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Group Exposes 'Hidden Gems' To Protect Them

Six 'Environmentally Sensitive Lands' Identified

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SPARTANBURG COUNTY, S.C. -- In what it called a "ground breaking" report, Upstate Forever identified areas that should be protected from development.

The group, which promotes sensible growth and protects special places, spent a year and a half inventorying Spartanburg County. The study showed six environmentally sensitive lands that warrant protection, additional study and conservation.

"This is one way of helping people know what these special places are, but even better is to get them out, to get them in a kayak on the river, to get them hiking in the woods, to make sure the people have access to these places so they will want to protect them," said Shelley Robbins, project coordinator for Upstate Forever.

The identified conservation focus areas are: "Landrum and Campobello," "North of Pacolet," "Croft and Southeast of Glenn Springs," "Tyger River," "Ferguson Creek and North Tyger" and "Enoree."

The group led concerned citizens on a tour and hike along the Tyger River, just off Walnut Grove Road. It's part of one of the focus areas.

"How many people in Spartanburg County knew that this was here?" asked Robbins.

By exposing the areas, which were called hidden gems, Upstate Forever hoped to encourage people to enjoy the areas. The Tyger River Foundation plans to add a kayak put-in and a picnic area to the location off Walnut Grove Road.

"Particularly our planners and our developers think about them differently. Start to think about the value of the natural resources rather than the development potential," Robbins said. "Think about the recreational opportunities and the services these places provide to us other than for building houses and Walmarts and that sort of thing."

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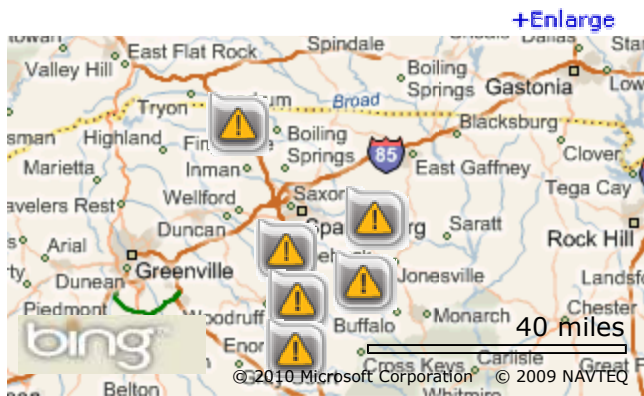


Video: Upstate Forever Identifies Six Hot Spots

According to Upstate Forever, 23 acres of land are developed every day in Spartanburg County.

"Our population has continued to grow even during the economic downturn. People continue to come here because it's an amazing place," Robbins said.

The organization hopes that one day, all Upstate counties will be inventoried, but right now, funding isn't available.



The Upstate Forever study showed six environmentally sensitive areas that warrant protection, additional study and conservation.

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