

Map of the Pee Dee Tour

Pee Dee Tour

Pee Dee Tour Interpretive Stops on the PEE DEE TOUR

1. Burch's Mill: *South Carolina's First Civil War Years Its End*
2. Dunham's Bluff and Snow's Island: *Control of the Rivers & Den of the Swamp Fox*

(2 signs at this one stop at Dunham's Bluff)

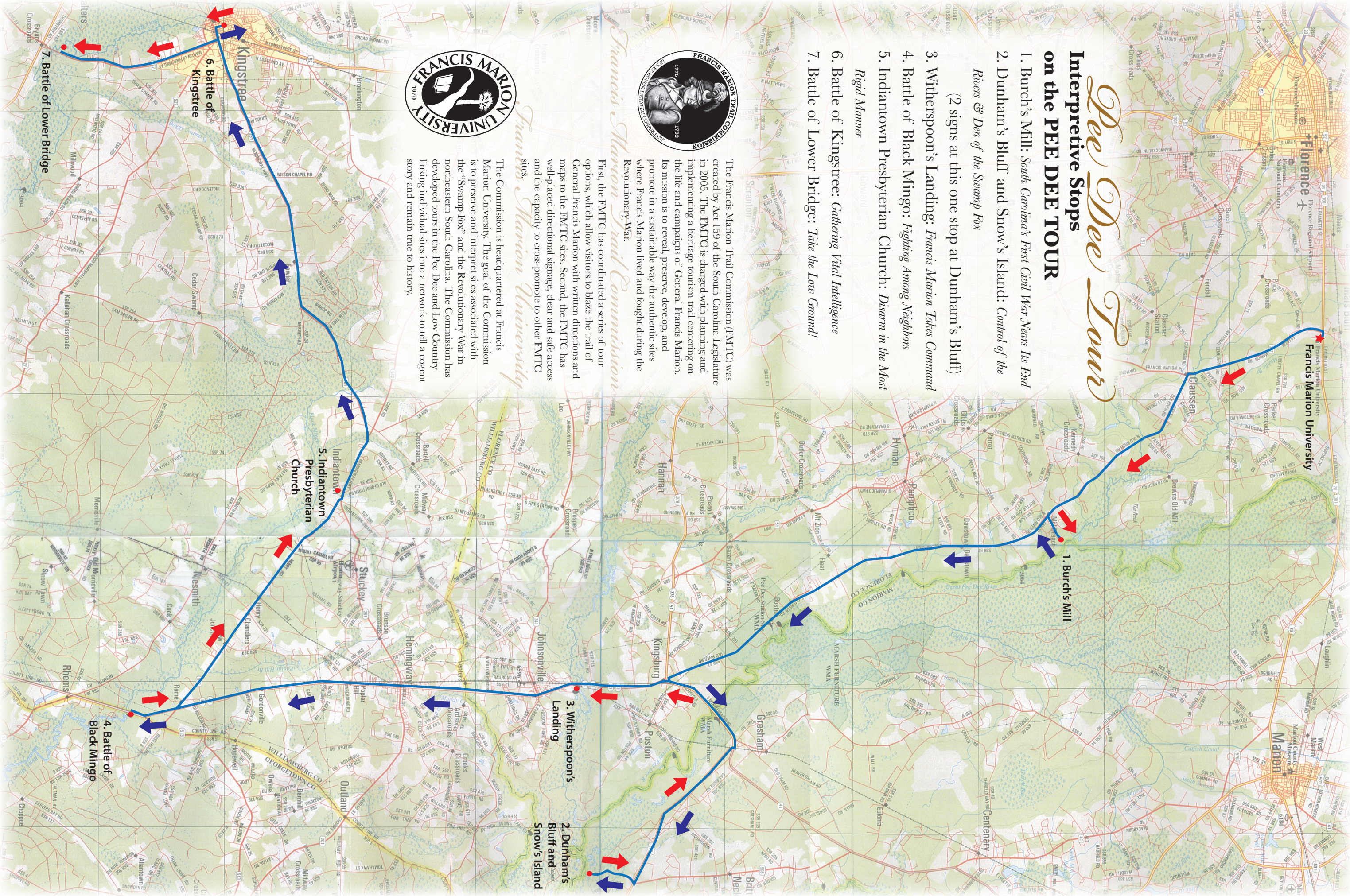
3. Witherspoon's Landing: *Francis Marion Takes Command*
4. Battle of Black Mingo: *Fighting Among Neighbors*
5. Indiantown Presbyterian Church: *Disarm in the Most Rigid Manner*
6. Battle of Kingstree: *Gathering Vital Intelligence*
7. Battle of Lower Bridge: *Take the Lost Ground!*



The Francis Marion Trail Commission (FMTC) was created by Act 159 of the South Carolina Legislature in 2005. The FMTC is charged with planning and implementing a heritage tourism trail centering on the life and campaigns of General Francis Marion. Its mission is to reveal, preserve, develop, and promote in a sustainable way the authentic sites where Francis Marion lived and fought during the Revolutionary War.

