

BRINGING RIVERS TO LIFE



American Rivers

FOUNDED 1973

June 24, 2003

Senator Ernest Hollings
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hollings:

I write to offer the strong support of American Rivers for the Congaree National Park Act of 2003 to redesignate the Congaree Swamp National Monument as a National Park. This legislation is a logical progression from your heroic efforts to designate the original Monument in 1976. This legislation will leave the citizens of South Carolina and the nation with a legacy of natural wonder and beauty for generations to come.

Located at the confluence of the Congaree and Wateree Rivers, the Congaree Swamp is the largest remaining tract of old-growth bottomland hardwood forest in the nation. Housing a tremendous variety of rare species such as the long-leaf pine and the red cockaded woodpecker, the Congaree Swamp is an amazing classroom of how healthy rivers and forests interact with periodic flooding and drying. Numerous fish species offer sporting opportunities for visitors to the area. Bird watching opportunities in the Congaree Swamp abound and the many miles of hiking and canoeing trails make this place an international treasure.

In addition to amending the designation of this great natural resource from Monument to Park, American Rivers supports the addition of more than 4,500 acres to the designated boundary. This expansion will ensure protection of more forested wetlands, more wildlife habitat, and the headwaters of the Santee River.

We hope that your colleagues in the Senate join you in elevating the status of this national treasure to the Congaree National Park. It is a resource deserving of the recognition and protection and American Rivers is proud to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca R. Wodder". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca R. Wodder
President