

# Upstate Advocate

2019 | SPRING/SUMMER

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS

15 ADVENTURES TO ENJOY  
ACROSS THE UPSTATE



## ASK THE STAFF:

What's one of your favorite outdoor adventures in the Upstate?



"Relaxing with the kids at Jones Gap."  
— Chris Starker, Land Conservation Manager



"Paddling! The Tyger River is a favorite."  
— Katie Hottel, GIS Coordinator



"A waterfall hike with my wife Anna."  
— Aldon Knight, Director of Development



"A day spent fishing on the Saluda River."  
— Shelley Robbins, Director of Energy & State Policy



Protecting Land & Water | Advocacy | Balanced Growth

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[www.upstateforever.org](http://www.upstateforever.org)



### Mission

Upstate Forever is a conservation organization that protects critical lands, waters, and the unique character of the Upstate of South Carolina.

### Vision

To conserve our land and water resources, resulting in an environmentally healthy and economically prosperous region, with a high quality of life now and for future generations.

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Sherry Barrett <i>Land Policy Manager</i>	Joy Dickerson <i>Assistant Financial Director</i>	Scott Park <i>Land Conservation Director</i>
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Lee Brashier <i>Executive Assistant &amp; Office Manager</i>	Lisa Hallo <i>Land Policy Director</i>	Dorothy Signal <i>Land Stewardship Associate</i>
Megan Burton <i>Communications Coordinator</i>	Erika Hollis <i>Clean Water Director</i>	Caitlyn Smith <i>Land Protection Specialist</i>
Megan Chase <i>Clean Water Advocate</i>	Katie Hottel <i>GIS Coordinator</i>	Chris Starker <i>Land Conservation Manager</i>
	Aldon Knight <i>Director of Development &amp; Community Relations</i>	Ava Thacker <i>Development Associate</i>
		Brad Wyche <i>Founder &amp; Senior Advisor</i>

# We are blessed to call this beautiful region home.

I love spending time in nature. Whether it's fly fishing the Saluda with my husband Edwin or biking the trails at Paris Mountain State Park with my two sons, spending time in nature improves my mood, keeps me healthy, and enriches my life.

Outdoor recreation enriches our communities as well — and I mean that literally. Think tourism dollars. Business recruitment. Job creation and talent retention.

According to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, outdoor activities like fishing, hunting, and bird watching contribute \$33.4 billion annually to the state's economy and support more than 200,000 jobs.

Another great example: Greenville County Recreation estimates the Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail's economic impact on the County is \$7 million per year. That's an impressive return for a \$2.7 million investment.

Investing in greenspace, trails, and clean water yields an astounding return to our region, enhancing both our economy and our quality of life. That's why Upstate Forever's work to protect critical land and water resources is so essential.

This spring and summer, I urge you to get outside and remind yourself just how blessed we are to live in the Upstate — a region with beautiful landscapes and bountiful outdoor recreation opportunities. *If you need ideas for an outdoor adventure, you'll find 15 of them starting on **page 7**.*

I also encourage you to make a gift to the *Crossroads Campaign*, our \$7.5 million initiative to ensure our region grows responsibly while protecting the critical lands, abundant waters, and unique character of the Upstate. If you have already given, we appreciate your support! *See more information about the Crossroads Campaign on **page 23**.*

From all of us at Upstate Forever, thank you for helping protect the special character of the place we call home.



**Andrea Cooper**  
Executive Director



**ASK THE STAFF:** *What's one of your favorite outdoor adventures in the Upstate?*



*"Unexpected adventures, like coming across this field of sunflowers in Anderson County!"*  
— Lisa Hallo, Land Policy Director



*"Spending time with my grandson Eli in Falls Park"* — Sherry Barrett, Land Policy Manager



*"Mountain biking with my son Havilah."* —Andrea Cooper, Executive Director



The 2019 ForeverGreen Awards Luncheon was bigger and better than ever! We had around 300 attendees, and unveiled a brand new award: the Marjorie E. Schmidt Stewardship Award. Thanks to all who contributed to a successful event, and be on the lookout for updates about next year's luncheon.

## 2019 Award Recipients



### THE MARJORIE E. SCHMIDT STEWARDSHIP AWARD

**Dick Carr** was honored for his tireless dedication to Upstate Forever for more than a decade.



### LAND PLANNING & POLICY CHAMPION

**The Northside Initiative** received this award for their collaborative efforts to transform and revitalize the Northside community in Spartanburg.



### THE TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION

**Doug Harper** was recognized for his key role in reauthorizing the South Carolina Conservation Bank.



### PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR

**Phil Gaines** was honored for his years of service to the SC State Parks Service. *[Read an interview with Phil on **PAGE 12**]*



### CLEAN WATER CHAMPION

**Nikki Grumbine** received this award to recognize her leadership with the Friends of the Reedy River.



### EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Dennis Chastain** was recognized for his 40+ years of work as a writer, historian, botanist, guide, and conservation advocate. *[Read an essay by Dennis on **PAGE 14**]*

Learn more about these award recipients at [upstateforever.org/blog/forevergreen-luncheon](http://upstateforever.org/blog/forevergreen-luncheon) and watch the awardee videos at our YouTube channel [UpstateForever](#)

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See more ForeverGreen Luncheon photos on Upstate Forever's Facebook page





Zach Lucero



Split Creek Farm



Ben Geer Keys



Manuel Goche



Travelers Rest Farmers Market



# 15 ADVENTURES

## 15,000 ACRES

Over the past two decades, Upstate Forever has worked to protect the natural assets that make the Upstate so special: our farmlands, forests, rivers, and natural areas.

In fact, we have protected more than 22,000 acres of critical lands across the Upstate since 1998.

But we won't stop there. This year, we are raising awareness of our mission to protect 15,000 more acres of critical lands by 2022.

To show why we protect it, we've highlighted 15 amazing outdoor activities across the Upstate. There's something for everyone — regardless of age, activity level, or recreational interest.

