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Upstate Forever gets \$1 million to develop a pollution solution

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Environmental group Upstate Forever said today it received more than \$1 million in federal and private grants to pursue a three-legged approach to protecting the Reedy and Saluda rivers that could become a template for watershed efforts nationwide.

The city and county as well as Clemson and Furman universities will collaborate on an ambitious plan to reward developers for projects that reduce stormwater runoff, create more development guidelines along the Reedy and rehabilitate old sites that spawn polluting discharge, officials said at a press conference today.

The Environmental Protection Agency awarded Upstate Forever \$800,000 for the work, and the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation provided a \$300,000 match. Brad Wyche, executive director of Upstate Forever, said the project will "allow us to have it both ways," enabling local development and better river protections at the same time.

The freak Reedy flood in 2004 and last summer's drought were cited by EPA and public officials as prompts to better steward Upstate rivers, which Wyche said are especially vulnerable because they're smaller foothills streams with steep banks.

The project will go hand-in-hand with a four-year Reedy-Saluda watershed study to be released soon, funded by a \$2.3 million donation from the Rasmussen Foundation, said adviser Charles Schulze.

GreenvilleOnline.com will have more details today.
