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Growth is focus of Lake Keowee group forum today

Upstate groups call for growth management policies

By Anna Simon

CLEMSON BUREAU

How today's growth shapes the area's future is the focus of a public forum today at 7 p.m. at Duke World of Energy.

The forum on planning and managing growth in the Upstate is co-sponsored by the Friends of Lake Keowee Society and Advocates for Quality Development Inc.

Featured speakers will include Jeff Allen of Clemson University's Strom Thurmond Institute and Brad Wyche, executive director of Upstate Forever.

Allen, who was project leader for a recently released study that predicts a tripling of developed land by 2030, will discuss the study and his belief that the forecasted results "can be avoided by planning for more efficient growth."

Wyche will discuss the fiscal and environmental impacts of unplanned growth, and review various policies and programs for managing growth.

Those ideas include concentrating infrastructure and services in areas where growth is desired, transfer of development rights programs, zoning and land use controls, affordable housing programs, revitalization of existing developments, infill developments and increased funding for conservation.

Because unplanned growth that can forever change the Upstate's environment and quality of life, Bill Graham, FOLKS president, and Steve MacLeod, AQD president, said their memberships are calling for Oconee and Pickens counties to start implementing growth management policies.

Tonight's forum precedes a public hearing by the Oconee County Council scheduled for April 15 on a proposed "Zoning Enabling Ordinance."

That hearing begins at 5 p.m. in council chambers in Walhalla.
