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Solution to lake problem might finally be on way

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Lake Greenwood is slowly being choked to death by too much phosphorous. That doesn't surprise any property owners around the lake, either. They've known for years that something was not right but no one seemed able to figure what. Now they know, and fixing it may now be in the works.

The biggest part of the phosphorous that piles on the other sediment has drifted down to the lake via the Saluda and Reedy Rivers. That's because most of the wastewater treatment plants on those rivers have no standards for phosphorous. That means the stuff is dumped back into the streams with discharge from those treatment plants.

Upstate Forever, an organization that has studied the situation for some time, says there are upcoming opportunities to help solve the problem that has property owners up in arms, and rightfully so.

Not too far into the future, eight wastewater treatment plants on the Saluda River and two on the Reedy River will be required to have their permits renewed by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. That would be the time to build in phosphorous standards to help reduce and, it is hoped, eliminate the basic problem.

S.C. Rep. Mike Pitts told an interested group recently that he will discuss the lake problem with the appropriate agencies regarding phosphorous limits being placed on the wastewater treatment plants. That includes Upstate Forever and DHEC. Pitts is a passionate outdoorsman who champions issues that affect fishing, hunting, boating and related pastimes. He's also effective in that role as a state lawmaker. One thing he's made clear since he's been in the South Carolina House of Representatives is "what you see is what you get." His dedication to good government has been exemplary. If he says he'll do something, you can, as they say, take it to the bank. That speaks volumes.

People on Lake Greenwood should be encouraged by Pitt's promise. It should give them hope that one of their long-standing problems will finally be heading toward a solution.

One thing we know for sure. It's caused by something identifiable. It's not like it's part of the global warming disagreements and arguments.

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