We protect the Upstate... so that you can **Be the Upstate.**

*Turn the page to read more >>*

 **For more information, visit [BetheUpstate.com](https://BetheUpstate.com)**



*Christina Carpenter*



*Dick Carr*



*Jack Robert Photography*





2 Hike Jones Gap

Allison Towner

## 1 Picnic & Paddle at the Tyger River Nature Park

ROEBUCK, SC

The Tyger River Nature Park offers a perfect perch for viewing abundant flora and fauna. Bring the family along for a leisurely stroll along the 0.8-mile nature trail, pack a picnic and relax on the riverbanks, or paddle along exciting Class I-II rapids and shoals — great for novice paddlers.

## 2 Hike Jones Gap

MARIETTA, SC

One of the most treasured parks in the Upstate, Jones Gap State Park boasts miles of beautiful hiking trails ranging from easy to strenuous. They're rarely crowded and contain tons of hidden waterfalls. For those who'd like to extend their stay in nature, the park also features campsites aplenty.

## 3 Dog Walk at Glassy Mountain Trail

PICKENS, SC

Panoramic views of the Blue Ridge Escarpment make this rugged, moderately difficult climb all the more rewarding. This mile-long trail is appropriate for all skill levels, and Fido is always welcome (on leash). In 2017, Upstate Forever worked with local landowners and community members to protect the breathtaking views from this Pickens County icon indefinitely.

## 4 Bike the Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail

GREENVILLE, SC

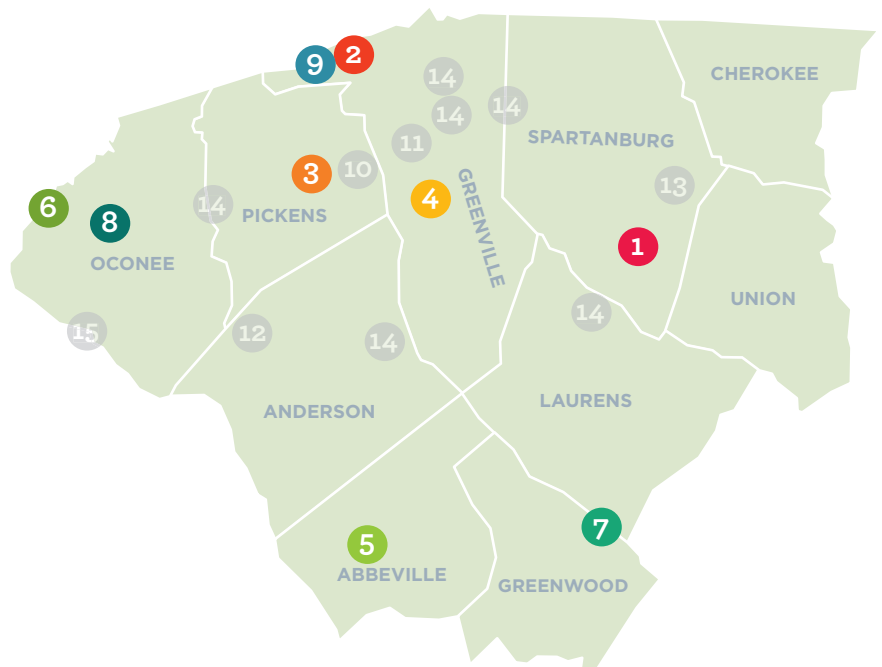
Rent a bike from one of the area's many rental shops, and journey north from Greenville to Travelers Rest (or vice versa). Stop to enjoy a bite at one of TR's local restaurants, a refreshing treat from Pink Mama's Ice Cream, or a craft brew at Swamp Rabbit Brewery before heading back to Greenville.



3 Glassy Mountain Trail



5 High Meadows Preserve





## 5 Quail Hunt at High Meadows Preserve

ABBEVILLE, SC

Located on Upstate Forever's second largest conservation easement, the 1,023-acre High Meadows Hunting Preserve offers guided quail, dove and other hunts. For 7 years, owner Jeff Fry has been working to raise bobwhite quail — whose populations have plummeted due to development and habitat loss — for release and recreational 40-bird hunts.

## 6 Walk Through History at Raines Mill

MOUNTAIN REST, SC

Built in 1914, the historic Raines Mill is a rustic 3-story structure with a 40-foot tall overshot water wheel. In its time, Raines Mill ground corn and wheat in the daytime and generated power for the nearby Long Creek Academy at night. The mill and its surrounding land have since become a favorite destination for hikers and waterfall enthusiasts.

## 7 Fish for Bass at Lake Greenwood

GREENWOOD, SC

Offering 212 miles of shoreline and 11,000 acres of water to explore, Lake Greenwood is a prime spot for largemouth bass, striped bass, catfish, crappie, perch, pickerel and sunfish fishing, though bass are certainly the most popular attraction and are plentiful from spring through fall. Launch your own boat at any of a dozen ramps around the lake, or rent one from a local purveyor.

## 8 Mountain Bike at Stumphouse Passage

WALHALLA, SC

Part of the 350-mile Palmetto Trail system, the Stumphouse Passage in Walhalla is one of the latest additions to the cross-state trail system. It boasts an excellent 1.5-mile hiking trail and 2.5-mile mountain bike park offering scenic views of numerous water features, with Issaqueena Falls nearby.

