

Saving Lake Conestee

A Hidden Treasure

The woods behind the old Municipal Stadium on Mauldin Road conceal a treasure you might not have known was there no matter how many Greenville Braves (or Bombers) games you attended. Within shouting distance of the field (which was recently acquired for a sports complex), the Reedy River snakes through the terrain, passing across Lake Conestee. With approximately 90 percent of the former lakebed silted in, the non-profit Conestee Foundation has purchased 145 acres that include the former lakebed, wetlands, sloughs, bottomland forests, and 1.5 miles of the Reedy River, with a natural wonderland of wildlife habitat. Efforts are underway to acquire an adjacent 112 acres of rolling piedmont pasture and mature hickory/oak forests that provides the only feasible public access to the lake property and the Reedy. The goal is to preserve between 600 and 800 acres as the Lake Conestee Conservation Park. Planned as a "passive public recreation and environmental education" area, organizers point out there are over 100,000 students within a 30-minute bus ride of Lake Conestee. The next step in the process comes on Saturday, Feb. 24 from 8:30 am – 1 pm. You are invited to participate in Operation Clean Sweep. Join staff, members and volunteers of the Conestee Foundation, Friends of the Reedy River, Saluda Reedy Watershed Consortium, South Carolina Water Resources Center, and Upstate Forever to help clean-up the historic 145-acre Lake Conestee, just south of Greenville. Meet at Former Municipal Stadium on Mauldin Road. Refreshments will be provided. To register, go to www.saludareedy.org/conestee.html. (J.S.)

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