

D. Paul Sommerville, Chairman  
May 1, 2013  
Fort Fremont Marker Dedication

Good Morning and welcome to today's official Marker Dedication of Fort Fremont. I'm Paul Sommerville of Beaufort County Council and I'm pleased to see how many of you were able to make it here today. Before we get started this morning, I'd first like to introduce Marina Rollings. She will lead us in an invocation.

It has been a long road to get where we are today, when we officially dedicate this Fort Fremont historical marker to the Beaufort County community. For many of you sitting in these chairs today, that road has been even longer with the hours you spent making phone calls, writing emails, and going to meetings. But with your help and the help of the Beaufort County Historical Society, Friends of Fort Fremont, SC Department of Archives and History, and Beaufort County, the public is now enjoying this historical landmark.

To go back to when this project first started takes us to October of 2004. That's when Beaufort County Council voted to pay \$5.4 million, through the Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Program and the Trust for Public Land, to transform 15 acres of the remnants of Fort Fremont into a park. I'm proud to say that since 2000, the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Program has preserved more than 21,000 acres for conservation, parks, buffers, scenic vistas, and for preservation of valuable economic and natural resources.

When Council is deciding on what land to purchase under the Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Program, there are certain criteria we look for. Fort Fremont has those – It has a high bluff coastal view offering an amazing view of Port Royal Sound and Parris Island. The site also has several options; the public can come and have picnics and since this is a true piece of history, it offers historical learning opportunities.

One County employee, who has had a hand in almost every aspect of Fort Fremont since the County bought it, is Ian Hill. He has been to this site countless times, and has helped clean it up, pick out fencing, decide where that fencing will go and has made many other critical decisions involved with the Fort.