

# Upstate Update

NUMBER 42  
MARCH  
2003

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

## **1. Saluda-Reedy Watershed Project Receives \$1.5 Million!**

Two grants totaling \$1.5 million will launch a comprehensive project focused on the Saluda-Reedy watershed. The V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation has pledged \$1 million over two years, and Fuji Photo Film, Inc. has made a commitment of \$500,000 over five years. *Upstate Forever* will serve as the coordinator of the project.

The Saluda River and Reedy River flow through one of the most rapidly growing and developing regions in the country. Within the 1,165 square mile watershed above Lake Greenwood, the population is increasing at the rate of approximately 32 people per day, while open land is being converted to development at the rate of about 23 acres per day. The Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium was formed to provide assistance, support and science-based information to state and local agencies and the public in addressing the immense challenges that confront the watershed. The principal members of the Consortium are:

- ♦ *Upstate Forever*
- ♦ Pinnacle Consulting Group, Inc.
- ♦ Clemson University: Jim Self Center on the Future
- ♦ South Carolina Water Resources Center
- ♦ Clemson Institute of Environmental Toxicology
- ♦ South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

Other members include:

- ♦ The Conestee Foundation
- ♦ Friends of the Reedy River
- ♦ SpectroTech, Inc.
- ♦ Furman University: Departments of Economics and Business and Earth and Environmental Sciences
- ♦ Lander University: Department of Biological Science
- ♦ Upper Savannah Land Trust

There is no doubt that the Saluda-Reedy watershed will continue to experience dramatic growth and change. Nor is there any doubt about the urgent need

*Promoting sensible growth and protecting special places in the Upstate*

to plan for this growth to ensure that our water resources are protected to meet all of the demands of this increasing population—for drinking water, tourism, recreation, economic development and waste treatment. For example, wastewater discharges into the Reedy River are projected to increase from the present amount of 34 million gallons per day to 51 million gallons per day by 2015; discharges into the Saluda River are projected to increase from 13 to 31 million gallons per day. For both rivers, that is almost a two-fold increase in less than 15 years. Moreover, stormwater runoff and sedimentation associated with rapid development in the watershed are having a serious adverse impact on water quality.

The Consortium has designed an integrated and comprehensive program of actions, demonstrations and studies with the ultimate goal of improving water quality throughout the Saluda-Reedy Watershed. The project is divided into the following eight major tasks:

1. **Land Cover:** To determine the current uses of land in the watershed.
2. **Growth Model:** To predict the extent of future development in the water shed if current development patterns continue unchanged.
3. **Economic Evaluation:** To evaluate the economic impact of water use and wastewater discharges.
4. **Water Quality:** To collect and analyze data needed to truly understand the causes and effects of water quality problems in the watershed.
5. **Riparian Lands:** To identify, protect, and restore important lands along the Saluda and Reedy Rivers and their principal tributaries.
6. **Education:** To improve public understanding and appreciation of watershed issues and problems.
7. **Performance:** To monitor compliance with regulatory standards in the watershed and to assess the effectiveness of those standards.
8. **Integrated Watershed Management:** To develop a plan for comprehensively managing the resources of the watershed based on long term, sustainable objectives and to advocate for appropriate policies to protect and improve water quality.

Over the next few weeks, the specific scope of work under the two grants will be defined. The grants will not enable the Consortium to complete all of the tasks, but additional funding will be sought for the remainder of the project.

The V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation, named for the founder of the VELUX window, has made a number of significant grants in South Carolina over the last 12 years, many of which have been for environmental initiatives and projects.

The grant from Fuji was announced as part of a ceremony celebrating a \$100 million expansion of their plant in Greenwood and the development of a new line of medical imaging products. Since Fuji opened its North American manufacturing and research and development headquarters in Greenwood in 1988, the company has accompanied each major expansion announcement with a donation to the community. Past contributions include the John and Holly Self Drummond Environmental Education Center at Lake Greenwood State Park.

## *2. The Poinsett Bridge Is Preserved!*

South Carolina's oldest bridge—the Poinsett Bridge in northern Greenville County—will be preserved! The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, through its Heritage Trust program, will soon own the bridge and about 120 acres of the surrounding property. It will then be leased to the Greenville County Recreation District for the establishment of a historic nature park for public use and enjoyment.

