their own area. This is important because, while the Sierra Club does have nine local groups throughout the state of South Carolina, these groups still are spread out in a way that may make direct participation with the organization difficult for many individuals. Therefore, an ongoing commitment and affiliation with the club may be an unreasonable burden for residents in remote parts of the state, but the structure is so that support can be provided on occasion to a particular issue in any part of South Carolina. This could be one of the greatest strengths of the Sierra Club.

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(Apr. 27, 2005). The nine local South Carolina groups include: the John Bachman group; William Bartram group; Nancy Cathcart group; Foothills group; Henry's Knob group; Robert Lunz group; Pee Dee group; Swamp Fox group; and the Winyah group.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Robert Guild, Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 5, 2005).

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> South Carolina Sierra Club Fact Sheet, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/SC%20Facts.html> (Apr. 27, 2005).

## 2) Funding

Substantially all the club's funding comes directly from individual contributions, with only a very small portion of its income coming from advertising and sales.<sup>20</sup> Of these contributions, "88.8 cents of every dollar [given] to the Sierra Club goes to conservation programs."<sup>21</sup> The Sierra Club's organizational structure protects the substantial investments of its contributing members by directing such a high percentage of these donations to the organization's ongoing projects that, ideally, these members desire to participate. Again, as mentioned above, individuals wishing to donate and have their donations be tax-deductible must expressly so state, and these contributions will be directed to the Sierra Club Foundation.<sup>22</sup> This creates an ability for the organization to collect greater funding from individuals that desire to make contributions to the Sierra Club's cause, but are in a financial situation that may hinder their ability to not discount such donations.

The Sierra Club is exemplary of a successful member-funded organization because the size allows for increased certainty of future funding. As such, future planning should be easier, without substantial concerns of the organization's ability to invest. Also, with the knowledge of its members that the organization is self-funded, the Sierra Club's members have increased responsibility to see that the funding is present to achieve their objectives. Furthermore, in twenty-first century America, time is often the most difficult commodity to donate. Much of the membership is comprised of part-time environmental advocates and full-time moms and dads.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *Id.* Approximately 99% of incoming funds is attributed to contributions.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

<sup>22</sup> Telephone Interview with Ed Fitzgerald, Fundraising Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 3, 2005).

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Robert Guild, Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 5, 2005).

The Sierra Club has the volunteers in place to make the necessary time commitments to carry out the organization's activities, while the substantial remainder of its membership can participate at a valuable level by monetary donations.

One fact of life, though, that a self-funded organization, such as the Sierra Club, must be prepared to accept is that the circumstances of its members are subject to change that may directly impact its financial status. Because the organization is in fact funded through voluntary contributions, the sufficiency of its resources may reflect the well-being of the economy. Therefore, in economic downturns when citizens are more likely to have less expendable income, the Sierra Club will have greater difficulties in collecting funding. However, this has not yet proved to be a substantial interference with its collections goals, and currently, the organization is finding it easier to collect funding for its programs than it did just a few years ago.<sup>24</sup> The best way to mitigate the potential for future funding issues is to maintain an expansive membership, and the Sierra Club may be among the best environmental organizations in the state in having this protection.

### **3) Leadership**

Dell Isham has served as the Executive Director of the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club since 1997.<sup>25</sup> Mr. Isham is the only full-time, paid staff member in the Sierra Club.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, Mr. Isham also serves on the Governor's Statewide Hazardous Material Steering Committee and the South Carolina Environmental Excellence Advisory Committee.<sup>27</sup> Generally,

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<sup>24</sup> Telephone Interview with Ed Fitzgerald, Fundraising Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 3, 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Chapter Leader Biographic Summaries, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/bios.html> (Apr. 27, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> Telephone Interview with Ed Fitzgerald, Fundraising Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 3, 2005).

<sup>27</sup> About CVSC, Board Bios, at <http://www.conservationvotersofsc.org/about.html> (Mar. 27, 2005).

it is the Executive Director's responsibility to generate a resolution on a particular state issue, that is then sent to the governing board for approval.<sup>28</sup> The South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club also employs a part-time contract lobbyist, Robert Barber, Jr.<sup>29</sup> In addition to lobbying for the Sierra Club, Mr. Barber also lobbies on behalf of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation.<sup>30</sup> There are occasions that Mr. Barber lobbies in favor of or in opposition of proposed state legislation for both organizations, but there are times that one group will not take a stance on a matter, while Mr. Barber will still lobby according to the other group's stance. With Mr. Barber working as a liaison for the Sierra Club in the South Carolina Legislature, the organization has the tools in place to most effectively reach its objectives.

#### **4) Policy**

Although national in scope, the matter of determining policy on state issues is the responsibility of the South Carolina state chapter, as it has discretion to determine its own statewide policy.<sup>31</sup> Typically, this translates to the South Carolina Sierra Club focusing mostly on state legislation.<sup>32</sup> For example, the chapter's leadership gets a South Carolina legislative update every week, including contact information regarding proposed legislative action.<sup>33</sup> This assures that the organization is knowledgeable on the activities within the South Carolina

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<sup>28</sup> Telephone Interview with Ed Fitzgerald, Fundraising Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 3, 2005).

