

South Carolina

Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism

Chad Prosser, Director

2003 JUL 10 PM 2:07

June 24, 2003

The Honorable Ernest Fritz Hollings
United States Senate
125 Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hollings:

On behalf of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, I wish to thank you for your efforts to have the Congaree Swamp National Monument re-designated as a national park. As the co-sponsor of the original legislation authorizing the establishment of the monument in 1976, you understand the critical importance of Congaree Swamp as one of the few remaining examples of old-growth, southern bottomland forest. The significance of the park has now been recognized globally and the monument is now a National Natural Landmark and an International Biosphere site.

We believe that with the proposed additional acreage, Congaree Swamp National Monument now merits designation as a national park. Tourism, as you know, is South Carolina's largest industry, and the designation of Congaree Swamp as the state's first national park will significantly increase public awareness and visitation to this important site.

For the sake of our tourism industry, and the enhancement of this valuable resource, PRT pledges our full support for your efforts to get national park status for Congaree Swamp. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

With warmest regards, I am,

Sincerely,



Chad Prosser

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