

Upstate Update

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Upstate Forever's Monthly Bulletin on
Important Issues and Events in the Upstate

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1. **Upstate Forever Honors Annual Award Winners**

A sellout crowd applauded the distinguished individuals and organizations honored by **Upstate Forever** at our first annual ForeverGreen awards luncheon on February 4, sponsored by SeaLevel Systems, Inc. and Community Journals. Congratulations to our award winners!

Dianne Culbertson - Land Conservation Champion. Culbertson conceived of the plan for the "Warrior Mountain Heritage Preserve Corridor" in the Gray Court area and has provided inspiring leadership by protecting her own lands within the corridor.

Dr. Larry Dyck - Clean Water Champion. Dr. Dyck has been a relentless and compelling advocate for the cleanup of PCB contamination in Twelve Mile River and Lake Hartwell. He is also leading the effort to remove the third and last dam on the river.

The Mary Black Foundation - Sustainable Communities Champion. The Mary Black Foundation has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving the design, livability and quality of the built environment. It is one of the very few foundations in the Southeast that has adopted "active living" as one of its top funding priorities.

City of Clemson - Clear Skies Champion. The City of Clemson is the first local government in the Upstate to adopt a climate action plan. The plan addresses important issues, such as energy conservation and waste reduction, greenhouse gas reduction, green building, land use and development programs, and education and outreach programs.

Rep. Mike Pitts - Public Servant of the Year. A member of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Pitts has provided outstanding leadership on water quality issues in our region and state. He has also been a strong supporter of **Upstate Forever's** Saving Lake Greenwood campaign.

Jennifer Kouyoumjian - Volunteer of the Year. Kouyoumjian designed, laid out and assembled a collection of the best writings of **Upstate Forever** board and staff members. The beautiful publication, "The Best of Upstate Forever," is available on our website.

Dr. David Shi - Extraordinary Achievement Award. Retiring Furman University President Dr. Shi has been a visionary leader for the sustainability movement in the United States. In the mid-1990s, he began laying the foundation to make Furman a national leader in the field. Today, sustainability is fully integrated into every aspect of life in the Furman campus.

Dr. Shi's keynote address, "The Recession's Silver Lining: More Sustainable Living," can be accessed on our website (www.upstateforever.org).

Promoting sensible growth and protecting special places in the Upstate

2. Air Quality Forum to Focus on Fleet Efficiency

In just one year, the United Parcel Service (UPS) reduced gasoline usage by 3 million gallons and saved \$6 million by implementing a “no left turn” policy. The City of Greenville’s sanitation trucks, GSP airport tugs, Furman University’s lawn mowers and Greenville, Anderson and Pickens’ Counties Sheriffs’ pursuit vehicles have collectively saved over 26,000 gallons of gasoline and 17,000 gallons of diesel fuel annually by converting to clean-burning domestic propane gas.

These and other money-saving initiatives will be discussed at a free air quality forum at Spartanburg Community College on **February 18 from 2 to 6 p.m.** “**The Impacts of Air Quality, Part 2: Retrofits and Technology**” is the second event in a three-part series sponsored by the JM Smith Foundation and organized by The Air We Breathe clean air coalition.

The event will feature several experts in the field. Steve Whaley with Alliance AutoGas Research and Development will present a vehicle that has been converted from gasoline to clean-burning, domestic propane gas. Following the vehicle display, Whaley will speak about propane autogas solutions for gasoline and diesel engines, how to increase air quality and reduce fuel costs without compromising performance, and hybrid bio-fuel conversion systems. Rick Todd, President and CEO of the SC Trucking Association, will discuss the use of auxiliary power units to lower emissions. Brian Barnes from the Air Quality Bureau of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control will address current local air quality and whether it is improving, as well as nonattainment planning and potential effects of nonattainment. Finally, Tony Hanks, Health and Safety Manager for UPS in South Carolina, will describe UPS’s “no left turn” policy and how it is reducing emissions.

To register for the February 18 event, call (864) 327-0090 or email eshanks@upstateforever.org.