## 9 Hawk Watch at Caesars Head State Park

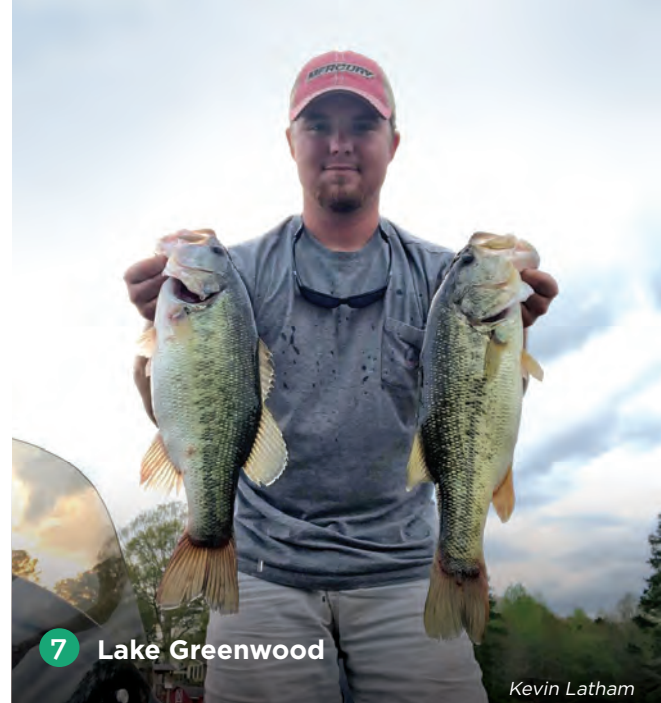
CLEVELAND, SC

Due to the park's unique location and features, hundreds of hawks — as well as bald eagles, osprey, and other raptors — fly past Caesars Head State Park each autumn. Grab your binoculars and plan a visit between September and November to view this breathtaking spectacle.

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*This list is just a sampling of the many recreation opportunities in the Upstate. We would love to hear and share your favorite hidden gems! Email Megan Burton, Communications Coordinator, at [mburton@upstateforever.org](mailto:mburton@upstateforever.org) to submit your favorite local outdoor adventures.*

*For more information about these adventures, visit [BetheUpstate.com](http://BetheUpstate.com)*

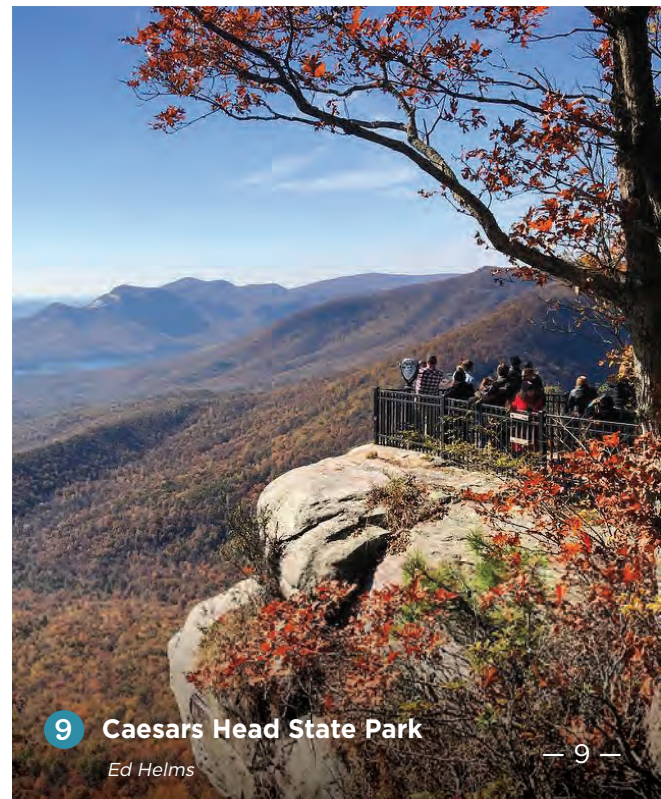


7 Lake Greenwood

Kevin Latham



8 Stumphouse Passage



9 Caesars Head State Park

Ed Helms



**11 Travelers Rest Farmers Market**



**10 Relax on a Front Porch at Greenbrier Farms**

EASLEY, SC

Get a taste of the simpler life at Greenbrier Farms' weekly Front Porch Series each spring and summer. Take in the setting of this idyllic organic farm in Easley while enjoying a sampling of the Farm's locally produced food, live music, various craft drinks, and fun for the whole family.

**11 Eat Local at the Travelers Rest Farmers Market**

TRAVELERS REST, SC

Enjoy a Saturday morning strolling the Upstate's largest open air market. Shop locally grown and raised fruits and vegetables, herbs, meats, eggs, plants, flowers and more. You can also enjoy live music, cooking demos, crafts from local artists, children's activities, and food trucks.

**12 Stretch and Laugh at Goat Yoga**

ANDERSON, SC

This trendy workout experience has made its way to the Upstate at Split Creek Farm in Anderson. An initiative of Split Creek Farm's "Goats 4 Goodness" non-profit organization, the one-hour goat yoga classes allow baby or mama goats to roam around as you practice your poses. A professional photographer is also on hand to capture each special session.



