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## **Shooters from Williamston, Aiken, Greer, Charleston Win Parks Photo Contest**

**COLUMBIA – June 25, 2009** – A professional photographer from the Upstate is the grand prize winner in the year-long photo contest sponsored by the S.C. State Park Service as part of the park system's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

A photo of a canoe on a lake at Oconee State Park by Steven Faucette of Williamston was judged the best of the best among the 2,452 digital images submitted by contestants from 19 states during the year-long contest.

Faucette also won Best in Show in the professional category. Other Best of Show winners were Deborah Hotzscheiter of Aiken in the amateur category for her shot of her mother and son fishing at Santee State Park, Kellyn Rowland of Greer in the student category for an image of a bumblebee at Sesquicentennial State Park, and Kendle Enter in the agency employee category for a photo of a mallard duck landing on a pond at Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site.

Phil Gaines, director of the S.C. State Service, presented Faucette the grand prize – a \$2,500 Folbot Edisto folding kayak specially equipped for photography and fishing and donated by Folbot Folding Kayaks of Charleston – during a ceremony on Thursday at Paris Mountain State Park in Greenville.

The Best in Show winners each won Nikon digital cameras donated by Popular Photography magazine. They were selected from monthly winners chosen each month by a panel comprising SCPRT staff and other media professionals.

"We're really excited to be able to present this most-fitting award to nature photographer Steven Faucette and we certainly appreciate all the great corporate sponsorship that we had for this competition," Gaines said.

"What's even more exciting, perhaps, is the turnout. The fact that more than 2,400 submissions – more than 200 photos a month – were submitted for this contest shows the sense of pride and ownership, and even love, which the people of South Carolina feel for their parks. And it wasn't just South Carolina. We had submissions from around the country. People everywhere in America appreciate and use and enjoy their parks, and we're proud to be part of that most-sustainable of traditions and services," he said.

David AvRutick, president/CEO of Folbot Folding Kayaks, said, "We are the same age as the South Carolina parks system and when we were approached about partnering with SCPRT, it was a quick decision. Not only is the synergy great, but what better place is there to take a kayak than on the water at a state park?"

Winning and other selected entries are displayed on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary Web site at [www.comeoutandplay.net](http://www.comeoutandplay.net) to help showcase the photographers' work and the natural, cultural and historic sights and activities that approximately 7 million visitors a year now enjoy at South Carolina's 47 state parks.

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