

2010 REPORT ON SOUTH CAROLINA'S TRAILS
By Jim Edwards, VP of External Activities, SC Horsemen's Council
CLEMSON EXPERIMENTAL FOREST

Dr. Gene Wood reports that there are 44 miles of trail in the Fant's Grove Area of the Clemson Experimental Forest, with about 109 miles of horse trails in the entire Forest. Dr. Wood does an outstanding job of maintaining the trail system and he has included a report on volunteer hours spent during 2009 and 2010.

Month	Work Days	Inmate Man-Days	Inmate Man-Hours on Trail ^a	Total Supervisor Man-Hours	Supervisor Man-Hours Transporting Crew ^b	Supervisor Man-Hours on Trail ^c	Supervisor Man-Hours Operating Equipment ^d	Supervisor Man-Hours Skilled Labor ^e	Supervisor Man-Hours Standard Labor ^f
Jan	1	3	21	11.5	4.5	7.0	4.9	1.4	0.7
Feb	7	31	217	80.5	31.5	49.0	34.3	9.8	4.9
Mar	2.5	5	35	28.8	11.3	17.5	12.3	3.5	1.8
Apr	4	12	84	46.0	18.0	28.0	19.6	5.6	2.8
May	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0
June	5	23	161	57.5	22.5	35.0	24.5	7	3.5
July	8	32	224	92.0	36.0	56.0	39.2	11.2	5.6
Aug	7.5	29	203	86.3	33.8	52.5	36.8	10.5	5.3
Sept	6.5	30	210	74.8	29.3	45.5	31.9	9.1	4.6
Oct	5	15	105	57.5	22.5	35.0	24.5	7	3.5
Nov	3	15	105	34.5	13.5	21.0	14.7	4.2	2.1
Dec	6.5	28	196	74.8	29.3	45.5	31.9	9.1	4.6
Total	56	223	1561	644.0	252.0	392.0	274.4	78.4	39.2

^aPerry Correctional Institute inmates

^bTime spent picking up and transporting inmates to trail worksite

^cMy time at work on the trail. This number discounts 1 hr. for lunch.

^dMy time operating skid steer equipment on the trail.

^eMy time spent doing or instructing skilled labor for bridge, retaining wall, and low water crossings.

^fMy time doing or instructing trail work with standard trail tools including chainsaws and brushcutters.

d+e+f=c

b+c = Total man-hours contributed by me

In addition to the effort shown above, two volunteers donated 14 days of assistance.

Volunteer days were recorded to the nearest 0.5 day. Max Hipps contributed 13 of the 14 days.

Month	Dates	Inmates	Crew Days	Supervisor Days	Accumulated Days		Date	Food Costs Amt.
					Crew	Supervisor		
April	15	5						
April	16	5						
April	23	5						
April	29	5						
April	30	5						
			25	5	25	5		
May	6	4						
May	13	5						
May	14	5						
May	19	4						
May	20	4					05.20.10	\$267.73
May	21	5						
May	27	5						
May	28	5						
			37	8	62	13		

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS

CHERAW STATE PARK

Cheraw State Park has one equestrian trail that is approximately 5 miles long. The trail has been closed for the past few months due to a large-scale natural resource management project in the area. The dense hardwood midstory has been cut across 300+ acres, and this project is the first major step towards conserving and restoring the rare longleaf pine forest around the horse trail. Future resource management activities around the trail will include measures to reduce the thick forest litter layer, thinning out some of the mature timber, and

implementing prescribed burning. These activities will promote a healthy longleaf forest with abundant wildlife and a diversity of plants that can be enjoyed by future generations. Cheraw State Park's horse trail is expected to be open by mid-June, and would like to thank our visitors for their patience throughout the duration of this project.