First, the FMTC has coordinated a series of tour options, which allow visitors to blaze the trail of General Francis Marion with written directions and maps to the FMTC sites. Second, the FMTC has well-placed directional signage, clear and safe access and the capacity to cross-promote to other FMTC sites.

The Commission is headquartered at Francis Marion University. The goal of the Commission is to preserve and interpret sites associated with the "Swamp Fox" and the Revolutionary War in northeastern South Carolina. The Commission has developed tours in the Pee Dee and Low Country linking individual sites into a network to tell a cogent story and remain true to history.



Whether you are a first-time visitor or a long-time resident, we invite you to learn about the Revolutionary War in eastern South Carolina and to explore the unique cultural and natural heritage of the Pee Dee and Santee basins.

In late 1779 and early 1780, British military planners implemented a new strategy to retake the rebellious North American colonies. But by the fall of 1780, the British realized that their hold on South Carolina was far from secure. Along the Pee Dee and Santee rivers, Francis Marion, a Continental officer who had escaped the fall of Charleston by chance, revived the Patriot militias and began attacking British supply and communications lines. With a band of fighters that reflected the ethnic and religious diversity of the province - including Native Americans, English, Ulster Scots, French Huguenots, free and enslaved Africans, and mixed-race people - Marion pioneered a form of guerilla warfare that took advantage of the heavily forested wetland terrain of the Lowcountry. Vastly outmanned and outgunned, Marion and other Patriot militia leaders constantly harassed the British and Loyalist forces in a series of small engagements. By denying the British total victory in South Carolina, Marion's militia helped turn the tide of the war in favor of independence.

Francis Marion obtained his nickname, the "Swamp Fox," because of his elusiveness, using the farms, forests, streams, and wetlands of the Santee and Pee Dee basins to his advantage when attacking or retreating from his opponents. After more than two centuries, many sites associated with Marion have remained largely undisturbed. We invite you to explore seventeen sites along the Pee Dee Tour, the Berkeley Tour, and the Clarendon Tour - and the striking natural and cultural richness of the South Carolina Lowcountry, a region that has played a disproportionate share in the history of the nation from colonial times to the civil rights movement.

Driving Directions for Self-Guided Tour

1. Burch's Mill

South Carolina's First Civil War Nears its End

Leaving the Francis Marion University Educational Foundation Building on Palmetto Street you will turn right towards the Francis Marion University main entrance. Proceed 1 block on Palmetto Street and turn right at the intersection of Palmetto Street and Francis Marion Road. Follow this road for 5 miles. At the intersection of Francis Marion Road and Old River Road you, turn left onto Old River Road and proceed 7.2 miles until you get to Mill Branch Road. This is a dirt road across from Mill Branch A.M.E. Church (red brick church on the right side of the highway). You will turn left and proceed down this dirt road for 1.2 miles until you come to a stop sign at the Great Pee Dee River. This is a bluff so proceed carefully. The interpretive sign is at the edge of the bluff overlooking the river. Your travel time from the Educational Foundation Building is about 22 minutes.

2. Dunham's Bluff and Snow's Island

Control of the Rivers & Den of the Swamp Fox

Return to the intersection of Mill Branch Road and Old River Road, turn left onto Old River Road, drive 13.7 miles to Hwy. 378 and turn left onto Hwy. 378. Proceed 9 miles on Hwy. 378 (crossing over the Great Pee Dee River) to Bluff Road and turn right onto Bluff Road. (Note: Bluff Road is a dirt road a few yards across the highway from a convenience store called "Park and Blow.") You will go 1.7 miles down this dirt road to Dunham's Bluff Landing. Interpretive signs for Dunham's Bluff and for Snow's Island are near the edge of the bluff facing the river. Your travel time from Burch's Mill is approximately 41 minutes.

3. Witherspoon's Landing

Francis Marion Takes Command

Retrace your route back up Dunham's Bluff Road and turn left onto Hwy. 378 (at the "Park and Blow"). Go 9 miles to the intersection of Hwy. 378 and Hwy. 41 (River Road) and turn left at the light. Proceed 3.2 miles and cross over Lynches River. You will take an immediate left into Witherspoon's Landing (now named Venter's Landing) which is a popular boat launch area on the Lynches River. The sign telling about this site is on the right near a pavilion as you face the boat ramp. Travel time is about 20 minutes from

Dunham's Bluff.