*“The Air We Breathe” is a collaborative effort of the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce, the Spartanburg Development Association, **Upstate Forever**, and Spartanburg County government to reduce ground-level ozone and other forms of air pollution in Spartanburg County. Visit www.cleanairspartanburg.com to receive updates on daily air quality, as well as information about how you can reduce ozone emissions in your daily life.*

3. Compromise on Third Dam May Restore Twelve Mile River

Upstate Forever has been actively involved in the federal court case relating to the PCB contamination of Twelve Mile River and Lake Hartwell (see [UU 104](#) and previous issues). One of the issues being debated is how the funds in the “restoration account” (almost \$9 million) should be spent. **Upstate Forever**, the Lake Hartwell Association, and the Pickens Soil and Water Conservation District have proposed to use a portion of the funds to remove the third dam on Twelve Mile River and to provide an alternative water supply system for the Easley-Central Water District. Removal of the dam would restore the natural, free-flowing character of over 100 miles of this beautiful river system and address the PCB contamination in both the river and the lake. While the Federal District judge in charge of the case has recommended that \$3 million of the funds be allocated toward removal of the third dam, the Natural Resource Trustees (representatives of several state and federal agencies charged with disbursing the funds) released a draft plan in October that did not include funding for the project.

On February 11, representatives of the groups advocating for removal of the third dam, including Chris Starker of **Upstate Forever**, met with the Natural Resource Trustees to present a compromise plan. The plan sponsors propose to remove a section of the third dam rather than take out the entire structure. An earthen dam would be built perpendicular to the remaining section, diverting water from the eastern side of the river into a new impoundment. The western side of the river would become free-flowing, with associated habitat and PCB cleanup benefits. The entire project is estimated to cost \$4.4 million, representing a significant cost savings over removing the dam entirely and replacing the water supply system.

Plan sponsors at the meeting requested \$300,000 to study the sediment currently behind the dam and determine the feasibility of the proposed project. Ross Self, chair of the Trustees, pledged to move ahead quickly to schedule a meeting and vote on funding the study. For more information read this [article](#) in the *Anderson Independent-Mail* or contact Chris Starker at cstarker@upstateforever.org.

4. Identifying Critical Lands for Water Quality in the Upstate

Healthy rivers and streams are integral to our region's environmental and economic well-being. But local governments and advocacy organizations have lacked the ability to prioritize which locations are most critical for protection or more restrictive development standards. Now an ArcGIS model developed by *Upstate Forever's* Rural Waters Project Associate Laura Garrett has identified the areas within watersheds in Greenville, Pickens, and Oconee Counties that would have the largest negative impact on water quality if disturbed or developed in an irresponsible way.

The three-part, customizable model provides a "Critical Watershed Area (CWA)" value for every cell of 30x30 meters in the landscape. The model incorporates a tremendous amount of information and data, such as flow, slope, soil type, forest cover, and probability of development. Cells with higher values are considered more critical to water quality. Using a combination of the CWA value and the relative threat of development, land can be prioritized for conservation efforts.

Upstate Forever's Land Trust Program is already incorporating the results generated by the CWA model into their prioritization scheme for outreach to landowners. Laura is presenting the model to interested local governments and nonprofit groups, which can use CWA as tool to guide allocation of funds for conservation and incorporate its results into comprehensive plans, slope ordinances, and transfer of development rights programs.

Laura has also recently completed another mapping project that will be of wide benefit, in this case to organizations statewide. The Federal Clean Water Act requires all states to develop a list of water bodies that do not meet water quality standards. The purpose of this list is to identify impaired waters so that the sources of impairment can be described and corrective actions implemented. In 2008, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) released a list of 2,300 assessed sites on our state's waterways. A total of 969 sites were identified as impaired.

The US Environmental Protection Agency takes DHEC's point data and matches it to stream segments. Laura combined both data sets to create useful maps showing which waterways are designated as impaired, what pollutants were present, which waterways have a TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) designated for any pollutant, and in what sub-basin they are located.

