

## Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

### Santee-Cooper Accord helps move migratory fish across the Carolinas

Welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

The Santee River basin begins in Western North Carolina, where the headwaters of the Catawba, Broad, and Pacolet Rivers trickle down from the Eastern Continental divide. The basin includes the Congaree, Saluda, Wateree and a host of other rivers, eventually all joining to form the Santee River which empties into the ocean north of Charleston. It's a basin whose rivers are punctuated by dams that provide electricity to Charlotte, Greenville and Columbia.

When we talk about migratory fish, you probably think of salmon runs in the Pacific Northwest, but here in the Southeast, American eels migrate from river to ocean to spawn, while blueback herring and American shad, a fish once harvested by George Washington, spend most of their lives at sea, returning to freshwater to spawn.

The dams that generate so much electricity are also huge barriers to migratory fish – keeping them out of spawning areas and other suitable habitat. However, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, North and South Carolina, Duke Energy and South Carolina Electric and Gas are setting out to improve the situation for migratory fish.

The power companies will fund the stocking of American shad to boost populations; they'll help shad move around South Carolina's Wateree Dam, enabling them to reach upstream spawning habitat; and help move eels past dams up and down the Catawba and Wateree rivers to reach important habitat right here in the Southern Appalachians.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.