**12 Split Creek Farm**

Paige Ramsey

**13 Go Camping (or Glamping) in Croft State Park**

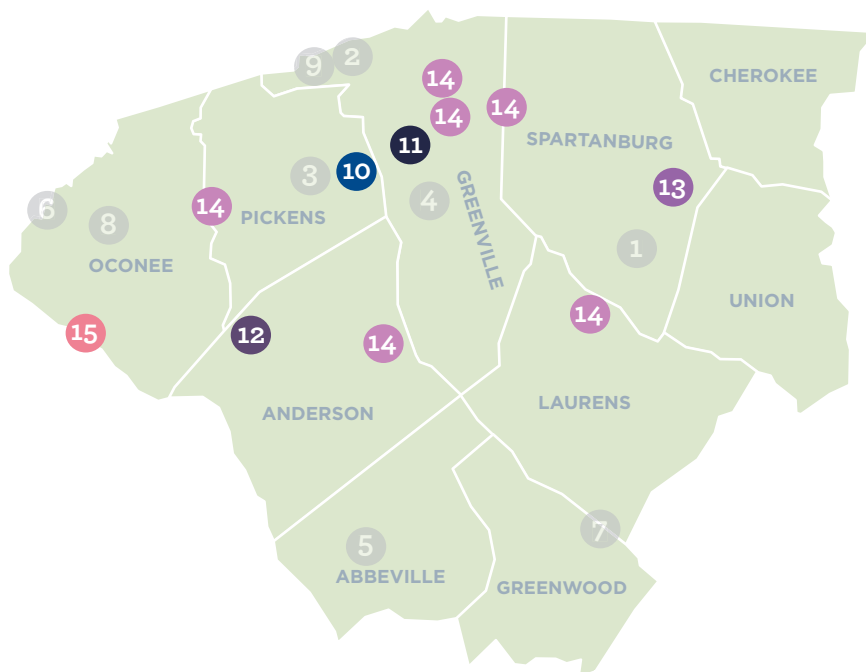
SPARTANBURG, SC

A hidden gem even to many Spartanburg natives, the 7,000+ acre Croft State Park is a wonderland for nature lovers. Once a World War II training camp, Croft is one of South Carolina's largest state parks and offers plenty of activities for the whole family. Most of the park's camp sites have water, electrical hookups, and nearby restrooms with hot showers, so you don't have to rough it *too* much.



**13 Croft State Park**

Jenn Evelyn-Ann





14 Sandy Flat Berry Patch



Eleanor Clifton

15 Chauga River



14 Pick Your Own Produce Across the Upstate

UPSTATE SC

There's nothing as satisfying as digging in to a beautifully ripe berry or luscious peach you've picked yourself. Luckily, there are U-Pick farms across the Upstate that invite the whole family to delight in farm fresh fruits right off the vine. Visit **BetheUpstate.com** for a list of U-Pick farms across the Upstate.

15 Paddle the Chauga River

OCONEE, SC

A freestone river with steep gradients and rapid currents, the Chauga is a thrilling blueway for paddlers of a variety of skill levels. The 31-mile blueway is surrounded by State Parks and National Forests, allowing beginner paddlers and experienced whitewater kayakers alike to immerse themselves in the natural splendor of the Upstate.

 For more information about these adventures, visit [BetheUpstate.com](http://BetheUpstate.com)

STAFF UPDATE

# Meet Upstate Forever's newest team members

We've grown! To intensify our efforts to protect our natural resources as the region grows, Upstate Forever has added several talented new staff members. For full bios and contact information, visit [upstateforever.org/team](http://upstateforever.org/team)



**Lee Brashier**  
*Executive Assistant /  
Office Manager*

Lee Ann Brashier recently moved to Pickens, SC from Denver. She loves the beautiful landscapes and natural beauty that South Carolina offers and is excited to keep exploring it. She is thrilled to help UF further its mission.



**Megan Burton**  
*Communications  
Coordinator*

A graduate of Anderson University, Megan has an impressive and versatile marketing and communications background. She will manage UF's social media and assist the Development team with boosting event engagement.



**Megan Chase**  
*Clean Water  
Advocate*

Megan has a B.S. in Ecology from UGA and a M.S. in Environmental Toxicology from Clemson University. As the Clean Water Advocate, she will work to protect our valuable water resources in the Upstate.



**Dorothy Signal**  
*Land Stewardship  
Associate*

Dorothy has a B.S. in biology from the University of South Carolina and an M.B.A. from Santa Clara University. Dorothy loves the mountains, forests, and wildlife of the Carolinas, and enjoys supporting UF's land stewardship goals.



**Caitlyn Smith**  
*Land Protection  
Specialist*

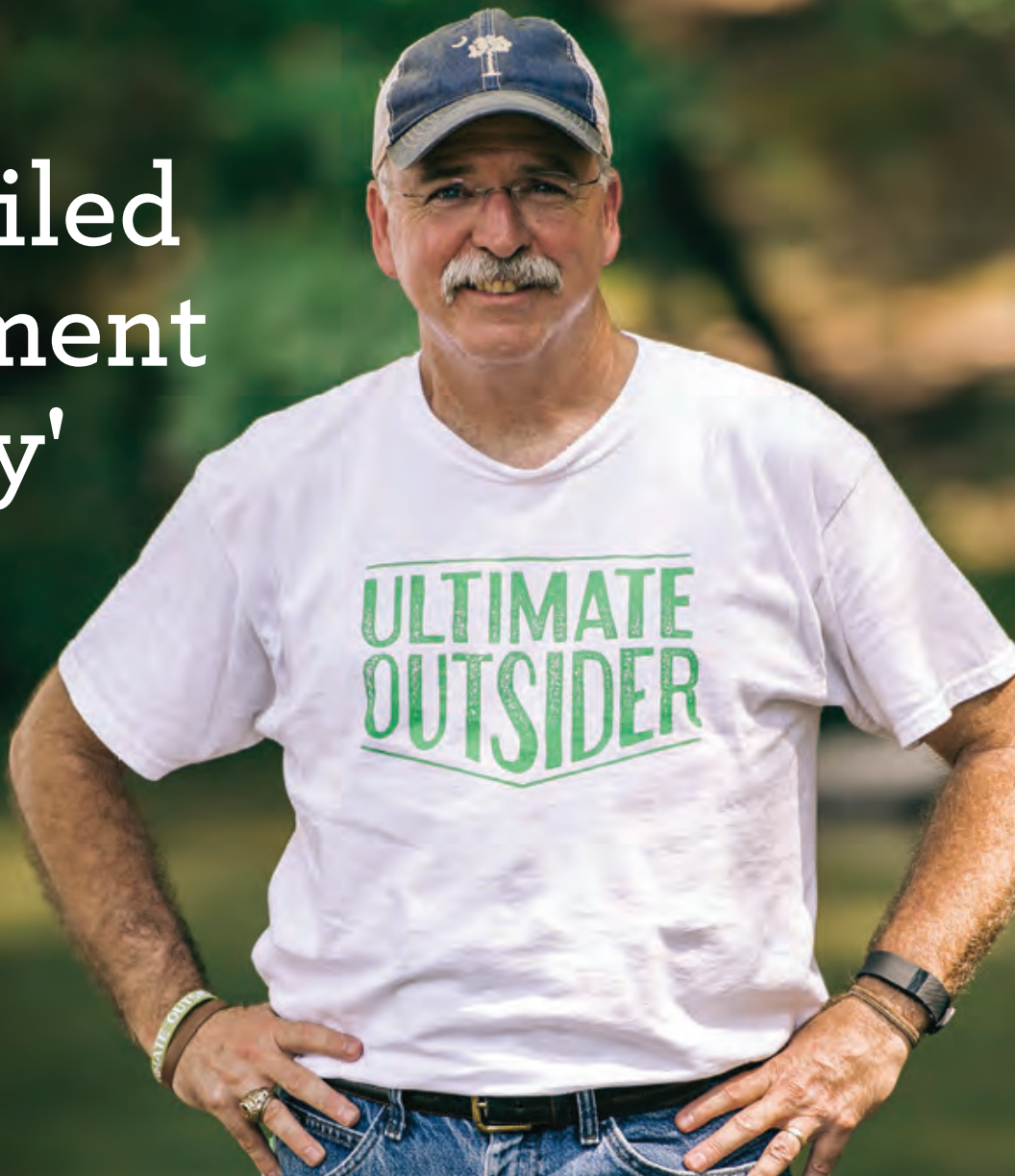
Caitlin received her B.S. in Agriscience & Environmental Systems from UGA. She has worked closely with farmers and community members to enact sustainable practices, and is excited to help protect land in the Upstate.