MCCALLA STATE NATURAL AREA HORSE TRAIL

- McCalla has approximately 15 miles of horse trail. Much of the trail follows the shoreline of Lake Richard B. Russell.
- A graveled parking area is provided.
- Drinking water or electrical hookups are not available.
- No overnight accommodations—daylight use only.
- Access is available through contact and registration with Calhoun Falls State Recreation Area at (864)447-8267 during daylight hours. Riders will be given the combination to the gate for access and must lock the gate after entering.

FRIENDS OF KINGS MOUNTAIN STATE PARK

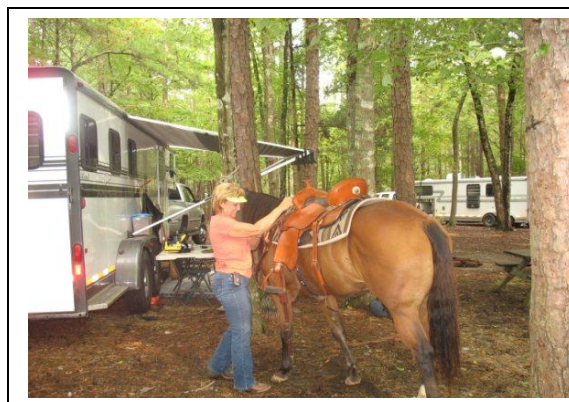
The Friends of Kings Mountain State Park (FKMSP) is a strong volunteer group which began January, 2009. Since that first organizational meeting, the membership has grown to 29 paid individual/family memberships and two paid club memberships for 2010. Over 50 people attended the 2010 April Quarterly Meeting. FKMSP has received a \$1000 grant from Duke Energy and is pursuing other funding to improve the facilities at Kings Mountain State Park.



The mission of FKMSP is to *improve and preserve the heritage of Kings Mountain State Park as a vital reminder of the history of South Carolina and as a valuable natural resource for all S.C. citizens and the park's many visitors. The primary purposes of the Friends are to: (a) support the mission of the Kings Mountain State Park, (b) provide support through partnerships in activities that may include assistance in environmental education, resource management and maintenance, (c) provide volunteer services through financial, staff and program support, and (d) support the park through the promotion of public awareness of the values and benefits of state parks.* To this end, members and volunteers have logged in over 900 man hours through March 2010 for a variety of services including:

- Application for and granting of our 501(c) 3 tax-exemption statuses as a tax-deductible, non-profit public charity.
- Bi-monthly maintenance of the 15 miles of equine trails & 20 miles of hiking trails, including re-routing some areas of the trail to reduce erosion.
- Clearing equine and hiking trails after the 2009 tornado.
- Clearing the equine campsite for camping and campsite improvements, including the addition of horse corrals and tie-lines. There is currently an average of over 300 equestrian campers per year over the past three years. Improvements are designed to improve this average to over 400 per year.
- Promoting the FKMSP through brochures and a welcome table at the KMSP Fall Festival Fun Day.

- Developing a proposal for the improvement of the day parking area, including a restroom facility. Parking facilities would be expanded to hold 10 additional trucks and horse trailers. Currently KMSP welcomes over 2000 equine users to the park annually.