<sup>29</sup> *Id.*

<sup>30</sup> Robert Barber, Jr. has been a contract lobbyist for the South Carolina Wildlife Federation ("SCWF") since 1998. He is the sole lobbyist for both the Sierra Club and SCWF.

<sup>31</sup> Telephone Interview with Ed Fitzgerald, Fundraising Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 3, 2005).

<sup>32</sup> *Id.*

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Robert Guild, Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 5, 2005). The leadership that gets these updates includes staff and certain volunteers of the organization.

Legislature, and from that, necessary action can be initiated as swiftly as possible. This ability to stay apprised of political and legal affairs must be of great value for any group that strives to have its voice heard in the political process. It allows for the Sierra Club to not concern itself with the political acuteness of its membership in the front door, but still use the membership as a representative base to take on important political initiatives.

At the community level, the local groups control the determination of city and county conservation policy.<sup>34</sup> This deference and autonomy is valuable in the environmental sphere, when the issues that frequently arise are most significant and sensitive to the localized area where they arise. Especially in an organization that focuses considerable amounts of its effort to statewide legislation, not much advantage (if any whatsoever) can be gained through a bureaucratic, top-down approach to policy making. Locally, this allows groups to rally membership and other area citizens when the need arises. Much of the commonplace grassroots environmental advocacy on issues in South Carolina can be contributed to ad hoc movements by concerned citizens, who probably are not “keeping an eye out” for adverse environmental consequences of community activities. It is more likely that such individuals merely respond to specific concerns in their own backyard. The organizational structure of the Sierra Club commits permanent groups throughout the state that, in the event of various questionable activities, have the personal resources, the know-how, and the “authority” to respond. Therefore, it is more likely that more local issues receive more support, and not just the handful of “backyard” advocates.

##### **5) Statewide Conservation Priorities**

The goal of this section is to provide a brief discussion of a sampling of Sierra Club

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<sup>34</sup> Telephone Interview with Ed Fitzgerald, Fundraising Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 3, 2005).

objectives in South Carolina. The hope is to develop some insight to the decision-making process that goes into the roles that the organization strives to fulfill in a given year, and issues that may arise. The South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club has a list of its statewide conservation priorities published on its website, which includes discussions regarding air quality, land use and preservation, nuclear materials and waste management, and water quality.<sup>35</sup> First, the Chapter's concern with air quality in South Carolina focuses primarily on the "Early Action Compact" entered into by South Carolina in an effort to "avoid many proscriptions of the Clean Air Act."<sup>36</sup> The Chapter urges that "we must closely monitor the Early Action Compact process to ensure that the plan submitted to EPA includes concrete steps to reduce air pollution in South Carolina."<sup>37</sup>

In order for South Carolina to progress in regards to air quality, the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club has prioritized its efforts in support of such progress. Listed as one of the chapter's "Primary Objectives" is the "[a]doption of tax incentives for alternative fuel vehicles."<sup>38</sup> Additionally, the chapter states that they "will pass of a law creating tax incentives for clean energy installations on homes and small businesses," and urges the promotion of the California emissions standard to be applied against newly manufactured automobiles sold within

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<sup>35</sup> Statewide Conservation Priorities, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/conservation.html> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

<sup>37</sup> *Id.*

<sup>38</sup> *Id.* The website states that there is a draft under consideration that would create a tax incentive for hybrid vehicles or alternative fuel infrastructure that "was written and/or reviewed by National Sierra Club DC energy and air quality staff []. There appears to be initial support from the Greenville Chamber of Commerce and the South Carolina Clean Fuels Alliance Land Use and Preservation."

the state.<sup>39</sup> As an additional objective for 2005, the Chapter's website urges its Chapter, as well as other environmental groups, to continue monitoring South Carolina's Early Action Compact with the EPA.<sup>40</sup>

This objective is a fine example of the Sierra Club's goals, as well as of the organization's typical, implemented strategy. First, the objective, "[a]doption of tax incentives for alternative fuel vehicles," is clearly stated to provide a fair understanding for those interested in the chapter's goals. No extraneous information is provided. However, it may be beneficial to the organization to create some way for interested members and outsiders to easily access additional information. This is true for much of the South Carolina Sierra Club's website. I will return to the subject of web design below. For now, it is enough to state that the effort to lay out the organization's objectives warrants credit. The air quality objectives also reflect the Sierra Club's ongoing strategic dedication to pursuing its goals through the legislative process. Although the Sierra Club does periodically get involved in judicial and administrative enforcement, the organization can achieve much broader policy objectives upfront.

There is also a major concern for South Carolina's land management, according to the Sierra Club.<sup>41</sup> "The national Sierra Club ranked South Carolina 48th in the nation with respect to the protection of open space."<sup>42</sup> Therefore, Sierra Club commits itself to support state legislation that would "create effective land management."<sup>43</sup> While there are three land use issues currently pending in South Carolina that the Sierra Club speaks to, interestingly, none of these are listed by

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<sup>39</sup> *Id.*

<sup>40</sup> *Id.*

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> *Id.*

<sup>43</sup> *Id.*

the organization as “primary objectives.” All three are listed under the heading “Additional Objectives.”<sup>44</sup> However, no explanation is provided for why such objectives are not “primary,” or what the distinction means.

