

# I AM A CONSERVATION VOTER



Bud Skidmore

I am Bud Skidmore and I am a Conservation Voter. I was born in Columbia SC in 1947, my mother, brother and I moved to Edisto Island in 1949 to take care of my grandfather. While I've spent time away from South Carolina, I attended the University of Florida and worked in Florida for three years after college, I returned to South Carolina.

While I have only lived in Columbia and Edisto Island, I've been lucky enough to travel the entire state of SC in my work for SC ETV. I've filmed and videotaped in factories, schools, parks, businesses and communities from Manning to Gaffney to Hartsville, to Hampton, Georgetown and many, many places in between. My final project for ETV was the building of the Arthur Ravenel Cooper River Bridge but over the course of my career there were hundreds which allowed me to see the diversity that is truly SC.

I love everything about SC from Riverbanks Zoological Park to the hills of Oconee County

but my 3 favorite places are own little farm on Edisto, the Congaree National Park and Botany Bay WMA.

Conservation is an ethic I grew up with and it's an ethic my wife shares. In 1992, we placed a small conservation easement on a portion of our property to help the Edisto Island Open Land Trust get others interested. My grandfather was probably the most influential person in causing me to feel so strongly about protecting the environment. I grew up surrounded by people on Edisto who loved the land, the birds and wildlife. I was fortunate enough to help found the Edisto Island Preservation Alliance, a member of the Common Agenda.

I'm looking out at the marsh as I type this, my bird feeder hosted painted buntings today, there are wild rabbits enjoying the lush grass in our field... if we destroy these special places particularly if we do it for money there will be a special place in hell for all of us. I feel very sure about that.

It's difficult for a single individual to have an impact on the political process or even to stay aware of the wide variety of issues that will affect our lives. I know I can count on CVSC to give me a heads up on the critical issues, help me have a voice and join my voice with like-minded people as they speak for all of us in the political process. We need CVSC today more than ever.

## CVSC SALUTES SENATOR GREGORY



Senator Greg Gregory of Lancaster, who was instrumental in guiding the solar bill at the State House, noted, "This bill provides another avenue for South Carolinians to acquire electricity, one that's clean, and renewable, and affordable, and it allows a greater degree of energy independence for homeowners and business owners." Plan to join us as we honor Senator Gregory at the Green Tie Luncheon for his leadership and tireless effort to protect the South Carolina we love.



# THE CONSERVATION VOTER

## WINNING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

In the 2014 primaries, CVSC-endorsed candidates went a perfect 13 for 13. All of the victories were sweet, but one race in particular was special for me.

As Field Director, I was charged with finding a way to change the anti-conservation culture of the House. That's a tall order but we know we make the biggest impression when we defeat an incumbent who has consistently voted against the environment - but it takes the right challenger.



CVSCEF Board Chair Cynthia Powell and newly elected Greg Duckworth

When Greg Duckworth told me he believed "stewardship of the earth is one of the chief responsibilities of mankind," I knew we had found our candidate. As a North Myrtle Beach Councilman, he advocated for green space as an economic driver and championed wind energy. His opponent, Representative Tracy Edge, had a lifetime Conservation score of 32%.

Greg was also an Eagle Scout and an elite mountain bike competitor. He knew what it meant to compete and he was running to win after having lost to Edge in 2012. Two years ago, Greg had started his campaign late, but by the time we met, he was close to reaching his goal of knocking on the door of every registered voter in his district. He had also raised more money than before and had the support of Horry County Senator Greg Hembree and North Myrtle Beach Mayor Marilyn Hatley.

Unseating an 18-year veteran is never easy, but it was clear that the Duckworth campaign had a winning formula. The CVSC Board approved an "independent expenditure" on behalf of Duckworth, which meant that we would send mailers to voters separate from Greg's campaign. CVSC had just 10 members in the district but our research revealed 1,585 who had registered to vote after 2012 or who had been added after redistricting in 2010. These plus some green inclined GOP voters gave us a universe

of 1,700 to target with mail and volunteer phone calls.

I looked up letters to local newspapers that had been written on Greg's behalf since 2012 and tracked down several of the authors and asked them to connect me with other Duckworth supporters. Working independently, our volunteers called over 1,000 registered voters the last week of the election.

