

# Statewide expedition completes first week

*South Carolina leaders have high praise for SC7-SCDNR partnership, leadership*

GREENVILLE, SC, UNITED STATES, July 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- South Carolina 7 (SC7) together with its 2025 partnering agency, the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), led by SCDNR Director Dr. Tom Mullikin and more than 500 participants, endured scorching summer temps cresting above 90-degrees daily and logging more than 70 miles on a route closely paralleling the state's famed Palmetto Trail to complete the first week of the 2025 SC7 Expedition.

Now in its sixth year, the monthlong SC7 Expedition is a statewide journey showcasing South Carolina's natural wonders—stretching from the Upstate mountains to the coastal Lowcountry. Led by Mullikin and S.C. National Heritage Corridor (SCNHC) Pres. Michelle McCollum, SCNHC members and leaders and members of Global Eco Adventures [SCNHC and GEA are the original founding partners of SC7], the expedition is designed to highlight and protect S.C.'s rich natural and cultural resources.

## STATE LEADERS PRAISE SC7

The SC7 Expedition launched July 1 with a ceremonial send-off attended by



S.C. Lt. Governor Pamela Evette and SCDNR Director Tom Mullikin pause on the SC7 Expedition trail in the S.C. Upstate.



Participants in the 2025 SC7 Expedition from the South Carolina mountains to the sea.

S.C. Senate President Thomas Alexander and Lieutenant Governor Pamela Evette, both of whom have completed the expedition in previous years.

“Thank you to SCDNR Director Tom Mullikin for leading the SC7 expedition shining a light on all our state has to offer. Eco-tourism is a critical part of our state’s economy, and I encourage all South Carolinians to get outside and enjoy this journey from the mountains and lakes, to our rivers and beaches,” said Lt. Gov. Evette.



SC7 and SCDNR logos

S.C. Supreme Court Justice John Few agrees, adding “It’s a true joy to be here” with the SC7 Expedition. Speaking from the trail near Jones Gap State Park in northern Greenville County this week, Justice Few said: “I’m delighted to be here and I want to celebrate everything that Director Mullikin and others are doing here to promote the beautiful outdoor opportunities we all have here in S.C.”

Pickens County Administrator Ken Roper said: “Pickens County is proud to support the SC7 Expedition, which celebrates the natural beauty and unique environment of our state. I believe the SC7 Expedition offers a unique opportunity to showcase Pickens County's stunning landscapes and foster a deeper appreciation for its unique place in South Carolina's diverse ecosystem.”

According to Director Mullikin, one of “the most stirring moments” of the week-one occurred July 4 as the SC7 team summited Table Rock Mountain in honor of America’s veterans. Mullikin is himself a military veteran (former U.S. Army captain) and retired two-star commanding general of the S.C. State Guard.

## SCDNR EXPERTISE, GUIDANCE, AND PROTECTION

Along the route so far, participants have learned about the recovery of fire-damaged forest areas, with insights from SCDNR Botanist Keith Bradley, who highlighted native-species regeneration and the importance of habitat restoration.

SCDNR’s law enforcement officers (game wardens) hiked shoulder-to-shoulder with SC7 participants throughout the journey, assisting others in the more challenging stretches of the route, including on the ascent up Sassafras Mountain, the state’s highest point. Officers provided guidance and support to visitors facing heat-related stress, ensuring safety while also showcasing SCDNR’s on-the-ground role in conservation stewardship.

“Our game wardens are not only law enforcement officers—they are educators, stewards, and protectors of public lands,” said SCDNR Director Mullikin, a world-renowned global expedition leader. “These members of SCDNR’S elite law enforcement arm has thus far reinforced the mission of SCDNR in the field.”

## WIDESPREAD MEDIA COVERAGE

SC7 officials say the expedition has, in its initial week, reached more than two-million homes in terms of generated press coverage with local, regional and national media outlets spotlighting South Carolina’s natural beauty and the collaborative conservation efforts of SCDNR and its partners.

Mount Pleasant (S.C.) Mayor Will Haynie, a previous SC7 participant, anticipates equal excitement when SC7 reaches the S.C. Lowcountry later this month. “Mount Pleasant is proud to be a sponsor of this year’s SC7 Expedition and to host some of its events this month,” said Mayor Haynie. “Conservation begins at home, and SC7 continues to inspire and lead us in ways that preserve healthy places for healthy people.”

## CONSERVING ACREAGE

Spanning nearly 20-million acres, with more than 3.4-million acres already protected under some form of conservation, South Carolina’s goal is to conserve 10-million acres statewide. In that effort, SC7 and its SCDNR partner play a critical role in advancing public awareness of the cultural, ecological, and historical significance of South Carolina’s landscapes. SCDNR supports the mission by bringing expertise, on-the-ground engagement, and educational resources to the expedition—helping to inspire stewardship across all generations.

As mandated by the state constitution, SCDNR serves as the principal advocate for and steward of South Carolina’s natural resources. Partnering with SC7 aligns with the department’s mission to be a trusted and respected leader in natural resource protection and management, balancing wise decision-making for the benefit of both ecosystems and communities.

Entering week-two, SC7 continues south-southeast with stops planned in the Midlands and adjacent communities before continuing toward the Lowcountry. Participants of all ages are encouraged to join hikes, attend educational forums, and support South Carolina’s environmental legacy.

– For more information on SC7 events and how to participate, please visit [www.southcarolina7.com](http://www.southcarolina7.com).

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