First, the Sierra Club stands in opposition of the damming of the Tyger River which runs through the publicly owned Sumter National Forest, in which local business leaders desire to create a new lake.<sup>45</sup> This project is essentially in its early stages, and from its inception, has found additional, strong opposition from the South Carolina Wildlife Federation.<sup>46</sup> Again, no explanation is provided for why this is a primary objective. There may possibly be no consequence whatsoever. But assuming that there is, what reason is there to differentiate? Perhaps it is due to the stage that this project is in that the Sierra Club does not make it a high priority. However, if so, might there be disadvantages of not making it a high priority? Arguably, it may be easier for opposition to such projects to be heard and heeded at an earlier stage, before substantial work or investment is made. Whereas, the further progress is made in a project, the less probability the project can be stopped.<sup>47</sup> If proactive pressure were a priority to

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<sup>44</sup> *Id.*

<sup>45</sup> *Id.*

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Angela M. Viney, Executive Director, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, in Columbia, S.C. (Mar. 24, 2005). Sportsmen should be very concerned about this lake proposal. The Central Piedmont Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Hunt Units would suffer significant habitat loss and the Tyger River Waterfowl Area would be destroyed. It is no secret that in the past 25 years, the WMA program has lost approximately 500,000 acres - at that rate, there will be no land for public hunting by 2054. Statewide Conservation Priorities, *at* <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/conservation.html> (Mar. 13, 2005) (quoting South Carolina Wildlife Federation’s website).

<sup>47</sup> A similar situation existed at a time when the issue was the placement and use of certain turbine pumps at a dam

oppose the Tyger River dam, might that increase the odds of achieving an environmentally successful outcome?

Another land use issue that the Sierra Club addresses is the funding of the conservation bank.<sup>48</sup> The sole concern is to see that the 2005 Appropriations Bill fully funds the Conservation Bank.<sup>49</sup> Here, the Sierra Club volunteers its services to act as a watchdog over the South Carolina Legislature. The organization's commitment to fulfilling such a role on behalf of the environmental community is should be highly valuable.

Lastly, the Sierra Club calls on itself to "ensure that the Sumter National Forest plan conforms to national Sierra Club goals."<sup>50</sup> While not mentioned in the same materials as those above, the Sierra Club has taken a position in opposition to the construction of the North Shore Road through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. At the Columbia chapter of the Sierra Club's March meeting, Mr. Norm Sharp spoke to the group about the initiative to prevent this road's construction and the adverse impact that such construction could cause. Mr. Sharp provided the group members with comment sheets, urging the members to comment before the Environmental Impact Study ("EIS") was completed. Moreover, Mr. Sharp stated that it would be easier to stop the project if concerns of the public were voiced prior to the decision-making done through the EIS, than would be to challenge the findings of the EIS should the members wait to comment after the pre-EIS comment deadline.

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on Georgia/South Carolina border. The government responded to opposition by saying that the investment was already made, and that they couldn't afford to not run the site. While this might not be the most appealing argument the government could make, it is practical one that is very realistic of governmental thinking.

<sup>48</sup> Statewide Conservation Priorities, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/conservation.html> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>49</sup> *Id.*

<sup>50</sup> *Id.*

## 6) Sierra Club Activities and Strategy

In 2005, the South Carolina Sierra Club held a strategic planning, weekend retreat in which 25 total people participated to help develop a strategic plan.<sup>51</sup> This proposed plan is to be presented to the state Executive Committee for adoption by the statewide chapter.<sup>52</sup> The highlight of the new strategic plan is the chapter's goal to employ more effective use of technology, such as broadcast e-mails, to make activism opportunities for its membership easier and more user friendly.<sup>53</sup> This is where I would like to return to the discussion of the South Carolina Sierra Club's website. The emphasis that the organization has put on technology upgrade reflects the commitment of the Sierra Club to its members, but also the current state of its abilities (or perhaps the limited lack there of). Knowledge is king. Information is value. Sierra Club's membership, though likely well adept to the environmental cause, should have easy access (and in 2005, this usually directly involves internet access) to whatever relevant information the organization can provide them regarding the targeted issues. A broad overview of the highlights is necessary, and the Sierra Club's website provides this; however, a greater opportunity exists to educate readers on each of these issues.<sup>54</sup> Such education is an important element in the long-term success and sustainability of an organization of the size of the Sierra

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<sup>51</sup> Interview with Robert Guild, Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club (Apr. 5, 2005). In attendance was also a representative from the national Sierra Club.

<sup>52</sup> *Id.*

<sup>53</sup> *Id.*

<sup>54</sup> An area of study that has recently seen growth is in the area of creating the most effective web designs to achieve the proprietor's objectives. *See e.g.*, Michael Bernard, Criteria for Optimal Web Design (Designing for Usability), at <http://psychology.wichita.edu/optimalweb/print.htm> (Apr. 27, 2005). Organizations, such as the Sierra Club, need to be aware of, and capitalize on, the advantages in the optimal use of technological tools.

Club, whose members are spread out throughout the state, but with a central office where most of the organization's affairs are handled.