On Election Night, CVSC board member Cynthia Powell joined me to meet the Duckworth campaign at a local restaurant where a gathering of 50 supporters waited nervously for returns. At 7:25, the first precincts began reporting. When I glanced at the volunteer logging figures into a spreadsheet, I saw that Duckworth had won the first two precincts by as much as he had lost them in 2012. By 7:43 Duckworth had surpassed the total number of votes he had received in 2012 and was ahead by more than 500 votes. At 7:50, Representative Edge conceded. CVSC had won a seat for the environment.

-Shawn Drury, CVSC Field Director



Recent polling has the Gubernatorial contest too close to call between Sheheen and Haley, and the entry of independent "Republican" Tom Ervin, plus a Libertarian on the ballot, all add up to a horse race for the fall. Vincent Sheheen's public statements underscore how much he and Haley differ on conservation:

### Nuclear Waste

Vincent Sheheen said Wednesday that he does not want German nuclear waste to come to the Savannah River Nuclear Site....."We can't allow the same mistakes to be made again," the state senator from Camden said. "We'll all be dead and those radioactive German spheres will still be here." -The State, July 2, 2014

### Safe Beaches

Sheheen said he will make removing the drainage pipes and improving water quality in the Myrtle Beach area a priority. "Local municipalities have invested tens of millions of dollars on some of the outflows to clean them up, but the state under Gov. Haley has not done anything to help...We will help to lead the charge to work cooperatively with the local community to take those same steps with the remaining outfalls." -The State, July 16, 2014



Visit GiveGreenSC.com to learn more about our other endorsed races. GiveGreenSC allows your donation to signal to candidates that you care about conservation. Check out House candidates like Vida Miller, Joe McCullough and Walt McLeod.

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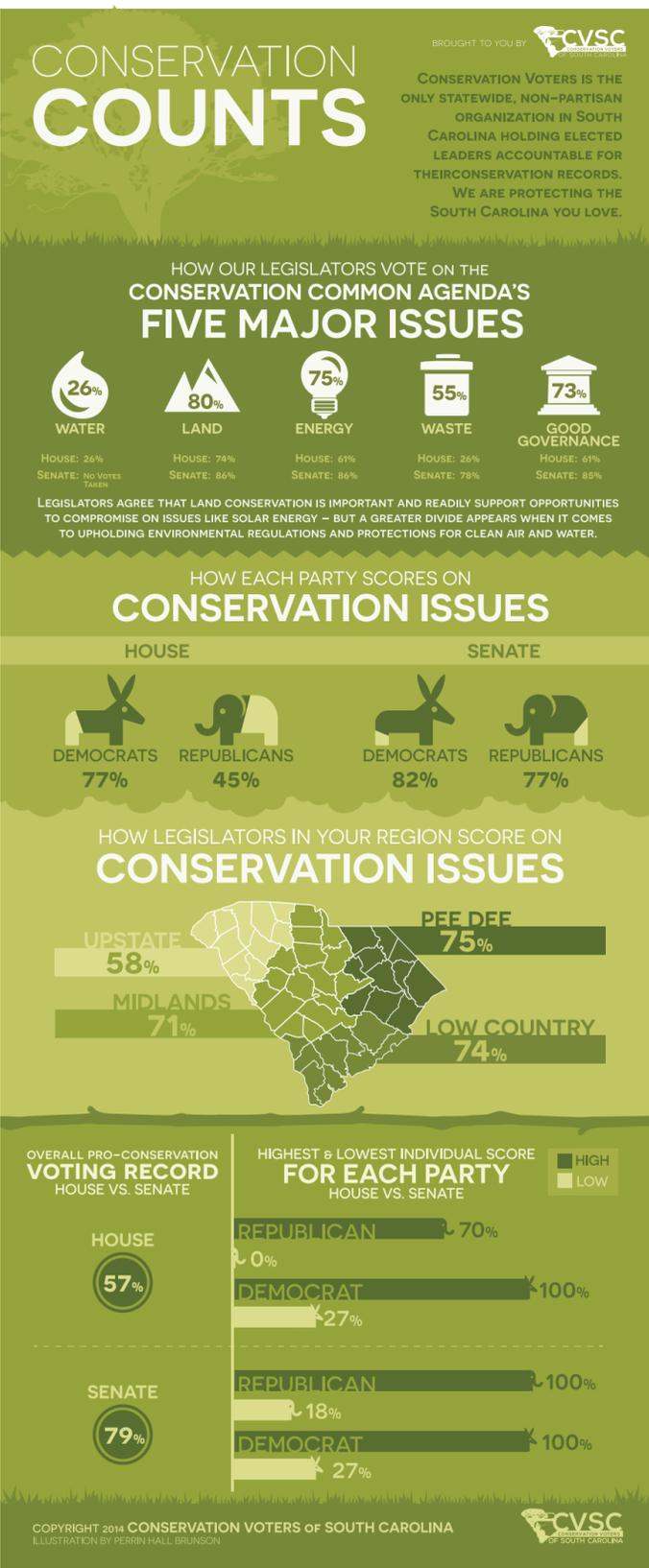
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Conservation Voters of South Carolina's 6th Annual

