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## Upstate Forever announces protection of High Meadows

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Upstate Forever announced its first conservation agreement in Abbeville County for High Meadows.

This expansive agricultural property, owned by Dr. Michael Fry, is more than 1,000 acres of rolling Piedmont pasture currently used for grazing cattle. High Meadows is currently the largest property with a single owner protected in partnership with Upstate Forever. This picturesque property is not only prime farmland, but adjoins a pre-Civil War historic home, thus ensuring that the home remains surrounded by the same landscape in which it was constructed. The property also contains frontage along Shanklin Creek and important wildlife habitat.

Fry's love and management of his land, coupled with the enhanced federal tax incentives set to expire at the end of this year, were the catalyst for his decision to permanently protect his property.

"I wanted to ensure the integrity of this land is intact long after I am no longer the steward," Fry said.

"The beauty of High Meadows is breathtaking and Dr. Fry's management has done much to enhance the conservation values. This is a great event to celebrate," said Dana Leavitt, Land Trust director at Upstate Forever.

Fry's conservation agreement permanently protects High Meadows from industrial, commercial and retail uses, residential subdivisions, parking lots, billboards and mining, while allowing him to continue traditional uses such as hunting, fishing, farming, harvesting timber and living (limited number of residences). A conservation agreement keeps the property in private ownership, is completely voluntary, and does not affect the property's ability to be sold or left to heirs. For information on protecting land with a conservation agreement, visit [www.upstateforever.org](http://www.upstateforever.org).

Upstate Forever is a regional conservation organization, which works to promote sensible growth and to protect special places in the Upstate. Currently, Upstate Forever has worked with 68 landowners to protect 12,660 acres of farms, fields and forests in the Upstate using conservation agreements. Abbeville was added as the 10th county in Upstate Forever's region in 2008 as the organization celebrated its 10th anniversary.

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