Creating is more inspiring than holding-the-line. [However,] we recognize that we had to fight valiantly simply to stay even and to prevent bad things from happening to the environment. Whether our message was being delivered before the legislature, in the courts, or in forums to shape public opinion, the Chapter protected the environment and maintained our position in the state.<sup>55</sup>

Often in the realm of environmental advocacy, much like any interest that has to compete against market economy desire and economic progress, small victories must be marked as successful accomplishments. One such victory noted by the Sierra Club for South Carolina was the greater number of Sierra Club endorsed candidates running for political office.<sup>56</sup> Out of 25 legislative seats up for election in 2004, 18 were won by endorsed candidates.<sup>57</sup> In South Carolina, local environmental champion and Sierra Club Chapter Executive Committee member Alonzo Frazier, was elected to the Allendale County School Board.<sup>58</sup> One of the keys to the longevity of the Sierra Club is that it counts on its membership to amplify the organization's voice through the political process by votes, and stand united in its objectives. The more involved the Sierra Club gets in the heart of the process, the better. A major success for this

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<sup>55</sup> Dell Isham, *The Year in Review . . . And a Look Ahead: 2004 was Marked by Defensive Successes*, CONGAREE CHRONICLE (Sierra Club, S.C. Chapter, Columbia, S.C.) Jan./Feb. 2005, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/newsletter/Congaree%20Chronicle%20Feb%202005.pdf> (Apr. 27, 2005).

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> *Id.*

<sup>58</sup> *Id.*

organization is to see a greater number of its endorsed candidates running for, and winning political offices.

Another victory realized in 2004 saw citizens of the town of Williston, South Carolina receive grant approval to fund the placement of water lines to individuals' homes that drew from contaminated private well water in an effort to supply safe drinking water.<sup>59</sup> To further the environmental justice cause, the Sierra Club has vowed to continue to pursue this effort to next see to the cleanup of the contaminated area near Dixie-Narco in Williston.<sup>60</sup>

The Sierra Club also pursued public relations goals over the past year seeking to reach out to the community by participation at the South Carolina Book Festival and the South Carolina State Fair.<sup>61</sup> Now there has been a call for new strategic planning to continue moving the South Carolina Sierra Club forward into this next year.<sup>62</sup> As it has been seen, the future of the Sierra Club through the new strategic plan will look to capitalize on new technological capabilities.

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<sup>59</sup> Dell Isham, *Citizens Win Victory with Chapter Help*, CONGAREE CHRONICLE (Sierra Club, S.C. Chapter, Columbia, S.C.) Jan./Feb. 2005, at 1-2, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/newsletter/Congaree%20Chronicle%20Feb%202005.pdf> (Apr. 27, 2005).

<sup>60</sup> Dell Isham, *Citizens Win Victory with Chapter Help*, CONGAREE CHRONICLE (Sierra Club, S.C. Chapter, Columbia, S.C.) Jan./Feb. 2005, at 2, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/newsletter/Congaree%20Chronicle%20Feb%202005.pdf> (Apr. 27, 2005). (Sierra Club Environmental Justice Coordinator, Rita Harris, stated ““The Sierra Club EJ Program will be there with you to see that the cleanup is complete.””)

<sup>61</sup> Dell Isham, *The Year in Review . . . And a Look Ahead: 2004 was Marked by Defensive Successes*, CONGAREE CHRONICLE (Sierra Club, S.C. Chapter, Columbia, S.C.) Jan./Feb. 2005, at <http://southcarolina.sierraclub.org/newsletter/Congaree%20Chronicle%20Feb%202005.pdf> (Apr. 27, 2005).

<sup>62</sup> *Id.* (“[T]he chapter leadership is calling for a strategic planning retreat early in 2005.”).

## B. The South Carolina Wildlife Federation

### 1) General Overview

The South Carolina Wildlife Federation (“SCWF”) is “active in promoting sound stewardship of [South Carolina’s] natural treasures.”<sup>63</sup> It was founded by sportsmen in 1931 and is currently governed by an elected Board of Directors.<sup>64</sup> SCWF is headquartered in Columbia, South Carolina. There is only a minimal full-time paid staff, and the occasional part-time staff position.<sup>65</sup> SCWF has approximately 4,400 “solid” memberships.<sup>66</sup> Of these, it is estimated that about 60 percent are sportsmen.<sup>67</sup> Also, SCWF strives to partner with individuals, groups, clubs and others with an interest in hunting and fishing to insure the sustainability of these resources.<sup>68</sup> While the organization strives to encourage diversity in its own membership, there is still only a small number of minority memberships, and only one minority, African-American, on SCWF’s

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<sup>63</sup> About the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, Strength Through Diversity, at <http://www.scwf.org/about/index.php?view=431> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>64</sup> About the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, Our Membership..., at <http://www.scwf.org/about/index.php?view=431> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Angela M. Viney, Executive Director, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, in Columbia, S.C. (Mar. 24, 2005). Mailing address:

South Carolina Wildlife Federation  
2711 Middleburg Drive, Suite 104  
Columbia, South Carolina 29204

<sup>66</sup> *Id.*

<sup>67</sup> *Id.* This figure is based on a random sampling conducted several years ago.

<sup>68</sup> About the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, What We Do..., at <http://www.scwf.org/about/index.php?view=431> (Mar. 13, 2005).

