

Approved by Council on December 15, 2009

PROPOSED PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGEMENT
OF THE TOWN'S ACCRETED LAND

December 15, 2009 version

1. The Town of Sullivan's Island owns the accreted land that is protected by the deed restrictions with the Lowcountry Open Land Trust. Every Town resident and property owner has a stake in the property, regardless of the location of that individual's residence or property.
2. The accreted land is protected for its aesthetic, scientific, educational, and ecological and safety value for all residents, as noted in the deed restrictions placed on this land with the Lowcountry Open Land Trust and within the Town of Sullivan's Island Codes and Ordinances. It must be recognized that this land was placed in trust for the benefit of all Sullivan's Island residents.
3. As its owner, the Town has responsibilities to be a *good steward* of the land and a *good neighbor* to the owners of properties that abut its land. The Management Plan must benefit the long term maritime ecosystem and its impact on wildlife and vegetation. The Town also recognizes that scenic views and breezes inside and outside the accreted land are valuable natural resources.
4. Steward responsibilities
 - a. As its owner, the Town has responsibility for management of the land.
 - i. Responsibility for designing and implementing a management plan rests with the Town.
 - ii. Management plans should be based on their impact on the land as an environmental, educational and recreational resource.

- iii. The Management Plan must recognize this land is part of a bio-diverse ecological process and must consider the natural succession of vegetation in this setting. Additionally, the accreted land provides a line of defense over which hazards of storm waves can be diminished and therefore provides an important shore protection function.
 - iv. Responsibility for funding the management of the land rests with the Town and management decisions must be independent of the sources of funding.
 - b. Management or modification of the accreted land should be at the sole direction and discretion of the Town after soliciting input from all Town citizens and property owners and appropriately credentialed experts in relevant fields.
 - c. Since there is much diversity in the accreted land from one area to another which can change over time, defined zones or management units should be identified based upon their characteristics, and a long-term plan developed for each of them. As an example, the land from Station 16 westward and in front of Fort Moultrie, and that in front of the Town-owned school property, should be allowed to evolve naturally, with minimal intervention except for purposes of public safety, education, and control of invasive species.
 - d. Current laws governing the accreted land should remain in effect until the Town has adopted, funded, and begun implementation of the management plan to a substantial extent.

5. Neighbor responsibilities

- a. The Town should do what it can to respect the neighbors to the accreted land while meeting its stewardship responsibilities.
- b. The Town's management plan may include a transition or edge band that abuts privately held properties that would be managed differently from, and more aggressively than, the (usually much deeper) seaward balance of the accreted land.

- i. The transition/edge band should be managed to further the following objectives when appropriate:
 1. Provision of a buffer from unwanted wildlife
 2. Minimization of potential fire hazard
 3. Enhancement of public safety
 4. Enhancement of breezes
 5. Enhancement of possible sight lines to the property seaward of the band
 - ii. Achievement of these objectives in the transition/edge band will be accomplished via different means depending on the characteristics of the accreted land including and seaward of the band. As examples:
 1. Where the band has characteristics of a developing maritime forest, the undergrowth might be cleared and smaller bushes and trees that compete with more significant trees might be removed.
 2. Where the seaward property is primarily myrtle fields, or currently cleared within the Town's ordinances, or partially cleared spaces, the band may be cleared or cut to provide an open field habitat, possibly with seeding of other grasses and/or wildflowers, with periodic mowing under the guidance of a landscape professional.
 3. Trees that are vanguard members of a maritime forest should be spared. Trees may be pruned when it is to benefit the health of the tree.
 4. Non-native, invasive species of vines, bushes, shrubs or trees should be removed.
- c. Public beach paths should be maintained based on the nature of the land they traverse, whether they are used for emergency access vehicles, and existing characteristics of the paths.