Wildlife, wild places in SC to benefit from Duke grants



SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Among 13 grants from Duke Energy to South Carolina nonprofits, the Palmetto Conservation Foundation received a $15,000 grant for a public education campaign to inform communities along the Palmetto Trail, pictured here, about the new Palmetto Conservation Corps, a program that emphasizes environmental stewardship and community service.

THE JOURNAL STAFF

GREENVILLE — The Duke Energy Foundation is investing more than $350,000 in 13 South Carolina environmental nonprofit organizations.

The grants will fund environmental projects, wildlife conservation efforts and environmental educational programs across the Duke Energy service territory in the state, according to a news release Wednesday.

"We are dedicated to protecting the natural beauty of South Carolina and being good stewards of the environment," said Clark Gillespy, Duke Energy's South Carolina president. "By supporting the organizations that do this hard work each and every day, we can help protect and restore wildlife and natural resources, and support quality environmental education programs in our state."

One of the grants, totaling $25,000, will help the South Carolina Aquarium bring a program to students in Lee and Marion counties that will help them learn about human and natural impacts that can pollute a waterway, conduct water quality testing and analyze real evidence. The students will understand how water resources are connected, and how pollution in one area can negatively impact water quality and wildlife in another.

"Thanks to the generosity of the Duke Energy Foundation, we can go farther than ever to serve South Carolina students with our education outreach," said Kevin Mills, South Carolina Aquarium president and CEO. "Together, we can inspire a new generation to protect our environment and the wildlife and wild places we hold so dear."

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Annually, the Duke Energy Foundation funds nearly $2 million in charitable grants in South Carolina. These grants are distributed across each of its priority areas, including environment, community impact, K-12 education and workforce development.

The South Carolina Aquarium received $25,000 to support the traveling environmental education outreach program, Rovers, specifically underwriting service to seventh graders in Lee and Marion counties.

The Greenville County Soil and Water Conservation District was awarded $14,000 for Project WET, an educator-training program that promotes awareness of water and empowers community action to solve complex water issues.

The Pee Dee Land Trust got a $45,000 grant for the Landowner Education Program, which educates private landowners about options for protecting their land and family legacy.

The South Carolina Waterfowl Association received $27,000 to support Camp Leopold, a school year natural resource conservation and environmental education camp in Pinewood that reconnects students to the land community through the use of hands-on environmental education programs.

The Beautiful Places Alliance was awarded a $35,000 grant to help South Carolina State Parks and partner agencies implement a controlled-burn program in several Upstate state parks, including Oconee, Devils Fork, Table Rock and Paris Mountain.

Clemson University received $26,400 to continue support of programs that provide an environmental education program on interrelationships of energy production and environmental stewardship for

GRANTS: Foundation annually funds nearly $2M in SC grants

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K-12 teachers at the Duke Energy Bad Creek Hydroelectric Station in Salem, S.C.

The Palmetto Conservation Foundation got a $15,000 grant for a public education campaign to inform communities along the Palmetto Trail about the new Palmetto Conservation Corps, a program that emphasizes environmental stewardship and community service.

The Newberry Soil and Water Conservation District received $20,000 to help complete the task of establishing native species for all wildlife — including pollinators — on 240 acres of abandoned pasturelands.

The Anne Springs Close Greenway was approved for a $46,300 grant to bring hands-on environmental outreach education to all second grade students in Fort Mill, Rock Hill and Lancaster School Districts.

The York Soil and Water Conservation District received $20,145 to expand the school garden lesson series to an additional 10 elementary schools in York County, and establish and maintain garden programs at the schools.

Our Upstate SC was granted $10,000 to help create the Upstate Outdoor Activity & Recreation Inventory & Interactive map, a first-of-its-kind resource for Upstate residents and visitors who wish to visit the region's parks, recreation areas and natural resources.

TreesGreenville received $34,144 for the "Energy Saving Tree" program, which helps residents conserve energy and reduce energy bills through strategic tree planting.

Francis Marion University got a $34,800 grant to expand restoration of the native longleaf pine forest of the Windham Environmental Center, develop educational materials related to the center and provide research and educational equipment for students and faculty.

The Duke Energy Foundation provides philanthropic support to address the needs of the communities where its customers live and work. In 2015, the foundation provided more than $30 million in charitable gifts. The foundation's education focus spans kindergarten to career, particularly science, technology, engineering and math, early childhood literacy and workforce development. It also supports the environment and community impact initiatives, including arts and culture. For more information, visit duke-energy.com/foundation.