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Subject: Gov. Nikki Haley, SCPRT Celebrate "600 in 60" Campaign's Contribution to State Parks

Gov. Nikki Haley, SCPRT Celebrate "600 in 60" Campaign's Contribution to State Parks

Cox Industries and Boy Scouts of America build 600 picnic tables in 60 days

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Hundreds of new picnic tables were placed in South Carolina state parks this spring through a community service project called "600 in 60," which brought together a private company, a state agency and a civic organization in support of parks. Using lumber donated by Orangeburg-based Cox Industries, Inc., and labor from scout organizations across the state, the project provided 600 new picnic tables to state parks in 60 days throughout March and April. The project is valued at more than \$100,000.

"This is how public-private partnerships are supposed to work," said Governor Nikki Haley. "We have a corporate partner committed to community service, a state agency with specific needs and a volunteer organization ready to help. It is an ideal collaboration that works for everyone involved."

Video footage of today's event can be found here: <http://goo.gl/uqi0S>

More than 2,000 cub scouts and boy scouts spent weekends assembling the tables provided by Cox Industries, nailing together pre-drilled and pre-cut lumber, and leaving the finished products at picnic grounds and other venues at state parks. Thirty-two state parks in South Carolina received tables.

"These kids did some mighty heavy lifting," said Duane Parrish, Director of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism. "Not only did they spend hours working on this project, they provided tangible gifts to state parks that are often taken for granted."

The idea came from Michael Johnson, President and CEO of Cox Industries, an Eagle Scout himself who has a deep appreciation for state parks and scouting programs.

"This project was originally simply a way to get the young people and adults, associated with youth programs like Scouting, to recognize all South Carolina has to offer," said Michael Johnson. "Today, I wish more of our young people spoke of the State Parks with the same excitement as they do of video games or theme parks. We have these incredible assets right here in our very own communities."

His company provided all of the material needed for the tables – including lumber, nuts, bolts and screws – and shipped them to supply stores or lumber yards near state parks. The Park Service worked closely with scout councils around the state to schedule "assembling dates" throughout March and April. The volunteer scouts ranged in age from 7 to 18, and represented troops and packs from across the state. Each scout who completed a table was given an official patch designed specifically for "600 in 60" by the Boy Scouts of America.

"We were proud to be a part of this impressive project because it fits well with the timeless values and core principles of scouting," said Doug Stone, Scout Executive and CEO of the Indian Waters Council, the BSA council that represents organizations in the Midlands.

The last of the picnic tables will be built on April 27 at several state parks throughout South Carolina.

For more information about "600 in 60," contact Marion Edmonds at medmonds@scprt.com or 803-734-1370.

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