To access the CWA report, or to view the maps of our state's impaired waters, go to www.upstateforever.org/programs_rurWater.html. For more information or to request a presentation, contact Laura Garrett at lgarrett@upstateforever.org.

5. Upstate Forever Staff Log Alternative Transportation Miles

In February 2009, *Upstate Forever* established an alternative transportation policy to provide incentives for staff members to walk, bike, carpool, and take public transportation. The provisions range from an extra 15 minutes allowed at the beginning and end of each workday for those commuting using non-motorized transportation to the provision of shower facilities, bike racks, and a loaner-bike program. When staff members tallied up their "alternative transportation miles," accumulated by avoiding single-occupancy vehicle trips to meetings and conferences, the results were impressive: 19,645 vehicle miles were avoided, preventing the emission of over 17,000 pounds of CO₂! Our top three alternative travelers were Mary Walsh, Ned Barrett, and Shelley Robbins. Well done!

6. Upstate Forever Job Opening

Upstate Forever has an opening in our Spartanburg office for a full-time Program Associate for our Sustainable Communities Program. The ideal candidate will be a person with a broad understanding of the policies and practices of land use planning and growth management including a working knowledge of the principles of walkability, transit, and mixed use developments. The Sustainable Communities Associate will assist the Director in achieving *Upstate Forever's* vision for the Upstate and related goals associated with the program. A good portion of the work of the Associate will be based in the Spartanburg area but will also include travel within the other nine counties in the upstate region. For a complete job description, go to www.upstateforever.org/index_doc/ProgramAssociateSCJobPosting.pdf. The deadline to apply is March 9.

7. Upcoming Upstate Forever Events

“The Air We Breathe”: The Impacts of Air Quality, Part 2: Retrofits and Technology

Thursday, February 18, 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Spartanburg Community College, Spartanburg

Cost: Free, but pre-registration requested

This second event in a three-part series on air quality, sponsored by the JM Smith Foundation, will feature several experts in the field discussing topics such as propane autogas solutions for gasoline and diesel engines, reducing fuel costs without compromising performance, the use of auxiliary power units to lower emissions, nonattainment planning, and UPS's “no left turn” policy and how it is reducing emissions. To register, call (864) 327-0090 or email eshanks@upstateforever.org. For more information about The Air We Breathe campaign, visit www.cleanairspartanburg.com.

Flicks for Thought Film Series: *Food Matters*

Tuesday, February 23, 5:30 p.m.

Upcountry History Museum, Greenville

Cost: \$5

Co-hosted by *Upstate Forever*, Greenville Organic Foods Organization, and the Upcountry History Museum, this informative film series is back for 2010! The final film in the series sets about uncovering the trillion dollar worldwide ‘sickness industry’ and gives people some scientifically verifiable solutions for overcoming illness naturally. For more information or to purchase advance tickets, go to www.flicksforthought.com or call (864) 250-0500 x21.

“Unnatural Causes” Documentary Film Series

Every Other Wednesday, February 24 - April 21, 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m.

University Center Auditorium, Greenville

Cost: Free, but pre-registration required

Unnatural Causes is an acclaimed documentary series broadcast by PBS exploring the root causes of our alarming socio-economic and racial inequities in health. The schedule of remaining episodes is:

February 24: *When the Bough Breaks* – Can racism become embedded in the body and affect birth outcomes?

March 10: *Bad Sugar* – What are the connections between diabetes, oppression, and empowerment in two Native American communities?

March 24: *Place Matters* – Why is your street address such a strong predictor of your health? (Note: This episode will be viewed in the Greenville Tech Multipurpose Room, McAlister Square Building.)

April 7: *Collateral Damage* – How do Marshall Islanders pay for globalization and U.S. military policy with their health?

April 21: *Not Just a Paycheck* – Why do layoffs take such a huge toll in Michigan but cause hardly a ripple in Sweden?