# 'I have failed at retirement miserably'

**An interview with Phil Gaines, South Carolina's long-serving State Parks Director and recipient of the Public Servant of the Year Award at the 2019 ForeverGreen Awards**

[Read more about the 2019 ForeverGreen Awards on [PAGE 4](#)]



*Phil Gaines started his 38-year career in 1982 as an entry-level ranger at Kings Mountain State Park. When he retired in August of 2018, he left behind a legacy of revitalization and sweeping improvements to park stewardship and service. We sat down with him to talk about his career highlights, his love for South Carolina, and his plans for the future.*

## **How's retirement? What are you up to now?**

People ask me what I'm doing now that I'm retired, and my first answer is that I have failed retirement miserably. I'm continuing to work for conservation through special projects with the SC Department of Parks and Recreation and Tourism, and through my role at Clemson University as a Professor of Practice in the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management School. Hopefully I'll be able to keep active and engaged in the conservation of public access and public lands.

## **How did you get involved with the Parks Service?**

I grew up in Greenville at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains and was always attracted to the outdoors. I spent a lot of time at Table Rock State Park camping, hiking, and swimming. I caught that itch very young.

The thing about "park people" — they not only like the outdoors, they like people, too. So I was attracted to that profession. I love South Carolina and I love our state parks. I love our lands and what defines us as a people.

## **Why are state parks so important to the Upstate?**

Not only are parks beautiful places that we visit to reconnect and to recharge our batteries, they also play an economic role in the quality of life that we cherish here in the Upstate.

State Parks are truly economic engines for their local communities. They provide green infrastructure that



sustains economic development. Sometimes parks are *the* tourism asset for their region. That’s why it’s critically important to manage beyond the gates of a park — to engage in the community and to showcase the park’s economic benefit.

**What was your focus during your time in the Parks Service?**

By the time I took a leadership role, one of the pressing issues was deferred maintenance needs, especially infrastructure. We focused really hard on those infrastructure needs, especially some older buildings from the Civilian Conservation Corps era (1933 to 1942). So we worked on places like Table Rock Lodge, Oconee cabins, Poinsett cabins, Myrtle Beach cabins, and so on.

We also worked on a more sustainable model for funding. Funding is always an issue for government, but in particular for parks. We worked on a model of self sufficiency, which has been a very successful model.

**You’ve been a strong voice for conservation and land protection. Can you talk about how your mission has overlapped with Upstate Forever’s?**

I’ve been very proud of the land protection we’ve been able to do throughout the state, particularly in the Upstate. We’ve had great land protection projects with Upstate Forever, Naturaland Trust, and other conservation groups.

Upstate Forever has really engaged the community in the importance of conservation. It’s not just about “conservation”— it’s about economic prosperity and quality of life. Organizations like Upstate Forever ensure we’re able to protect and defend the things that identify us as the people of South Carolina.

Every time I come back home to Greenville, and I hit that part of I-385 right where the water tower is, and I look out to the mountains and see that Blue Wall, it feels like coming home. There’s just nothing like it. Organizations like Upstate Forever ensure that view and the natural things within it will always be protected for this and future generations.

**What successes are you most proud of?**

You know, many people have asked me that — what my legacy will be, what I’m most proud of. There’s tangible things like the improvements to facilities like Table Rock and Oconee, building on the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps. I’m pretty proud of those improvements. I’m also proud of our land protection efforts.

But the legacy I hope I will leave is this: there’s a new generation of park ranger that is engaged and empowered to take this outdoor conservation ethic into the future. Parks and conservation are not only about this generation, they’re about future generations. It’s about impacting people who aren’t even born yet.

I was very fortunate to “stand on the shoulders of giants before me,” as Isaac Newton would say. So hopefully I’ve done my part to inspire, engage, and empower a new generation of park and conservation leaders. That’s the legacy I’m most proud of. 🌿

 **Follow Phil’s adventures on Instagram: @therangerphil**



Phil Gaines



Phil Gaines



Phil Gaines



# Every Last Acre on Earth



*This is a shortened version of an essay by **Dennis Chastain**, award-winning outdoor writer and recipient of the Extraordinary Achievement Award at the 2019 ForeverGreen Luncheon [SEE PAGE 4]. You can read the essay in its entirety at [upstateforever.org/last](http://upstateforever.org/last)*

It happens to everyone at one time or another. You hear a line in a song and you can't get it out of your head. Or maybe you read a passage in a book and it just lingers in the back of your brain, sometimes for weeks or months.