The Poinsett Bridge, constructed in 1820, was part of the old State Road that connected the South Carolina upcountry to North Carolina. It is a spectacular, gothic-like structure of stone that arches over a beautiful mountain stream surrounded by rhododendron and hardwoods. But vandals, erosion and the elements have done serious damage to the bridge. A few years ago it became painfully obvious that unless steps were taken to acquire, restore and secure the bridge, it would be lost. Greenville County Council appointed a citizens committee chaired by the indefatigable local historian Anne McCuen to explore ways to protect the property. *Upstate Forever* Executive Director Brad Wyche served as a member of the committee.

Achieving any major goal usually requires a lot of hard work, perseverance and dealing with unexpected obstacles, and that certainly was the case with the Poinsett Bridge. One notable challenge was that two parties actually owned the bridge—the Blue Ridge Council of the Boy Scouts owned one half (as part of its Camp Old Indian property) and Jack Parkhurst, a North Carolina resident owned

the other half (as part of a 116-acre tract). The latter was not in a position to donate the property, but Mr. Parkhurst and the Boy Scouts shared a strong desire to protect the bridge and were willing to give the committee time to find a way to do so.

One obvious funding source was the South Carolina Heritage Trust program, which receives annual funding to acquire important natural and historic sites in the state. Their representatives eagerly joined the committee and eventually obtained the necessary approvals to purchase the property. But then a major obstacle developed. The Boy Scouts were in the middle of a fundraising campaign to make major improvements at Camp Old Indian, one of which was to replace its dilapidated septic tank system with a small wastewater treatment plant. Their plan was that the treated effluent would be discharged from this plant into the stream that flows beneath the Poinsett Bridge. Concerned about the prospect of a public park being downstream from the discharge point, the Scouts required that as a condition to the sale of its property, the State sign a release of all claims relating to the wastewater operation. The State said it could not sign such a release, and there the matter sat for almost two years.

The breakthrough came when the Scouts decided to abandon their plans for the treatment plant in favor of an on-site system. It also certainly didn't hurt when State Senator Verne Smith and State Representative Lewis Vaughn became actively involved, insisting that the project succeed. The Scouts dropped their demand for the release, and the project was back on track.

The State has received an option to purchase the Boys Scouts' half of the bridge and about six acres of the surrounding property; the closing should take place within the next few months. Last month the State acquired all of Mr. Parkhurst's property. The park should be a reality by next year.

Preserving the Poinsett Bridge was truly a team effort, and all members of the team need to be thanked and recognized: the Blue Ridge Council of the Boy Scouts, particularly Executive Director Pat Currie and Board members Everett Baker and Jim Stewart; Jack Parkhurst; the Heritage Trust staff (Chris Judge and Stu Greeter); the Greenville County Recreation District staff (Charles Hall, Gene Smith and Kathy Varadi); Greenville County Council, most notably Council member Joe Dill; Senator Smith and Representative Vaughn; Anne McCuen and the members of her committee, including Wes Breedlove, Carroll Pittman, Mann Batson, Bill Lindsay, Arlene Markley, Susan Manning, and Charlotte Lynch.

Congratulations on a job well done!

### 3. "The Cotton Patch" Is Preserved.

The stunning 400-acre property in Polk County known as "The Cotton Patch" has been preserved through a conservation easement granted to **Upstate Forever**.

The Cotton Patch has almost three miles of frontage along both sides of the North Pacolet River, one of the region's most important freshwater resources and the most significant tributary to Lake Blalock, a principal source of drinking water for Spartanburg County. The conservation easement contains stringent provisions to protect the river and the adjoining riparian lands. The Spartanburg Water System has expressed its strong support for the conservation easement and its river protection provisions.

The Cotton Patch is located in close proximity to Four Columns and Fairview Farms, two major tracts that also border the North Pacolet River and are protected by conservation easements granted to **Upstate Forever**. The total river frontage protected by all three easements exceeds five miles.

In 1992, the Cotton Patch was acquired by Robert H. Wallace, Jr., who brought a keen appreciation of the land's value and potential. Shortly after acquiring the property, Mr. Wallace agreed to designate it as a "Stewardship Forest" under a program developed by the U.S. Forest Service. The Cotton Patch's Forest Stewardship Program was among the first of its kind in North Carolina and the first ever in Polk County.

The property contains eight rare species of plants, including the rare white walnut tree and the very rare bristly sarsaparilla. According to *The Natural Heritage Program List of Rare Plants in North Carolina* (Jaime Amoroso editor, 1999), the latter species has never before been found in the state.