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Stay tuned for the CVSC Counts Tour in a city near you. Let's gather together and tell legislators we are counting their votes and counting on them.

# CLIMATE CHANGE COMES OUT OF THE CLOSET



Rebecca Haynes, Government Relations Director and Alan Hancock, Program Director

Back in 2007, we cheered when Governor Sanford appointed a Climate, Energy & Commerce Committee to focus on "global warming." When Presidential candidates campaigned in South Carolina prior to the 2008 primary, they took positions on "climate change." But after the failure to enact carbon legislation in 2010, the topic got too "hot" to touch.

Rather than abandoning the cause, conservationists switched their focus to local, clean energy solutions. But times—and the climate—are changing. Around the country savvy politicians no longer deny the fundamental facts of a warming world. Climate deniers still exist but they are on the defensive. Are we ready to start talking in South Carolina?

Extreme weather events, like Hurricane Sandy, last winter's polar vortex, heat spells and record highs of 113 here in 2012 are bringing discussions thankfully out of the closet.

Extreme weather is becoming the norm and the National Climate Assessment, released this May, confirms that sea levels will rise, threatening Charleston and special places like Hunting Island and Edisto Beach. In late July, NOAA released a report on the increase in flooding days since the 1950s, and Charleston has seen an increase of 409%. That comes with a cost, a cost that we are already paying.

It is timely that EPA is now leading the charge under the authority that Congress provided in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. I spoke recently at EPA's public hearing in Atlanta in support of its [Clean Power Plan](#) to finally limit carbon pollution from power plants.

CVSC is working with DHEC, utilities, cooperatives, and other conservation and community groups to develop a sound and defensible plan for South Carolina. Now that climate change is back out of the closet, we have the opportunity to speak openly about how we can marry it to clean energy jobs and affordable, renewable energy.

—Alan Hancock, CVSC Program Director

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## COUNTING THE VOTES

In theory, elections are report cards for politicians – the opportunity for citizens to let their elected leaders know how they feel about their performance. In practice, however, most incumbents in South Carolina are rarely opposed. This year is no different from year's past: over 60% of our 124 state Representatives are unchallenged.

Elections are Conservation Voters' opportunity to help constituents engage in meaningful conversations with their legislators. So when elections are uncontested, you need other ways to communicate. You need the CVSC Conservation Scorecard.

Every one of us has a Representative and Senator and it's our job to hold them accountable and to extract a price for voting against the environment. Or give thanks for voting with us. In some cases that means casting a ballot, but for most of you, it means speaking up when you encounter your own legislator standing in the check-out line, watching soccer practice or walking the dog.

You'd be surprised how often elected leaders comment on how little feedback they get. If you don't want to let politics interfere with your social life, you can instead pick up the phone, write a note or send a text – but please make it personal. When you do, it only takes a few of you to make a big impact.

Our 2014 Conservation Scorecard has been redesigned as a web document that you can search to learn more about the votes, actions behind the scenes and bills that were passed or stopped. You can download a printed version of the chart but we hope you will find the web version helpful throughout session as we continue to update it.

In August, we will launch a "CVSC counts" tour to find out what constituents around the state are saying about how their Representatives and Senators scored. We'll be filming short segments to post and share with elected leaders about how you feel about votes to take away the right to protest past coal ash pollution – or to fund the Conservation Bank. Help us make your voice count to protect the South Carolina you love.

*Ann J. Imbelcke*

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