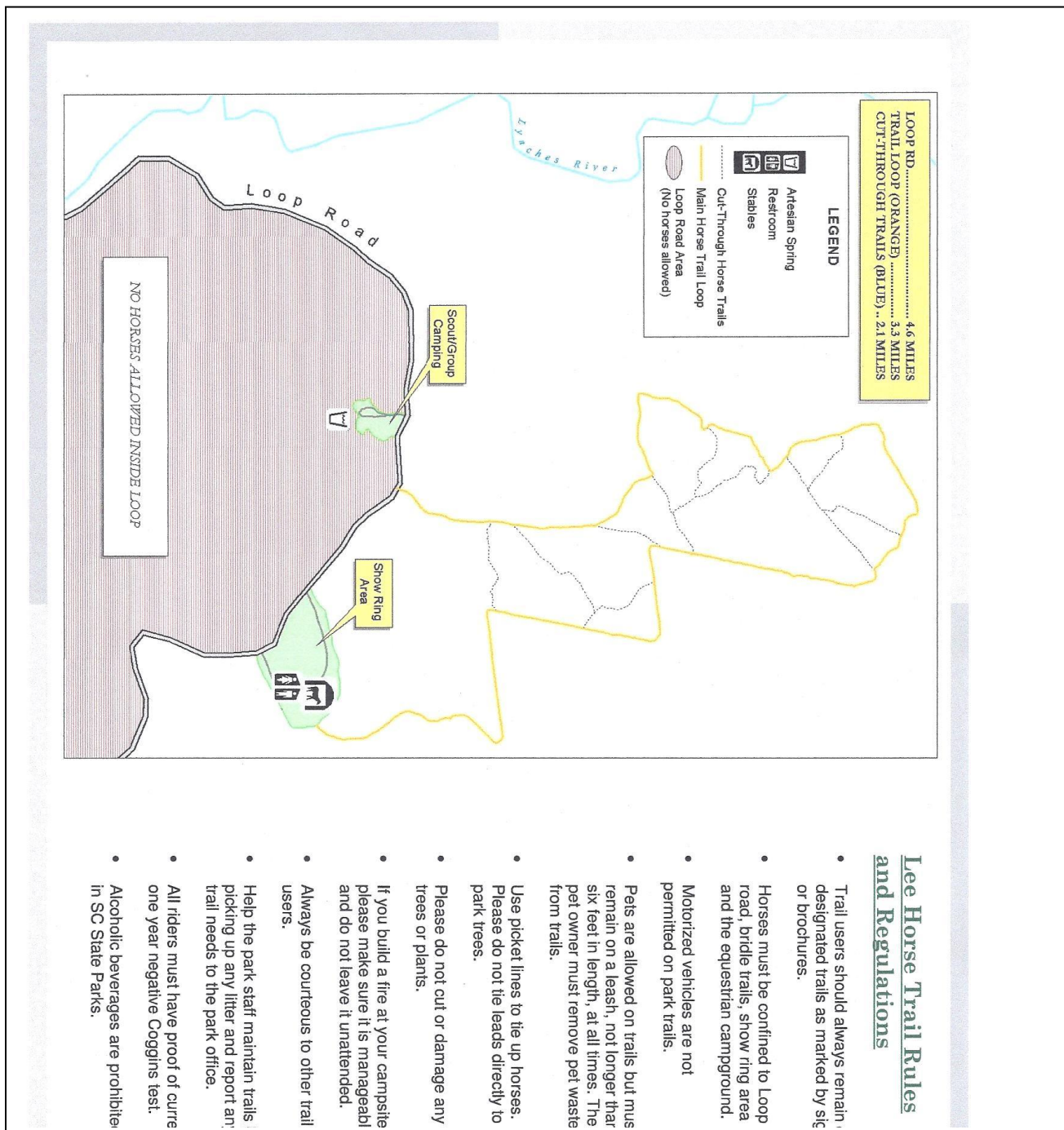
LEE STATE PARK EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES

Equestrian Camping: Twenty-three sites with water and electricity are designated for equestrian campers. In addition, a primitive equestrian camping area is located near the stable.

Equestrian Stable: The equestrian group area, located adjacent to the show ring and stables, is available for horse clubs and other equestrian groups.

This area may be rented for \$300/night and includes the show ring, stables and an open space which can accommodate up to 50 horse trailers.

When this area is not reserved, stalls are available near the show ring for \$7.50/night. **Equestrian Trail:** Lee offers seven-miles of equestrian trails. Equestrians are also allowed to ride in the Loop Road which is open to vehicular traffic.