It could be something someone said in a casual conversation that brings a troublesome issue into sharp focus, and then it hovers in the deep recesses of your mind like an ominous storm cloud looming over the horizon. That's what happened to me several years ago and I can't quit thinking about it.

We were sitting cross-legged up on top of Table Rock, that grand granite dome in the mountains of northern Pickens County, which has long been one of the most prominent and most cherished natural features in the Palmetto State.

I was up there with my long-time friend Tommy Charles, a now-retired archaeologist. We had spent the morning poking and probing around the cliffs and exposed rock outcroppings looking for ancient etchings in the stone, prehistoric petroglyphs that could well be the last vestiges of a largely unknown, undocumented people who once called this place home.

The rolling, heavily-textured, green, gray and brown patchwork lay before us like a finely detailed landscape painting by one of the grand masters.

I told Tommy that I had been climbing Pinnacle, the adjacent mountain, for more than 30 years and it seemed that every year the signs of civilization keep creeping closer and closer to the mountain.

"Over on Pinnacle," I recall telling Tommy, "I try to get up to my favorite hunting spot before first light, right at the break of dawn." According to family tradition, it is also the place my great-grandfather, "Big Ab" Chastain, hunted when he was a young man. The spot up near the top of the mountain that we both chose as our favorite hunting lair is a relatively flat, boulder-strewn patch of woods enclosed by steep cliffs and ridges. I call it very simply, The Pretty Place.

Part of the appeal of standing there in that little sanctified spot of hardwood forest is that it provides a treasured link between me and my great-grandfather, whom I never knew, but nevertheless consider a kindred spirit.

Every time I go up there, in the last predawn minutes before the glowing





“For those of us who cherish the charming rural landscape, and the woods and wild places, our world has once again shrunk before our very eyes.”

— DENNIS CHASTAIN

Mac Stone/Naturaland Trust

sun peeks up from the distant horizon casting its bold white light on the landscape, I take a moment to turn around and look through the dark woods to the East where I can see the lights in the tallest buildings in downtown Greenville, along with the twinkling street lights of the various communities, neighborhoods and housing developments of Berea, Easley, Dacusville, and Pickens.

“I guess if I live long enough,” I said wistfully, “those lights will eventually be right up here at the foot of the mountain where my ancestors have been living in scattered cabins and homesteads for two hundred years. It breaks my heart.”

Tommy was surprisingly silent for a moment as if maybe he had not heard me, but then, staring straight off toward the distant horizon, he posed the question that still haunts me, “Are we just going to develop every last acre on earth?”

The reason that otherwise unremarkable question haunts me is the fact that I don’t know the answer.

And because I don’t know the answer, I have to wonder: Are there any real limits on development, the conversion of open rural spaces and wild lands into housing developments, gated communities, commercial districts and industrial sites? Who knows?


Maybe there really are no limits on growth. Maybe we really will eventually develop every last acre on earth; maybe not in my lifetime, but eventually. That prospect haunts me, scares me beyond comprehension, and drives me to distraction.

Here is what I know. I know that development is directly related to growth and nothing in nature grows forever. Sadly, however, the rules of nature don’t apply here. While growth has historically been relatively slow, regular, planned and

predictable, it is now rapid, episodic, largely unplanned and almost totally unpredictable.

This means we are now gobbling up thousands of acres of farmlands and woodlands each day with little time to react, little time to do adequate planning to accommodate the new land use paradigm.

For those of us who cherish the charming rural landscape, and the woods and wild places, our world has once again shrunk before our very eyes.

Where are the wildlife going to live? And where are we humans going to go to seek solitude, to recharge our batteries, or maybe just to marvel at the wonder and splendor of the natural world, and restore our city-weary souls? Where are we going to go, indeed? And I am left wondering, are we just going to develop every last acre on earth? 



BOARD UPDATE

# Congratulations to new board chair Joe Lesesne

Many thanks to **Mark Taylor** for serving as Upstate Forever’s Board Chair for the past two years. Mark is the president of SynTerra and has been involved with Upstate Forever since it was formed in 1998.

Along with Brad Wyche, Mark has also co-chaired the *Crossroads Campaign* Steering Committee for the past year, and has been integral to its success. He will remain on the board but has passed the reins to our new chair, **Joe Lesesne**.

A longtime leader in Spartanburg and the state as a whole, Joe served as president of Wofford College for 28 years, from 1972 until 2000.

Joe has chaired the boards of the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce, the Spartanburg County Foundation, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. He has served on the Upstate Forever Board since 2004. We’re grateful for his willingness to share his experience and leadership as Upstate Forever’s new board chair!



**Mark Taylor**



**Joe Lesesne**

**NEW BOARD MEMBERS** For full bios, visit [upstateforever.org/board](http://upstateforever.org/board)



**John Keith**

Dr. John Keith is an orthopedic surgeon who has served as Chief of Staff at Mary Black Hospital and as an Associate Clinical Professor at MUSC. He is a tennis player and skier, a committed husband, a devoted father, a former Eagle Scout, Tarheel, and a Wofford Hall of Famer.



**Gaye Sprague**

A native of Anderson, Gaye is the owner and principal of Sprague & Sprague Consulting Engineers in Greenville. Gaye served as one of two at-large representatives on Greenville City Council from 2009-2017 working to make Greenville a thriving and sustainable community with a high quality of life.



**Emelyn Jones**

Emelyn has an impressive history of community involvement with organizations like Meals on Wheels, Junior League of Greenville, and Greenville County Legal Auxiliary. She lives at Lake Keowee with her husband Neil, and has hiked to all 31 waterfalls in South Carolina.



