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Saluda River on Endangered List

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Reporter

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One of the Upstate's most popular rivers is now on the country's most endangered list.

Environmentalists have named the 200 mile long Saluda River 6th most endangered in the country.

The river was placed on America's Rivers list because of high levels of phosphorous and the critical level of need for action. The element is found in human waste and isn't harmful to humans directly, but it chokes the life out of bodies of water by depleting the oxygen. Algae Blooms and fish kills are common problems associated with too much phosphorous in waterways.

"Algae growth can reduce lake shore property values, it reduces the amount of oxygen in the water, it can lead to fish kills, which, in turn, ripples through the economy and can cause serious degradation to just the general quality of life and the pleasure of being on some of the greatest waterways and lakes that we have in the upstate," Upstate Forever Mountain Streams and Rural Waterways program director, John Tynan, said.

America's Rivers says insufficient waste water treatment is the cause of the Saluda's problems. Eight waste water treatment plants sit along the river's banks, and according to Upstate Forever, none have restrictions on the amount of phosphorous they can release.

"This year, communities along the Saluda River and Lake Greenwood have the unique opportunity to call on DHEC and work with the wastewater treatment plants to reduce phosphorous emissions from those plants," said Tynan.

80% of the waste water treatment plants which flow into the Saluda are up to renew permits. Tynan says the community can work together to ask DHEC to put stricter emission rules in place.

To find out more about Upstate Forever's initiative and education on rivers:

<http://www.upstateforever.org>

For more information about the endangered river list:
<http://www.AmericanRivers.org/EndangeredRivers>