CROFT STATE NATURAL AREA

A green retreat in the heart of fast-growing Spartanburg County, the park offers more than 12 miles of biking, over 20 miles of horseback riding, and one can hike any trail. The park also provides a playground, picnicking and camping, as well as fishing and boating in two lakes, including 165-acre Lake Craig. If you're seeking diversity, five equestrian trails of varying difficulty and length in Croft State Natural Area should keep you busy. The trails have portions of singlewide and doublewide, which range in difficulty from moderate to strenuous. The surface is a mixture of rocky root systems with some boggy spots that may be closed during rainy weather. Once part of a World War II Army training camp, this 7,054-acre park includes forgotten military structures, an old gristmill and cemeteries from earlier settlers. But the park's greatest asset is its land: Rolling terrain, hills, and creeks provide a fertile habitat for numerous deer, fox, wild turkeys, and raccoons. The park has excellent equestrian facilities including 50 campsites with electricity and water available for rent for \$14.00 per night per site plus taxes, 51 horse stalls that rent for \$9.50 per stall per night plus taxes with fresh shavings available every night, and a first-class show ring. The park regularly hosts shows in its show arena and it is available of rent. Croft State Natural Area is an excellent destination for serious equestrians. The equestrian trails offer over 21 miles of densely forested habitats. The park includes four loop trails and one connector.

The 3.5-mile Rocky Ridge Trail and the 6.5-mile Foster's Mill Loop are considered strenuous.

The 2.4-mile Lake Johnson Loop, 3.5-mile Fairforest Creek Loop, and 4.5-mile Lake Johnson/Fairforest Creek connector are considered moderate.

You may also enjoy a ride on the Palmetto trail which runs through Croft State Natural Area. This trail provides rides an additional 4.5 miles of trail but keep in mind this 4.5 miles is considered Multi-Use.

To make reservations: Call 1-866-345-PARK (7275) or go online at www.SouthCarolinaParks.com or contact the park directly at: **Croft State Natural Area**, 450 Croft State Park Rd., Spartanburg, SC, 29302. Telephone: 864-585-1283 CROFT STATE NATURAL AREA TRAIL on next page.

US FOREST SERVICE TRAILS

Discover Equestrian Opportunities on the Francis Marion & Sumter National Forests in South Carolina

Officially designated in 1936, the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests encompass more than 629,000 acres throughout South Carolina. These lands are managed by the USDA Forest Service for multiple uses including watershed protection and improvement, timber and wood production, habitat for wildlife and fish species (including threatened and endangered ones), wilderness management, minerals leasing and recreation.

The forests provide the American people with a diverse set of outdoor recreation opportunities on four ranger districts in South Carolina: the Andrew Pickens in the mountains, the Enoree and Long Cane in the piedmont region, and the Francis Marion on the coastal plain. Whether you enjoy hiking or horseback riding, paddling, fishing, hunting, camping, birding or simply relaxing at one of our picnic areas, the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests have something special waiting for you!

There are six trails and associated facilities specifically designed for equestrians on the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests. A brief description by National Forest and Ranger District follows, along with plans and accomplishments over the last year.

Francis Marion National Forest

Jericho Horse Trail

The 19-mile loop trail traverses a wide array of habitat types, from mature longleaf pine stands to bottomland hardwood drains, and offers captivating scenery to visitors. Horseback riders and mountain bikers may glimpse prothonotary warblers darting among the trees.

Tuxbury Horse Trail

This 14-mile loop trail ambles along old railroad logging trams, traversing a wide array of habitat types from mature longleaf pine stands to bottomland hardwood drains. It offers captivating scenery to visitors who may glimpse prothonotary warblers darting among swamp cypress knees or endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers in search of food in the bark of majestic longleaf pines.

Plans/Accomplishments:

Special funds were sought and awarded in fiscal year 2010 for rebuilding bridges and hardening wet areas on the Jericho Horse Trail and the Swamp Fox Passage of the Palmetto Trail. Some structures will be replaced in-kind, while others will be replaced with more environmentally and

financially sustainable structures such as arched culverts, french drains, and raised/hardened trail tread using geo-block. These actions will mitigate impacts to the streams, wetlands, swamps and bays traversed by the Swamp Fox Passage and Jericho Horse Trail, and will rectify safety concerns.