Board.<sup>69</sup> Angela Viney, SCWF's Executive Director, points out that minority participation in environmental and wildlife conservation groups is statistically low throughout the South Carolina.<sup>70</sup>

Minority participation is a hot topic, and a hard issue. There is no consensus on a "right" strategy to integrate or encourage greater minority participation. Primarily, there is a general concern that minorities do not have the representation in environmental organizations that they should. Furthermore, there is a more pointed concern that often activities with the potential for adverse environmental impact occur in proximity to higher percentages of minorities. This is definitely an area that needs to be addressed; however, the inherent difficulty on implementing an effective program, as well as the investment required, the likelihood of a major campaign to address the problem is probably not likely in the immediate future. This issue may be bigger than any one organization. It could require a statewide initiative, with participation across various organizations, and in the long-term, may find the highest probability of success through investment in the state education system.

## **2) Funding**

SCWF does not receive any funding through the National Wildlife Federation.<sup>71</sup> Although kin to the National organization, SCWF is an independent corporation that fills out its own 990 form.<sup>72</sup> SCWF is directly funded through donations and various sales. Part of what the

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<sup>69</sup> Interview with Angela M. Viney, Executive Director, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, in Columbia, S.C. (Mar. 24, 2005). One notable all African-American club in South Carolina that SCWF has worked alongside on occasion is the Tri-State Bass Club.

<sup>70</sup> *Id.*

<sup>71</sup> *Id.*

<sup>72</sup> *Id.* According to Executive Director Angela Viney, the structure of SCWF and its relationship to the National

organization does is directed at “reviewing and commenting on agency permit and policy decisions.”<sup>73</sup> One thing that is fairly common amongst the various organizations’ websites, is that the ability to make donations is reasonably accessible and user friendly. However, lacking is, for lack of a better term, a “sales pitch.” For newcomers, the information is there regarding the issues and the activities, but missing is a short statement of the importance of the donations in the programs that the organizations undertake.

### **3) Leadership**

Angela M. Viney has been the Executive Director of SCWF for the past 8 years, after spending the previous 20 years working with the American Red Cross.<sup>74</sup> Similar to the Sierra Club though, SCWF is actually governed by an elected board. Beyond the governance of the board, “[c]ommittees are the working groups of the Federation.”<sup>75</sup> A paid staff person acts as the liaison to each committee, but the major responsibilities remain with the volunteers.<sup>76</sup> The committees include an Education Committee, Wildlife Committee, Fisheries Committee, Land

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Wildlife Federation creates an organizational atmosphere that allows SCWF a “freer hand” to tend to its own affairs, those issues that are of interest in South Carolina. This has the benefit of allowing SCWF discretion in its independent decision-making, but still makes the National organization available for aid when needed. Additionally, SCWF has the discretion of which national initiatives that it should choose to support on behalf of the National Wildlife Federation. For example, SCWF has given its support to the National Wildlife Federation’s position on the Alaska Wildlife Refuge, and has often work closely with the national group in Washington D.C.

<sup>73</sup> About the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, What We Do..., at <http://www.scwf.org/about/index.php?view=431> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Angela M. Viney, Executive Director, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, in Columbia, S.C. (Mar. 24, 2005).

<sup>75</sup> Do You Have the Right Stuff?, at <http://www.scwf.org/articles/index.php?view=429> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>76</sup> *Id.*

Use and Environmental Quality Committee, Communications Committee, and Finance & Development. Board members are required to be on both program and administrative committees.<sup>77</sup> It is on these committees that work is done on the issues before it is sent on to the Executive Committee for a recommendation to the Board.<sup>78</sup> The Executive Committee is the “filter” where the issues submitted by the program and administrative committees can first be heard by 7 or 8 people before being presented to the Board.<sup>79</sup> The Board itself is comprised of 23 active members, serving 3-year terms with no maximum for repeat terms, and 12 emeritus board members.<sup>80</sup> In addition, Robert Barber is the sole contract lobbyist employed with SCWF.<sup>81</sup> As mentioned above, Mr. Barber represents both SCWF and the Sierra Club in the South Carolina legislative lobby.

While this organizational structure at first appears to be somewhat convoluted, with several steps for decisions or proposals to move through, the actual workings of the structure appear to be sound. Having various committees allows a certain group of individuals to manage

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<sup>77</sup> Interview with Angela M. Viney, Executive Director, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, in Columbia, S.C. (Mar. 24, 2005).

<sup>78</sup> *Id.*

<sup>79</sup> *Id.*

<sup>80</sup> *Id.* While there is no maximum to the number of terms a member can serve on the SCWF’s Board, the organization still maintains quality controls that hopefully assure competent representation on its Board by only allowing persons to run for a Board position once nominated for election for each term. This is done at its annual meeting held in January where all members are entitled to vote. However, though theoretically this system allows for full participation to its membership, like most large organizations, in practice relatively few participate in the annual meeting.

<sup>81</sup> *Id.*

and work with specific affairs in an area, with minor oversight by the Executive Committee and the board, has the potential to create a high level of attentiveness at the committee level and flexibility at the state-wide level. Moreover, the term and election policies applicable to the board should assure, as best possible, a well-motivated and highly competent association.

