

For Immediate Release

December 5, 2005

**Upstate Forever Announces
Annual Award Winners**

Upstate Forever is pleased to announce the winners of its Annual Awards for 2005. The awards were presented at the organization's Annual Meeting at the Asbury Hills Retreat and Conference Center on November 5, 2005.

Land Steward of the Year: Madelon Wallace

Madelon Wallace had a vision to protect the 1,260-acre Fairview Farm, a place of great biological diversity and stunning scenic beauty in northern Spartanburg County. The site of a Revolutionary War battle, the property has substantial frontage on the Pacolet River and will soon be traversed by the "Mountains to the Sea" Palmetto Trail. When the owners were not interested in preserving the property, Wallace put her own money at risk in securing an option to purchase and then assembled a group of buyers in an extremely complex conservation deal. The success of that project led to the establishment of three more major easements in the Landrum/Tryon area, with over 2,500 acres now permanently protected.

Innovator of the Year: Milliken & Company

Headquartered in the Upstate, Milliken & Company employs 16,000 people in 65 plants in 12 countries. Beautiful landscaping is a hallmark of all their facilities; their wonderful campus in Spartanburg comprises 600 acres populated with "Noble Trees" and open to the public. Before most people had even heard of the term "sustainable development," Milliken was actually implementing it, tracking and reducing water and energy use company-wide since 1971. They now recycle 100% of their paper waste and 98% of all waste and have reduced the use of chemicals by 88% in last 10 years. Milliken is setting the standard for other companies in environmental protection and the efficient use of our natural resources.

Public Servant of the Year: Burnie Maybank

The Director of the South Carolina Department of Revenue, Maybank earned national distinction this year as a moderate voice for reform in response to some highly publicized, abusive conservation easements. Recognizing that questionable transactions hurt the work that good land trusts do, he launched

the first statewide audit of land trusts in the nation and later testified before Congress on changes needed in the system. As DOR Director, Maybank has published guidebooks outlining the tax benefits of conservation easements. A long-time ally and friend of conservation, Maybank has a distinguished record of public service to our state, including serving on the SC DHEC Board, the SC Public Service Commission, and as General Counsel to the Secretary of State. He received the Order of the Palmetto, the highest award that can be given to a civilian in South Carolina.

Extraordinary Leadership Award: Carlton Owen

Carlton Owen, a member of ***Upstate Forever's*** board since its inception and its Chairman for the last two years, is only the second person ever to receive this award. ***Upstate Forever*** is a much stronger, more efficient and more effective organization because of Owen's superlative leadership. Owen recognized the need for more structure as the nonprofit organization grew in membership and staff size. Because of his leadership, ***Upstate Forever*** has implemented staff goals and objectives, established values and policies for the organization, and established an investment policy for its endowment. Other projects and organizations that have benefited from Owen's talents and hard work include: Upstate House (a partnership with the Home Builders' Association of Greenville that is a fundraiser for ***Upstate Forever*** and a demonstration project for green building techniques), the Rail-Trail project connecting Travelers Rest to downtown Greenville, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and its "Acres for America" project that to date has preserved more than 300,000 acres across the nation.

Volunteer of the Year: Dan Roberts

Dan Roberts has shared his numerous talents and skills with ***Upstate Forever*** in a variety of ways. An accomplished writer, Roberts researched and wrote several items this year for the monthly newsletter, ***Upstate Update***. An expert in computers, he spent countless hours training our staff and keeping our computer system running. When ***Upstate Forever*** moved to its new office, Roberts recruited other volunteers and got our system up and running again very quickly.

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Photo of Award Winners is available upon request.