Of the 44 structures to be worked on, perhaps the most challenging and interesting is the 60 foot trail bridge over Nicholson Creek. This old, sub-standard trail bridge will be replaced with a fiberglass bridge that will not only provide a safe and enjoyable crossing for equestrians, but will also be designed to enable placement and manipulation of weirs under the bridge structure. The weirs will be used by wildlife biologists to manipulate water levels upstream of the bridge to create a flooded bottomland during the fall and winter, a preferred habitat for wood ducks and migratory ducks, as well as wading birds like the blue heron. This effort will enhance the experiences of trail users by increasing opportunities for wildlife viewing, in particular wood ducks, which have been a rare sight due to loss of habitat. The fall and winter flooding will also provide opportunities for public waterfowl hunting, an activity that is limited in the low country of South Carolina.

In addition to the replacement of the Nicholson Creek Trail Bridge, the improvement of the bridge's southern approach is critical to the safety of trail users, will improve their experience, and will also mitigate resource impacts. The trail tread in this section is presently made-up of rough and sharp gabions/rip-rap placed there in the past to protect the raised dike on which the trail lies from Nicholson Creek flooding. However, the gabions/rip-rap makes it very difficult and unsafe for trail users to traverse, particularly equestrians. It is also causing trail users, particularly equestrians, to skirt around the rip-rap section and thereby negatively affect the sensitive wetlands adjacent the trail. To correct this issue, a 250 foot long by 6 foot wide rough concrete surface will be constructed over the gabion/rip-rap section to make the trail tread a safe and enjoyable experience for all users, while at the same time correcting the resource issues.

The above projects are expected to be awarded around August of 2010.

Sumter National Forest

ENOREE RANGER DISTRICT

Buncombe Horse Trail

This trail 32 mile trail winds through forested hill and valley terrain. Points of interest include old cemeteries, wagon roads, and plantation sites. Opportunities also exist to view various wildlife species and abundant plant life. With interconnecting loops, riders have an opportunity for various length rides. Primitive campers, hikers and mountain bikers are also welcome. Primitive camping opportunities are available. Brick House



Campground is a year-round camping facility providing a base of operations for many recreational activities including horseback riding.

Woods Ferry Horse Trail

The rolling hills of Sumter National Forest near Chester are home to nine miles of easy-to-moderate loops known collectively as Woods Ferry Horse Trail. The trails run over a terrain that's primarily red clay and is a wonderful interruption from the area's typical pine trails. This area has a hardwood canopy of poplars, maples, and sweet gums. Look for deer, turkeys, to redtail hawks, quail, blue heron, and even the rare osprey. Bald eagles can be seen along the Broad River corridor.

Woods Ferry Recreation Area offers campers and day-users a variety of activities from picnicking, fishing, canoeing, or horseback riding. Extended stay camping is allowed in campsites 19 – 29 (Loop B) during hunting season--Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec., and Apr. *Camping opportunities are available year round. Camping facilities include:* 28 family campsites with tables and grills -seven have horse stalls; two group campsites-one has horse stalls (10 & 30); restrooms with hot shower (showers are shut off Nov. 1 – Mar. 31 to prevent freezing); centrally-located water spigots.

Plans/Accomplishments:

- The district is developing a Draft Adaptive Management Plan for equestrian trails in fiscal year 2010. The draft plan will be developed using information gathered from past public equestrian meetings. A public meeting also will be held in the fall of 2010 for the public to have a chance to review and provide comments before the draft is finalized. Associated facilities (Brick House Campground and Woods Ferry Recreation Area) will also be included in the review of the existing horse trails.
- Trail assessments on the Buncombe and Woods Ferry Horse Trails will be accomplished for inclusion in the Draft Adaptive Management Plan. The Buncombe trail assessment has already been completed.
- 19 miles of the Buncombe Horse Trail had hazard trees and trail corridor cleared. Completed April, 2010.
- Plans are to complete heavy brushing on approximately 9 miles of the Buncombe and 3 miles on the Woods Ferry Horse Trails by August, 2010.
- 1.5 miles of the Buncombe Horse Trail has been relocated (includes installation of a new trail bridge – see picture below) to a more sustainable trail alignment that also provides a better experience for riders. Directional arrows and blazes will be completed by the end of June 2010.
- 7 miles of the Woods Ferry Horse Trail had hazard trees removed and trail corridor cleared in November, 2009.