Under the conservation easement, the property may be subdivided into no more than eight residential tracts. On each of these tracts only one single-family residence and a few small ancillary structures associated with the residence may be built. Approximately two-thirds of the property will be common open space on which no development of any kind is permitted.

## ***4. Upstate Forever Receives First Conservation Easement In History Of Union County.***

***Upstate Forever*** has received a conservation easement that will permanently protect approximately 600 acres along the Broad River in Union County. It is believed to be the first conservation easement recorded in the history of Union County.

The property, owned by Broad River Plantation, LLC, has about two miles of frontage along the Broad River, with over 200 acres of bottomland hardwoods. The rest of the property consists of open fields, mixed hardwoods and pines. Under the terms of the easement, the owner can build no more than two residences on the property. Wildlife impoundments may be constructed, but lands along the river and its tributaries will be carefully monitored and protected.

This conservation easement is a win-win: The owner continues to use and enjoy the property, and this beautiful tract right next to one of the Southeast's most important rivers is preserved forever.

## ***5. Dan Burden Rocks The Upstate!***

When world-renowned "walkable communities" expert Dan Burden agreed to visit the Upstate for two days, he said we could work him as hard as we wanted. And did we ever! We scheduled seven separate events for him on March 11 and 12 in Greenville, Spartanburg and Anderson and at Furman and Clemson Universities. We did allow him a few hours sleep. Each event was a great success—the total attendance exceeded 500, and we received terrific coverage in several Upstate newspapers.

There is no more knowledgeable and passionate expert for better community design than Dan Burden. He spends 350 days a year on the road, traveling across the world and making his case with a power point presentation that takes your breath away and leaves you saying, "Yes! Yes!" Dan gives you a candid assessment of what you're doing right and what you're doing wrong in your community. He had high praise for the downtown revitalization efforts taking place in Greenville, Spartanburg and Anderson, but he was quick to criticize the many overbuilt highways and woefully inadequate road crossings that we have in our region. There's nothing like hearing Dan live, but the next best thing is his

website: [www.walkable.org](http://www.walkable.org). So please check it out if you were not able to hear him.

*Upstate Forever* deeply appreciates the support and hard work of our two co-presenters—HeartWise Spartanburg and the Greenville County Pedestrian Task Force—and the many co-sponsors and endorsers for Dan’s presentations. We could not have done it without them.

Also, we are pleased to announce that Dan has agreed to serve on our Advisory Council. We are very honored to have him in the *Upstate Forever* family.

## **6. Jack Turner Wins South Carolina Environmental Awareness Award.**

University of South Carolina Spartanburg (USCS) biology professor and *Upstate Forever* member Dr. Jack Turner received the 2002 South Carolina Environmental Awareness Award in a ceremony at the State Rotunda on February 26. This award was established by the General Assembly to recognize outstanding contributions toward the protection, conservation and improvement of South Carolina’s natural resources. Dr. Turner’s vision of providing an outreach program to enhance environmental education in Spartanburg County led to the creation of the Watershed Ecology Center at USCS in 1999. By November 2002, the program had reached nearly 4,000 students across the county.

The Watershed Ecology Center conducts research in water quality and sponsors educational programs for the citizens of Spartanburg County. The Center also monitors the water quality in the North and South Pacolet Rivers and conducts water quality studies for the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Spartanburg Water System.

“Dr. Turner has been deeply involved with watershed ecology for many years and his strong commitment to conservation and protection of our natural resources is unparalleled,” said Dr. John C. Stockwell, chancellor of USCS. “It is the work that he has done with his students, colleagues and citizens of this community that merit the award.”

Congratulations, Jack, on a well deserved award!

## ***7. Rick Huffman Wins Environmental Education Award.***

Native plant guru and *Upstate Forever* member Rick Huffman is the winner of the 2002 Environmental Educator Award from the South Carolina Environmental Education Association. Rick, the founder and president of the South Carolina Native Plant Society and a landscape designer with over 25 years of experience, has brought public attention to the importance of working with natural systems in designing and building facilities. His school projects include the South Carolina Academic Learning Environment (SCALE) in Duncan, which features a “walking model” of all the basic natural systems in the state; the installation of over 5,000 native plant groupings at the River Ridge Elementary School in Moore, South Carolina; and a native plant courtyard at A. R. Lewis Elementary School in Laurens which has been featured on Nickelodeon. All of these projects have become important outdoor learning classrooms for students and teachers. Rick’s landscape firm, appropriately named Earth Design, is also involved in numerous residential and construction projects.