#### **4) Activities and Strategy**

Exemplary programs, such as Backyard Wildlife Habitat Certification, have been successful in South Carolina. Other programs of interest include Habitat Stewards, The Carolina Fence, and the Wildlife and Industry Together (WAIT) initiative. The latter of these, WAIT, was “designed to encourage corporate landowners to integrate wildlife habitat needs into corporate land management decisions.”<sup>82</sup> Recently, SCWF helped the Audubon Society bridge a relationship with Bridgestone/Firestone in the Aiken area under using its WAIT program.<sup>83</sup> This is an example of the symbiotic relationship that helps the various organizations achieve their goals.<sup>84</sup> SCWF was able to implement its program successfully while allowing the Audubon Society to enjoy the benefits of the relationship it sought with the industry in its area. Moreover,

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<sup>82</sup> Wildlife And Industry Together (W.A.I.T.), at <http://www.scwf.org/articles/index.php?view=168> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>83</sup> Interview with Angela M. Viney, Executive Director, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, in Columbia, S.C. (Mar. 24, 2005). The Audubon’s state office is housed at Francis Beidler Forest. This is where they run their day-to-day operations and conduct long-term planning. The Executive Director is Norman Brunswig. Also, Audubon has a second center at Silver Bluff Center and Plantation which serves the Aiken-Augusta community. Their mission is to protect habitat for birds and other wildlife. Their organization gives credit to its local-chapter organizational form as being one of the most important elements to the success of its advocating efforts.

<sup>84</sup> In another instance of cooperation, SCWF joined up with South Carolina Fire Council to help establish March as the annual Prescribed Fire Awareness Month that Governor Sanford proclaimed this year.

strategically, there is great potential for success of programs in South Carolina that incentivize the formation and nurturing of conversationalist-industry cooperation. The development of such relationship, while benefiting the environment itself, also provides terrific public relations possibilities for all organizations involved. To some extent, there exist a perception that environmental interest groups refuse compromise or fuel controversy on a regular basis. In the end though, there are circumstances that are best suited for strategic controversy, and some for strategic compromise.

Another program initiated by SCWF is the Conservation Summit. This is an area in which the organization is trying to encourage and increase minority participation in its programs. But again, Ms. Viney comments that “it’s difficult.” As discussed above, any conscious effort to development and improve minority participation deserves admiration, but it is important that this issue continues to be addressed. The Conservation Summit was an outgrowth of monthly meetings at the SCWF office among so-called “Echo Leaders.”<sup>85</sup> Ms. Viney believes that it strengthens the conservation community if these leaders and their organizations work together. However, this means overcoming the superficial, yet real problem of “who gets credit for what.”<sup>86</sup> This can be a common nuisance when multiple organizations share an interest and devote substantial time and resources to fighting for a cause. If successful, each organization wants its kudos, as this in turn increases internal morale, as well as the group’s public image. Ms. Viney tries to stay reminded of what President Harry S. Truman once said: “It’s amazing

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<sup>85</sup> Interview with Angela M. Viney, Executive Director, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, in Columbia, S.C. (Mar. 24, 2005).

<sup>86</sup> *Id.*

what you can get done when you don't care who gets the credit.”<sup>87</sup> The 2004 Summit included a successful turnout of about 50 representatives from 23 different conservation organizations in attendance.<sup>88</sup> Hopefully, this program will continue cultivating cooperation, as well as encourage future cross-strategizing among the interest groups in South Carolina. Broad participation in such programs should only have positive returns in environmental awareness and problem solving.

## **C. The Coastal Conservation League**

### **1) General Overview; Funding; Leadership**

The Coastal Conservation League was founded in South Carolina in 1989, the same month Hurricane Hugo hit the shorelines of the state.<sup>89</sup> Dana Beach, South Carolina Coastal Conservation League Executive Director, helped found this organization.<sup>90</sup> Since its founding, Mr. Beach has received the James S. Dockery Southern Environmental Leadership Award, as well as being awarded the Order of the Palmetto in 2000.<sup>91</sup> Comprised of more than 4,000 members and staff, the League focuses its initiatives on protecting the South Carolina's coastal

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<sup>87</sup> *Id.* To be precise, President Truman actually said, “It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit.” See Quotation Details, at <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/367.html> (Apr. 28, 2005).

<sup>88</sup> Conservation Leaders Unite at 3rd Annual Summit, at <http://www.scwf.org/articles/index.php?view=387> (Mar. 27, 2005). “Some of the attending organizations include[d] Trout Unlimited, SC Audubon, Upstate Forever, League of Women Voters, the Sierra Club, the SC Coastal Conservation League, the SC Native Plant Society, Friends of the Rivers and The Nature Conservancy.”

<sup>89</sup> David Quick, Happy 15th Birthday to Use, at [http://www.scccl.org/news.php?news\\_id=37](http://www.scccl.org/news.php?news_id=37) (Apr. 28, 2005).

<sup>90</sup> About CVSC, Board Bios, at <http://www.conservationvotersofsc.org/about.html> (Mar. 27, 2005).

<sup>91</sup> *Id.*

plain's "natural landscapes, abundant wildlife, clean water and traditional communities."<sup>92</sup> According to one source, the League has grown to "a staff of 20, a budget of \$1.5 million and 4,4000 members."<sup>93</sup> The Leagues maintains a website at <http://scccl.org>.