New trail bridge on the 1.5 mile relocation of the Buncombe Horse Trail

LONG CANE RANGER DISTRICT

Long Cane Horse Trail

The Long Cane Horse Trail is located in the northern part of the Long Cane Ranger District. This 26.7-mile loop trail winds through the pines and hardwoods of the Long Cane Scenic Area and passes the largest Shagbark Hickory tree in the United States. A historic cemetery and the original “Charleston Road” enhance the visitor experience. Numerous access points and a convenient cut-through enables riders to adjust the length and duration of their ride.

Fell Camp, located in the northern part of the Long Cane Ranger District, is used by equestrians accessing the Long Cane Horse Trail, as well as hunters in season. The camp also serves as a day-use parking area for the Horse Trail.

Plans/Accomplishments:

In February 2010 Forest and District representatives met with experts from the Forest Service’s Region 8 Regional Office in Atlanta, GA to discuss solutions to the Long Cane Horse Trail crossing of Long Cane Creek. The Forest has secured special funding to design a hardened stream crossing/ford in fiscal year 2010. It is presently working with the SC Dept of Transportation to secure a right-of-way and/or permit for the crossing.

ANDREW PICKENS RANGER DISTRICT

Rocky Gap/Willis Knob Horse Trails

The Rocky Gap Trail in South Carolina and the Willis Knob Trail in Georgia combine to offer some of the most scenic horseback riding in the Southern Blue Ridge Mountains. Winding across deeply dissected ridges, the trails descend into the beautiful Chattooga Wild and Scenic River corridor. The Rocky Gap has several loops, while the Willis Knob Trail is designed as one large continuous loop. Each trail crosses several gravel roads.

Rocky Gap (SC)—12.5 miles with several loops. Willis Knob (GA)—one 15-mile loop. Several access points allow for trips of various lengths.

The Whetstone Horse Camp, in South Carolina, serves as a base camp for many users of both trails. There is a fee for the Whetstone Horse Camp.

Plans/Accomplishments:

The newly renovated Whetstone Horse Camp is tentatively set to re-open in June 2010. This popular campground has been closed for major renovations since the fall of 2009. Equestrian users will be pleasantly surprised at the improvements to the length and width of the campsites, which now will accommodate larger horse trailers with sites up to 75 feet long. There are a variety of horse related features such as hitching rails and highline posts as well as new tables and grills at each site. Bathroom facilities remain vault toilets, there are no shower facilities. The campground has 18 campsites, for both equestrian and non-equestrian campers. Half of the

18 sites are reservable through Recreation.gov at 1-877-444-6777, including the two double sites. The remaining sites are first come-first served. Cost per night is \$12 for a single site to \$24 for the double site. If you use Recreation.gov to reserve there is a \$10 reservation fee per reservation. In addition to the campground renovations, the trailhead to the Rocky Gap Trail has been redone to better park longer trailers.

PRIVATELY OWNED HORSE TRAILS

Camelot Farms, St. Helena Sound, SC, offers one and two hour guided trail rides for those who choose not to bring their own mounts. For those traveling with horses, there are sights for three trailers. For information, contact Camelot Farms, P O Box 968, St. Helena Sound, SC 29920, 843-838-3938, email apples_2_apples@hotmail.com.

Broxton Bridge Plantation, Ehrhardt, SC is equipped for larger groups and has multiple trails. For information, contact Broxton Bridge Plantation, Ehrhardt, SC, 800-437-HUNT, email BROXTONBRIDGEPLANTATION@juno.com