**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 50-21-860 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF AIRBOATS, TO ADD THE USE OF AIRBOATS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF WETLANDS TO THE LIST OF EXEMPTIONS FROM THE RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF AIRBOATS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 50-21-860 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 50-21-860. (A) As used in this section, ‘airboat’ means a watercraft propelled by air pressure caused by a motor mounted on the watercraft aboveboard.

~~(A)~~(B) It is unlawful for a person to operate an airboat on the public waters of this State from the freshwater‑saltwater dividing line, established by Section 50‑17‑30, seaward.

~~(B)~~(C) It is unlawful to operate an airboat on the waters of the Waccamaw, the Great Pee Dee, the Little Pee Dee, the Black, and the Sampit Rivers in Georgetown and Horry Counties from one hour before legal sunset to one hour after legal sunrise and anytime during the season for hunting waterfowl.

~~(C)~~(D) It is unlawful to operate an airboat on the waters of that portion of Lake Marion and Santee Swamp west of the I‑95 bridge upstream to the confluence of the Congaree and Wateree Rivers during the season for hunting waterfowl.

(E) A person violating the provisions of this section, upon conviction, must be punished as provided by Section 50‑1‑130.

(F) The provisions of this section do not apply to the operation of airboats by law enforcement, emergency medical, civil defense, noxious weed control, management of wetlands, military personnel, state and federally approved wildlife banding, surveying, biological research programs, and private waters.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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