**Neal Workman**

Neal is a South Carolina business leader, philanthropist and founder of Trehel Corporation. He has served as chairman of Ten at the Top, and has also devoted time to organizations like the Anderson Chamber of Commerce and the SC National Heritage Corridor.



**A BIRD’S EYE VIEW**

UF Executive Director Andrea Cooper snapped this photo of Table Rock on a recent flight over northern Greenville and Pickens Counties with SouthWings pilot Hap Endler.

Headquartered in Asheville, SouthWings is a fantastic nonprofit organization that protects and restores southeast ecosystems through flight. Flights help us identify problems we can’t access on the ground. We’ve worked with them to monitor construction on the Dominion Pipeline and to assess critical areas like watersheds and forests.

Thank you, SouthWings! Visit their website at [southwings.org](http://southwings.org)



## LAND PROTECTION

# Hundreds of additional acres protected on Paris Mountain — with more to come



**By Scott Park**

LAND CONSERVATION DIRECTOR  
[spark@upstateforever.org](mailto:spark@upstateforever.org)

A natural respite just minutes from the hustle and bustle of Greenville, Paris Mountain has long been a treasured retreat for many Upstate residents.

However, due to the County's rapid population growth and the area's scenic appeal, Paris Mountain has experienced increasing development pressure in recent years. If not managed thoughtfully, unbridled development could forever destroy the character of this Greenville County icon.

Fortunately, because of ongoing efforts to protect this beloved landmark — by Upstate Forever, partner conservation organizations, and dedicated community residents — hundreds of acres of protected lands have been added to the area over the past year, including two properties that will ultimately expand Paris Mountain State Park.

Upstate Forever's nationally-accredited land trust has been protecting land on the mountain since 2003. In 2018 alone, our team worked to secure three additional conservation easements in the area, totaling over 230 acres.

**These additions bring the total amount of land permanently protected by Upstate Forever on Paris Mountain to six properties and more than 465 acres.**

The newly protected land provides invaluable natural habitat for fish, wildlife, and plants, including eighteen threatened or endangered species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and plants.

Residents can also look forward to expanded recreation access and potentially more trails in Paris Mountain State Park once the two properties are fully transferred to the Parks Service and are open to the public.

Lands protected by these conservation easements will dramatically impact the future of residential development on Paris Mountain. Because of zoning regulations, the addition of conservation easements will significantly reduce the number of additional residential subdivisions approved for development on Paris Mountain. This protects



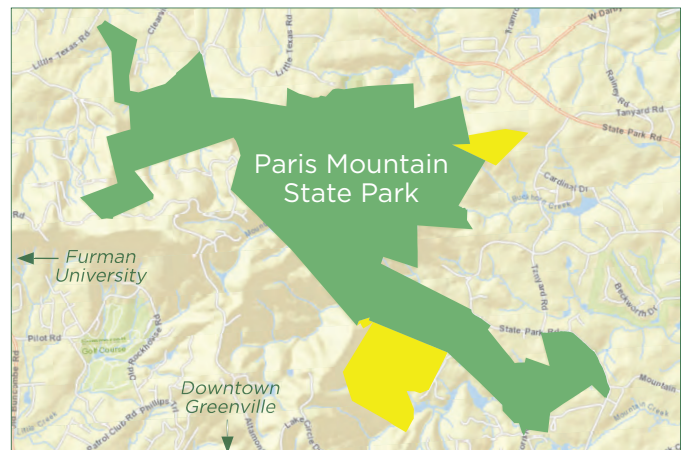
*Upstate Forever protects 465 acres across six properties on Paris Mountain.*

*Photo: Russ Ethridge*

the scenic views, natural habitat, and healthy streams that are so integral to the mountain's beauty.

We are grateful for the continued support of the community and local residents as we pursue land conservation opportunities on Paris Mountain, as well as the support of our partners at Naturaland Trust, Paris Mountain State Park Friends, and the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism.

We look forward to continuing this work together and have plans to secure additional tracts on Paris Mountain over the next few years. 🌿



*Two recently protected properties (shown in yellow) will be added to the park in the near future. We will let you know when they are open to the public!*





Top: A full house at the Anderson County meeting. Bottom: Meet the attorneys from SELC handling the Duke rate case - (left to right) David Neal, Stinson Ferguson, and Gudrun Thompson

ENERGY & STATE POLICY

# Overflow crowds at all three Duke rate case hearings

Upstate Forever works at the state and local level to encourage clean renewable energy, energy storage, and energy efficiency in the most flexible and cost-effective manner possible. To that end, we have partnered with the Southern Environmental Law Center, the NAACP, and the Coastal Conservation League to intervene in Duke Energy's current rate cases.

Duke's proposed tripling of the base facilities charge — the fee you pay before you turn on a single switch — strongly discourages energy efficiency and solar, and disproportionately harms the lowest users (usually the elderly and low income customers).

About 1,000 Upstate customers attended the three-night hearings the Public Service Commission (PSC) held in March in Spartanburg, Anderson and Greenville.

After these hearings, Duke agreed to drop the proposed base facilities charge of \$28 down to \$11.96. This is still a 44% increase from the current \$8.29, and they continue to insist on their current revenue requirement and flawed methodology. Therefore, our parties will continue to participate in the PSC proceeding. A final order will be issued no later than May 8.

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STAY IN THE LOOP

## Keep up with the latest news from Upstate Forever

We hope you're enjoying the Upstate Advocate, which is published twice a year in April and October. Want to stay informed in between issues? Here's how to get the latest updates about UF news, events, and opportunities.



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### Check out our website

Find more information about our programs, as well as blog posts, news items, and events at [upstateforever.org](http://upstateforever.org)





Membership in the Wyche Society is open to all who support Upstate Forever annually at a level of \$2,500 or above. To join, email Aldon Knight, Director of Development and Community Relations, at [aknight@upstateforever.org](mailto:aknight@upstateforever.org)

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# Ultra-rare plant habitat protected in Travelers Rest

A 56-acre property in Travelers Rest once slated for subdivision development has been acquired by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) Heritage Trust and added to the adjacent Blackwell Heritage Preserve.