4. Battle of Black Mingo

Fighting Among Neighbors

From Witherspoon's Landing turn left back onto Old River Road/Hwy. 41 and proceed 15.2 miles to the bridge over Black Mingo Creek. About 20 yards before the bridge is a pull-off and historical marker for the Battle of Black Mingo on the right side of the highway. Beyond this marker on the left side of the highway, just before the Bridge abutment, is a paved ramp leading down to a boat landing. Make a left turn onto this ramp to the boat landing. The interpretive sign telling about the Battle of Black Mingo is at the edge of the water (Black Mingo Creek). You will be able to look across the creek at the site of the Revolutionary War port and crossing that was called Shepherd's Ferry. Dollard's tavern, the epicenter of the battle, was a short distance up the hill across the highway and the old port at Willtown was about one mile up the creek from where you are standing. Travel time from Witherspoon's landing is about 20 minutes.

5. Indiantown Presbyterian Church

Disarm in the Most Rigid Manner

From Black Mingo Creek bridge, turn to the right back onto Hwy. 41, go 1.5 miles and turn left onto Hwy 512 West. Proceed 10.6 miles and turn left onto Hwy. 261/512 (also called Hemingway Highway or Henry Road) for 350 yards to Indiantown Presbyterian Church on the left. The interpretive sign is at the west end of the parking lot near the highway. This church was a center of resistance to the British. The church graveyard is very old and is the resting place for a number of people prominent in the Revolution as well as the Civil War. Travel time from Black Mingo Creek bridge is 13 minutes.

6. Battle of Kingstree

Gathering Vital Intelligence

Turn left from Indiantown Presbyterian Church back onto Hwy 261/512 (Hemingway Road) and proceed west towards Kingstree for 17.3 miles. Go through several traffic lights on Hwy. 261 and turn right onto Academy Street in the downtown area. Go 4.5 blocks to an intersection with Kelly Street and you will see Kellahan Park in front and to the right of your position. Park beside Kellahan Park and enter the fenced area. The interpretive sign for the Battle of Kingstree is near the center of the park at an intersection of walkways. Travel time from Indiantown is approximately 19 minutes.

7. Battle of Lower Bridge

Take the Low Ground!

Retrace your route back down Academy Street into downtown Kingstree and turn left onto Hwy. 261. Cross the railroad tracks and go a few blocks to the intersection with Hwy. 377. Make a right turn onto Hwy. 377 towards the town of Andrews. Proceed 5.5 miles to a historical marker located at a pull-off on the right about 200 yards before the bridge crosses Black River. There is parking on the bridge itself and the interpretive sign for the Battle of Lower Bridge is located beside the historical marker for this same fight. It is believed the battle occurred on both sides of the Black River on the same side of this bridge as the interpretive sign. Travel time is approximately 14 minutes from Kellahan Park.

Tour Options

After Lower Bridge the tourist has several distinct options, most of which involve proceeding about one mile further on Hwy. 377 until it intersects with Hwy. 521. The tourist can elect to end the tour at this point by turning left onto Hwy. 521 and proceeding to either Georgetown/Myrtle Beach or connecting to other roads off of Hwy. 521 to go to Charleston.

A second option is to turn right on Hwy. 521 and proceed to Manning to tour historic sites in Clarendon County. Detailed directions for a Clarendon County tour are available.

A third option is to turn right onto Hwy. 521, go approximately 7.5 miles to an intersection with Hwy. 52 and turn left onto Hwy. 52 to go to Berkeley County to tour sites there. Detailed directions for a Berkeley County tour are available.

Welcome Francis Marion Trail Commission Swamp Fox country



The oil painting titled, "General Marion Inviting a British Officer to Share His Meal," which also has the nickname "The Sweet Potato Dinner" was painted by John Blake White. The British officer depicted in the painting was amazed that Marion's militia could survive and fight effectively living in such conditions. He came to believe that such men would be very difficult to defeat.

Pee Dee Tour

The Pee Dee Tour with audio CD of Francis Marion stories and anecdotes

his stories

Encompassing portions of Florence, Marion, Georgetown, and Williamsburg counties, the Pee Dee Tour includes eight sites along the Great Pee Dee River and several of its tributaries. Among the sites on this tour are the scenes of some of Marion's first acts as a partisan leader at Witherspoon's Ferry, Kingstree, and Black Mingo Creek, as well as one of his last, the signing of a peace treaty with a local Tory leader at Burch's Mill. Along the way, stop for lunch or dinner at one of the nationally-famous barbeque restaurants in Hemingway and Johnsonville; take a kayak out on the Lynches River or Black Mingo Creek; and stroll through the charming historic district of downtown Kingstree.