

Upstate Forever

CASE FOR SUPPORT



The Upstate is one of the fastest growing and most rapidly changing areas in the Southeast. Our ten-county region's population now exceeds 1.3 million and continues to increase at the rate of 33 people per day. Land is being developed at a rate that is the equivalent of a brand-new Haywood Mall (86 acres) every day.

Certainly we need growth to keep the economy strong and to provide good jobs and opportunities for our citizens. The issue is not whether the Upstate is going to continue to grow – that is inevitable. Rather, the issue is how and where this growth will be accommodated. It is one of the most important issues our region has ever faced.



Will we become a polluted, traffic-choked area like Atlanta, or will we maintain the quality of life that makes us one of the best and most attractive places in the country?

That is the question that *Upstate Forever*, a South Carolina non-profit organization, has been asking and addressing since our founding in 1998. Through our Land Trust, Clean Air and Water, and Sustainable Communities programs, *Upstate Forever* promotes sensible growth, sustainable development, and the protection of important lands and natural resources in our region.

We have made great progress across all three programs. We have protected over 14,000 critically important acres, such as Stumphouse Mountain in Oconee County, the Nine Times tract in Pickens County, key tracts in the Mountain Bridge Wilderness Area and along Highway 11, and beautiful farmlands in Spartanburg, Laurens and Abbeville Counties.

We were the first land trust program in South Carolina to receive national accreditation.

(over)



Bill Robertson





Through a comprehensive assessment of the Lake Greenwood watershed, we have established an action plan for restoring and protecting this vitally important lake.

We have played key roles in stopping harmful projects, such as the proposed mega-landfill in Spartanburg County, and in making valuable projects and initiatives a reality, such as the Swamp Rabbit trail in Greenville County and the hospitality tax for new and expanded parks in Spartanburg County.

Through our “Upstate House” project, we brought the EarthCraft green building standard to South Carolina, and we recently completed the green renovation of our main office, for which we received LEED certification at the highest level (Platinum) – the first building in the Upstate and only the second in South Carolina to achieve this designation.

We have sponsored over 500 conferences, workshops, and speeches on a wide variety of topics.

We currently have over 2,500 members for whose support we are deeply grateful. With your support, we can achieve our long-term goals and keep the Upstate as the best region in the world...Forever.



Long-Term Goals

We are working hard to achieve the following goals by 2020:

- ♦ *Upstate Forever* and its conservation partners will protect an additional 100,000 acres of important lands in our region
- ♦ Our region’s air and water quality will meet all standards
- ♦ The Upstate will achieve a “growth ratio” of 1 to 1, where the rate of land development is equal to the rate of population growth
- ♦ Most Upstate counties will establish policies and incentives that direct growth to areas where infrastructure and services exist to support it
- ♦ The form-based “Smart Code” will be adopted in most of the region
- ♦ Green design will be the rule, rather than the exception
- ♦ The Upstate will be a model for how a fast-growing region can both accommodate growth and protect quality of life
- ♦ *Upstate Forever* will have at least 10,000 members