Although Upstate Forever does not typically oppose specific developments, we opposed this one because it would have seriously threatened the Heritage Preserve and the survival of the bunched arrowhead, an extremely rare plant only found in two counties: Henderson, NC and Greenville, SC.

This conservation success story is truly a testament to the dedication and collaboration of many partners and stakeholders, including Naturaland Trust, SCDNR, Southern Environmental Law Center, Senator Lindsey Graham's office, the SC Native Plant Society, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and many passionate neighbors who were engaged throughout the process.

The property will be managed by SCDNR as part of the adjoining Blackwell Heritage Preserve, which now contains 72 acres.

In addition, Greenville County has added regulations to its planning code to give greater protection to sites like this one. Upstate Forever is grateful for the tireless efforts of everyone who worked to ensure the protection of this important ecological area.

Read the full article at [upstateforever.org/blackwell](http://upstateforever.org/blackwell)



*Bunched arrowhead is one of the rarest plants on Earth, found only in Greenville County and Henderson County, NC. The federally threatened plant species dwarf-flowered heartleaf is also present on the now-protected site.*



# Impact the future through planned giving



Jo and Bob Hackl

*"We admire how Upstate Forever brings together public and private partners to chart a path for responsible growth. Thoughtful stewardship of our natural resources has been critical to our community's success and the future of our region depends on continued work in this area."*

— **JO & BOB HACKL**, LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

**Join Jo and Bob in the Legacy Society by including Upstate Forever in your estate plans.** Below are some ways to make a planned gift to Upstate Forever's endowment, ensuring we are able to continue our work for generations of future Upstate residents. 🌱

What to give	Your goal	Your benefits
<b>Bequest</b>	Maintain control of your assets during life Make a gift to charity when you pass away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Estate tax charitable deduction</li> <li>» Life use and ownership of your property</li> </ul>
<b>Gifts of Retirement Assets</b>	By making a testamentary gift of your retirement assets such as a gift from your IRA, 401k, 403b, pension or other tax deferred plan, you will help further our work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Avoid leaving family a taxable gift</li> <li>» Estate tax charitable deduction</li> </ul>
<b>Gifts of Insurance</b>	If your life insurance policy is no longer needed or will no longer benefit your survivors consider making a current or future gift to help further our mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Income or estate tax deduction</li> <li>» Income tax deductions for annual contributions to help us maintain the policy</li> </ul>
<b>Charitable Lead Trust (CLT)</b>	Pass on cash or property to your family/ make annual gifts to charity in the future Avoid substantial gift or estate tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Gift or estate tax deduction</li> <li>» Trust assets plus appreciation pass to family at a reduced cost</li> </ul>
<b>Gifts of Real Estate</b>	If you own appreciated real property (such as your home, vacation property, vacant land, farmland or ranch or commercial property), you can avoid paying capital gains tax by making a gift to us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Avoid paying capital gains tax</li> <li>» Charitable income tax deduction</li> <li>» Leave a lasting legacy</li> </ul>



For more information, contact Aldon Knight, Director of Development, at [aknight@upstateforever.org](mailto:aknight@upstateforever.org) or (864) 250-0500, or visit our planned giving website at [upstateforever.giftlegacy.com](http://upstateforever.giftlegacy.com)



# Crossroads has launched!

Our sincere thanks to all who joined us in March at Zen Greenville as we celebrated the launch of the \$7.5 million *Crossroads Campaign*. Thanks to the generosity of many lead donors, we are well on our way to meeting that goal.

Help us protect the Upstate for generations to come. **Pledge at least \$25 per year for three years or make a one-time gift of \$50\*** to receive our limited edition Be the Upstate tee created in collaboration with local outfitter Dapper Ink.

To get your shirt, visit [upstateforever.org/donate](http://upstateforever.org/donate)



**Limited Edition 'Be The Upstate' Tee**  
*\*While supplies last. Back features UF logo  
 Created in partnership with Dapper Ink*

## About Crossroads:

Our region is at a crossroads, and we have an important decision to make. We can sit back and watch as our farms, forests and mountains are paved over. We can do nothing as our waterways are polluted. Or we can band together to protect this land we call home and promote positive, responsible growth. The choice is yours, and the time is now.

### Your gift to the *Crossroads Campaign* will help:

- » Permanently protect an additional 15,000 acres of critical lands
- » Safeguard water quality and quantity
- » Balance responsible growth and development with natural resource protection
- » Engage a growing base of conservationists
- » Provide sustainable funding for years to come

To learn more, visit [upstateforever.org/crossroads](http://upstateforever.org/crossroads)

## LEAD DONORS

### MOUNTAIN BRIDGE SOCIETY (\$1M +)

Anonymous In Memory of  
 Marjorie E. Schmidt

### BLUE RIDGE SOCIETY (\$500,000 - 999,999)

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Brad Wyche & Diane Smock

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### LEGACY SOCIETY (PLANNED GIFTS)

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507 Pettigru Street, Greenville, SC 29601

201 E. Broad Street, Suite 1C, Spartanburg, SC 29306

[www.upstateforever.org](http://www.upstateforever.org)



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## Support the Crossroads Campaign

The *Crossroads Campaign* is our \$7.5 million initiative to ensure the Upstate grows responsibly while protecting the critical lands, abundant waters, and unique character that make our region so special. Help us protect the Upstate for generations to come by making a pledge today!

**To learn more, turn to the inside back cover  
or visit [upstateforever.org/crossroads](http://upstateforever.org/crossroads)**



Joey Maxwell (left) and Robert Hoskins (right) in Greenville County. JACK ROBERT PHOTOGRAPHY



*Pacolet Milliken is pleased to support Upstate Forever in improving the quality of life for all Upstate residents.*