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A complimentary lunch is available at 11:45. Films begin promptly at noon followed by discussion from 12:30 - 1:00. Preregistration is required: go to www.eventbrite.com/org/356423622?s=1499414 or call (864) 241-3151. For more information on the series or to view clips, go to www.unnaturalcauses.org. The viewings are sponsored by the Piedmont Health Care Foundation in partnership with Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, Community Foundation of Greater Greenville, Greenville County Medical Society, Greenville Forward, Greenville Hospital System, United Way of Greenville County, and *Upstate Forever*.

Rain Barrel Giveaway

Saturday, February 27, 10:30 a.m. (registration begins at 9:30 a.m.),
Carolina First Center Room 102C, Greenville

Cost: Free

55-gallon rain barrels will be provided to the first 100 city of Greenville residents (limited to one per household). The first 20 city residents will also receive a rain barrel stand constructed and installed by members of Boy Scout Troop #19. Residents must show proof of city residency by presenting a valid driver's license and current utility bill. Attendees are also required to stay for a short presentation (approximately 30 minutes) by representatives from the City of Greenville and *Upstate Forever*. This event is sponsored by the City of Greenville and *Upstate Forever*, in partnership with Boy Scout Troop #19. For more information, contact Jessica Chapman at (864) 467-5708.

Upstate Forever Lobby Day 2010

Tuesday, March 9, 11:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
South Carolina Statehouse, Columbia, SC

Cost: Free

Join us at the Statehouse to speak to your legislators about conservation issues. Staff from *Upstate Forever* and Conservation Voters of South Carolina will be on hand to brief you on current issues and explain the lobbying process. **You're not expected to be an expert**—all you need is a willingness to learn and a desire to bring about change. We will even provide transportation, with vans leaving from both Greenville and Spartanburg at 9:00 a.m. and returning by 5:30 p.m. Contact Nancy Fitzer at nfitzer@upstateforever.org or (864) 250-0500x30 if you are interested in participating. Another Lobby Day, this time with organizations from around the state, will take place on May 4.

Fourth Annual Art and Conservation Celebration

Tuesday, March 23, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Saffron's Sidewalk Cafe, Greenville

Cost: \$40 per person or \$75 per couple

Join us for a wonderful evening of great food and drink and outstanding art. Our silent auction of nature-based art is back with the usual stunning variety of local and regional artists and beautiful works! Heavy hors d'oeuvres, beer, and wine are included with admission. Call (864) 250-0500 or email gwilson@upstateforever.org for tickets.

8. Lots o' Links

[Ozone Season Begins March 1!](#) For daily forecasted updates, visit www.enviroflash.info.

[Tools for Doing Your Own Home Energy Audit from Scientific American.](#)

[Study Shows Economic Benefits of Green Building.](#) Green construction spending currently supports more than 2 million American jobs and generates over \$100 billion in gross domestic product and wages.

[Down on the New Urban Farm.](#) Hammond's Ferry in North August, SC, is a traditional neighborhood development (TND) with a farm supplying a local restaurant.

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[Heat and Power Combined: Copenhagen's Other Message](#). The Danish capital features a district heating system: heated water from electricity production, which would normally be pumped into the sea, is channeled back into homes and businesses through a 1,300 kilometer system of underground pipes.

[U.S. Car Fleet Shrinks by Four Million in 2009](#). In 2009, the 14 million cars scrapped exceeded the 10 million new cars sold, and not just because of the recession.

[The South's Top Ten Endangered Areas](#). The Southern Environmental Law Center has released its list of threatened places in the Southeast.

[Conservation of the Southern Blue Ridge Escarpment](#). A new web resource provides information about this spectacular region.

9. Quote of the Month

"I grew up in Gray Court and Owings and we raised our sons there. When I was little we swam at Rock Hole, a swimming hole on Pumpkin Creek where families had gone for 200 years. We splashed in puddles after the rain and reveled at the beautiful rainbows. We played in the forests and fields and at night we watched the lightning bugs and learned the constellations. I thought all those things would always be there. But when I grew up and traveled I saw that many areas had lost their special places. And I realized that we need to do all we can to preserve ours."

-- Dianne Culbertson, *Upstate Forever's* 2010 Land Conservation Champion, in her remarks at the ForeverGreen awards luncheon, 2/4/10