Way to go, Rick! We are proud of you!

## ***8. Last Chance to Nominate Noble Trees in the Upstate.***

The Hub City Writers Project is seeking nominations for their soon-to-be-published book entitled “Noble Trees of the Upcountry.” Upstate trees can be nominated based on their beauty, historical value or status of endangerment. The deadline for submissions is April 1. For more information or to nominate a tree, visit Hub City’s website at: [http://www.hubcity.org/nws\\_nobletrees.htm](http://www.hubcity.org/nws_nobletrees.htm)

## ***9. Upcoming Events.***

### ***Upstate Forever Field Trips***

March 22—Wildflower hike along Howard Creek in Pickens County. Cost \$20.00 per person.

April 26—Kayak clinic and tour of Lake Jocassee. Suitable for beginners. Cost \$75.00 per person.

May 10—Photography outing to DuPont State Forest with award winning photographer Bill Robertson. Cost \$20.00 per person.

Field trips are open to all *Upstate Forever* members. Space is limited. Call our office at 864-250-0500 for more information or to make a reservation.

**Many Hands Make Light Work.** On March 29, *Upstate Forever* is partnering with the Haynie-Sirriner Neighborhood Association, First Baptist Church of Greenville, the City of Greenville and Friends of the Reedy to conduct a cleanup in the Haynie-Sirriner community in Greenville. Meet at Ellie Mae Logan Park at the corner of Haynie and Howe Streets at 9:30 a.m. A bag lunch will be provided. Please call our office at 864-250-0500 to let us know if you can help.

**Transfer of Development Rights - Is South Fulton Setting the Stage for the Region?** - April 4, Atlanta, GA. <http://www.southface.org/home/sart/sustainatlanta.html>

**One North Carolina Naturally: Partnerships in Conservation Conference** - April 16 & 17, Raleigh, N.C. <http://www.enr.state.nc.us/officeofconservation/pages/events.html>

**Walk21-IV: Health, Equity & Environment, The 4th International Conference on Walking in the 21st Century** - May 1-3, Portland, OR. <http://americawalks.org/walk21/>

## 10. Lots o' Links.

**Virginia Beach's "Green Line."** Virginia Beach has relied on a strong municipally enforced boundary to stop sprawl. But pressure is mounting to open the "green line." <http://www.pilotonline.com/opinion/op0304eda.html>

**Nation's Most Chaotic Traffic Pattern.** New Jersey has one of the nation's most chaotic traffic patterns. Is mass transit up to the challenge? <http://nj.com/news/ledger/index.ssf?/base/news-7/1046935052128040.xml>

**The Assault on Smart Growth.** Even as Smart Growth garners new supporters, a smear campaign attempts to discredit the movement. <http://www.ctnow.com/news/opinion/commentary/hc-plclangdon0302.artmar02.story>

***Why Is Sprawl a Conservative Concern?*** Speech by Martha Marks, President of Republicans for Environmental Protection.  
<http://www.rep.org/opinions/speeches/16.htm>

***A Different Slant on "New Urbanism."*** Most New Urbanist projects draw on historical architectural styles, but Atlanta's Lighthouse Lofts will be a starkly modern bright white structure of storefronts and lofts in the Old Fourth Ward near downtown Atlanta.  
<http://www.accessatlanta.com/ajc/business/horizon/0303/03modern.html>

***Driverless Taxi Trials Begin This Month in the Welsh Capital of Cardiff.*** The Urban Light Transport system, known as the Ultra, will consist of 4-passenger automatic cabs that travel 25mph on tracks laid on the road surface and will become fully operational in 2005.  
[http://www.e4engineering.com/item.asp?ch=e4e\\_automotive&type=News&id=47546](http://www.e4engineering.com/item.asp?ch=e4e_automotive&type=News&id=47546)

***Los Angeles Visioning Process for 2025.*** Hundreds of participants try to answer the challenge of where to locate the 6 million people who are expected to move into the region during the next 25 years. Be sure to watch the video. <http://www.uli-la.org/realitycheck/index.html>

## ***II. Quote of the Month.***

"That needs to be put on a road diet."

Dan Burden  
March 11 and 12, 2003  
A frequently heard assessment of many  
Upstate highways