

This is a printer friendly version of an article from GoUpstate.com

To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

---

Article published Nov 14, 2006

## Leader's focus: Blend nature with progress

**CHRISTINE BOUSH, Staff Writer**

Keeping the green in growth is Angela Viney's primary objective as new director of Upstate Forever's Spartanburg office.

"There are so many exciting opportunities for Spartanburg County as it continues its economic progress and growth," Viney said. "It is my hope that I can play a part in guiding that growth to assure that the county maintains its exemplary and attractive lifestyle."

Upstate Forever is a nonprofit organization that works to educate communities on the benefits of meshing conservation with economic growth.

Viney said she gained valuable experience addressing conservation issues on the state level while working as the director of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation for the past 10 years.

"While working across the state has been immensely rewarding, I'm looking forward to focusing on one county," Viney said. "I'm also glad to be closer to family and the mountains."

Upstate Forever board member Joe Lesesne said Viney is one of the most respected and effective leaders in the South Carolina conservation field and will be a tremendous asset to the organization.

Viney said immediate goals in Spartanburg are to protect more natural areas and provide more "personal power" transportation options to residents.

"Parks and open areas are important to a healthy community," Viney said. "We need to be able to provide more walking paths and biking paths to offer the ability to enjoy the outdoors and alternative forms of transportation without taking our lives in our hands."

David Rutherford, head of Spartanburg County's planning and development department, said he is impressed with the work Upstate Forever has done in Spartanburg and would like to collaborate on additional projects.

Since the Spartanburg office opened in 2004, the staff has compiled a report titled "Active Living Assessment" that identifies provisions in city and county ordinances that impede active living; a "Rapid Parks Assessment" that determined the county's long-term needs for additional parks and green spaces; hosted a three-day workshop on better designs for commercial development in the county and helped stop a proposed regional landfill.

"I think their focus on conservation and planning is critical for the community in the long run because it's

always best to have more folks looking at what's best for the community than just the county planning department," Rutherford said. "They study the issues a little more in depth than other agencies and bring additional information to the table that creates something very positive for the community."

Viney said Upstate Forever's environmental focus would help Spartanburg's goals of sustainable growth.

"If you can create a community in an environmentally sound way, it will be more economically viable than the alternatives in the long and short run," Viney said. "The city is pretty well convinced of that, and I'll be working to educate the citizens, leaders and businesses."

Christine Boush can be reached at 562-2719 or [christine.boush@shj.com](mailto:christine.boush@shj.com).

---

.