## **2) Activities and Strategy**

Some of activities that the League took on in 2004 include an initiative to protect the Ashley River from the accumulation of subdivisions through the placement of conservation easements, rural land protection in Beaufort county, the funding of the South Carolina Conservation Bank, the environmentally sound placement of an aircraft plant in low country of South Carolina, and support for a stronger public process for industries and organizations to work out new Clean Air Act rules in South Carolina developed by DHEC.<sup>94</sup> These activities the Coastal Conservation League termed "2004 Touchdowns!"<sup>95</sup> Some of the "fumbles" discussed for 2004 include actions by the South Carolina Department of Transportation, a Morris Island developer, Georgetown Road promoters, and Kiawah and Seabrook Island officials.<sup>96</sup>

Of other interesting note, the website does speak to some of the League's criticisms. John Templeton, of the South Carolina Landowners Association, calls the league a "radical

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<sup>92</sup> Coastal Conservation League home page, at <http://scccl.org/index.php> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>93</sup> David Quick, Happy 15th Birthday to Us!: Coastal Conservation League, 15-Year Crusade Earns Friends, Foes, at [http://scccl.org/news.php?news\\_id=37](http://scccl.org/news.php?news_id=37) (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>94</sup> See *2004 Touchdowns*, 2nd ANNUAL COASTAL CONSERVATION LEAGUE TOUCHDOWNS AND FUMBLES, (SCCCL, Charleston, S.C.), 2004, at <http://scccl.org/news.php> (Apr. 27, 2005).

<sup>95</sup> *2004 Touchdowns*, 2nd ANNUAL COASTAL CONSERVATION LEAGUE TOUCHDOWNS AND FUMBLES, (SCCCL, Charleston, S.C.), 2004, at <http://scccl.org/news.php> (Apr. 27, 2005).

<sup>96</sup> See *2004 Fumbles*, 2nd ANNUAL COASTAL CONSERVATION LEAGUE TOUCHDOWNS AND FUMBLES, (SCCCL, Charleston, S.C.), 2004, at <http://scccl.org/news.php> (Apr. 27, 2005).

environmental group” and “anti-free enterprise.”<sup>97</sup> Templeton has said that the League’s efforts hurt the lower and middle class.<sup>98</sup> This often is a common perception and sentiment in opposition to the interference in development by environmental organizations. Such organizations should be prepared to respond to claims of elitist environmentalism, and should have measures in place to gauge public opinion. While money “talks,” one would hope that citizens can be swayed through proper education in environmental values. Organizations, such as the SCCCL, must also confront the claims that the economic interests advanced by such groups as the SC Landowners Association may, to some extent, further minorities’ well-being. In instances where this is true, might it be best to work towards a satisfactory compromise, if at all possible? Otherwise, the onus is on the South Carolina environment movement to involve more minorities and to encourage them to play an active role in policy making.

#### **D. South Carolina Environmental Law Project**

##### **1) General Overview**

The South Carolina Environmental Law Project (“SCELP”) is the only non-profit law firm in South Carolina whose sole purpose is to protect the state’s environment.<sup>99</sup> The organization’s stated goal is “to protect South Carolina’s natural resources and environment

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<sup>97</sup> David Quick, Happy 15th Birthday to Us!: Coastal Conservation League, 15-Year Crusade Earns Friends, Foes, at [http://scccl.org/news.php?news\\_id=37](http://scccl.org/news.php?news_id=37) (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>98</sup> *Id.*

<sup>99</sup> About SCELP, at <http://www.scelp.org/about.php> (Mar. 13, 2005). The mailing address for the organization is:

South Carolina Environmental Law  
Project P.O. Box 1380  
Pawleys Island, South Carolina 29585

through forceful legal advocacy.”<sup>100</sup> Although governed by a Board of Directors,<sup>101</sup> SCELP’s president and general counsel is James S. “Jimmy” Chandler, Jr.<sup>102</sup> It was in 1987 that Mr. Chandler founded SCELP.<sup>103</sup>

SCELP’s governing Board of Directors is charged with selecting those cases the organization will handle.<sup>104</sup> This process falls under both the guidelines of the Internal Revenue Service, as well as SCELP’s own criteria, specifically: (1) “the significance of the environmental impacts of the challenged project;” (2) “the value of the case in establishing a legal precedent;” (3) “the likelihood of obtaining a favorable result;” (4) “the involvement of state agencies and state laws;” (5) “the availability of alternative funding sources;” (5) “the support of South Carolina’s environmental groups;” (6) “the availability of time and resources of SCELP;” and (7) “the value of the case in raising important public policy issues, whether environmental or non-environmental.”<sup>105</sup>

## **2) Funding**

“SCELP is funded by grants from private foundations, individual contributions, fees awarded by courts, and payments from client groups.”<sup>106</sup>

## **3) Activities and Strategy**

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<sup>100</sup> *Id.*

<sup>101</sup> *Id.*

<sup>102</sup> Who We Are, at <http://www.scelp.org/who.php> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>103</sup> *Id.* In addition to Jimmy Chandler, SCELP also employs Amy Armstrong, staff attorney, and Kathy Taylor, paralegal and administrative assistant. *Id.*

<sup>104</sup> About SCELP, at <http://www.scelp.org/about.php> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>105</sup> *Id.*

<sup>106</sup> How You Can Help, at <http://www.scelp.org/help.php> (Mar. 13, 2005).

