

[Back](#)

Upstate Forever seeks accreditation

Published: Friday, March 2, 2007 - 2:00 am

By Lorando D. Lockhart
STAFF WRITER
llockhart@greenvillenews.com

A local nonprofit was chosen as the only Southeast representative to participate in a pilot for a national accreditation.

Upstate Forever, which promotes land trusts, sustainable communities and clean air and water, will help recognize organizations that meet national standards for administering land trust programs.

When a land trust is nationally accredited, it shows the public there is accountability in how land is permanently conserved.

Dana Leavitt, an Upstate Forever spokeswoman, said, "Accreditation will help build even broader public support."

Advertisement The group is one of more than 1,660 land trusts nationwide.

Upstate Forever currently has 39 conservation agreements that protect nearly 8,000 acres in the region, Leavitt said.

"The participants selected by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission represent a wide variety of land trust programs in terms of size, geographic location and types of protected land," Leavitt said.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission was established in 2006 as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance.

The program will be tested this year and will be available to organizations beginning in 2008.

Leavitt said that at that time, land trusts could join organizations such as zoos, museums and colleges in gaining accreditation.

Tammara Van Ryn, the commission's executive director, said Upstate Forever and other organizations "are willing to demonstrate publicly their commitment to high standards of ethics and operations."

STORYCHAT 
What's your view?
[Click here](#) to add
your comment to
this story.