A unique feature of SCEL P is its role in environmental advocacy that is a direct consequence of the services that the firm provides; specifically, in providing legal representation to many environmental organizations and citizen groups in South Carolina, SCEL P strengthens the capabilities of their clients to fight environmental issues.<sup>107</sup> This has the effect of creating a symbiotic relationship between SCEL P and their client, and in many instances, simply provides greater accessibility to the courts for concerned citizens that otherwise may not be able to retain legal representation.<sup>108</sup> This representation can be before both court and governmental agencies.<sup>109</sup> Therefore, SCEL P has a unique niche in South Carolina conservation. Truly, SCEL P's existence and commitment to legal advocacy fulfills a significant component in enforcement of environmental laws, as well as furthering environmental justice in the state.

An example of SCEL P's current case load includes a successful challenge to a potential permit to be issued by OCRM to a developer in the residential area of Myrtle Trace near Conway, South Carolina.<sup>110</sup> This was a local neighborhood group that SCEL P represented in getting the permit overturned.<sup>111</sup> However, "the developer has now filed suit seeking to reinstate its permit."<sup>112</sup> This case arose in the 1980's, when the developer of Myrtle Trace obtained

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<sup>107</sup> About SCEL P, at <http://www.scelp.org/about.php> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>108</sup> Examples of SCEL P's clients are: Sierra Club; South Carolina Wildlife Federation; South Carolina Coastal Conservation League, League of Women Voters; National Wildlife Federation; National Audubon Society; Natural Resources Defense Council; Friends of the Earth, Northern Beaufort County Committee; and Fishing Creek Basin Committee. About SCEL P, at <http://www.scelp.org/about.php> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>109</sup> *Id.*

<sup>110</sup> Current Cases and Projects, at <http://www.scelp.org/updates.php> (Mar. 13, 2005).

<sup>111</sup> *Id.*

<sup>112</sup> *Id.*

permits “allowing the filling and excavation of wetlands.”<sup>113</sup> However, a mitigation agreement was entered into establishing a “protected buffer area” on an 8.5-acre tract of land located between the Myrtle Trace development and Conway Hospital.<sup>114</sup> Later, the owner of this protected land sold the property to another developer wishing to build an assisted-living center.<sup>115</sup> It is this purchaser-developer that, even with knowledge of the mitigation buffer status of the tract of land, still sought a storm water permit from OCRM that would allow for the center’s construction.<sup>116</sup>

The issues addressed in the Myrtle Trace case above are exemplary of SCEL P’s involvement in South Carolina. Neighborhood groups often can find assistance from SCEL P to take on issues such as the development of a nature preserve that citizens in the area seek to prevent. In another case, SCEL P is challenging on behalf of a community interest group, titled “Round Swamp Concerned Citizens,” a “permit for [an] open-pit de-watered limestone mine in [the] area prone to sinkholes.”<sup>117</sup> On several other issues SCEL P represents the major environmental interest organizations in South Carolina, such as the Sierra Club, as well as representing individual citizens in some cases.<sup>118</sup>

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This review has focused mostly on basic organization issues and advocacy strategy.

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<sup>113</sup> *Id.*

<sup>114</sup> *Id.*

<sup>115</sup> *Id.*

<sup>116</sup> *Id.*

<sup>117</sup> *Id.*

While there's far from a perfect science to maximizing environmental advocacy efforts in South Carolina, certain aspects and issues surface in such a survey of this business. The precise objectives of environmental groups often differ in definition, but these same groups share a core belief and objective in the betterment of the state of the South Carolina environment. With this commonality, one can only hope that strives will continue to be made to enhance organizational cooperation and cross-organizational strategizing. There are examples of this already happening, such as the Conservation Summit. With this teamwork, perhaps positive movements will continue to getting minorities involved in the environmental movement through their representation in South Carolina environmental organizations. Individuals such as Mildred Myers, Alonzo Frazier, and Virginia Sanders have added incredible contributions, leading directly to successful conservation efforts. It is necessary that commitment remains to diversity.

Other success has been realized in the political sphere. This includes both the growth of conservation-minded candidates seeking political office, and the ongoing commitment by statewide environmental organizations to legislative lobbying and oversight. In regards to the latter, the Sierra Club and SCWF have played significant roles in South Carolina policy making. Additionally, the Coastal Conservation League has also done a lot of good, as far as keeping bad legislation from getting passed in the state.

Lastly, continued investment in education is needed. This also encompasses the objective of optimal use of technology. As has been discussed with the Sierra Club, the strategic use of technology is a valuable tool and is deserving of further discussion and development. Hopefully, this is an area that will be capitalized on because, consequently, enhanced accessibility to the issues and the facts effectively shrinks the existing disconnect among the spread out South

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<sup>118</sup> *Id.*

Carolina citizens. With knowledge comes involvement, and with involvement comes influence and great possibility. Therefore, South Carolina environmental organizations need to take the helm and continue emphasizing reinvestment into the debate of how to strengthen existing, as well as creating new, instruments for environmental advocacy within South Carolina.