

# Upstate Update

NUMBER 46

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

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## Mark Your Calendars!!



September 16, 2003

Palmetto Expo Center  
Greenville, SC

8:00am-4:30pm

This conference focuses on one of the most significant challenges facing our fast-growing region - affordable housing. An outstanding group of speakers will discuss many of the important issues relating to this subject, including an overview of housing needs and trends in the Upstate, financing mechanisms, measures to improve energy efficiency, and barriers and incentives. To see the entire agenda, please visit one of the following web sites: [www.upstateforever.org](http://www.upstateforever.org) or [www.hbaofgreenville.com](http://www.hbaofgreenville.com)

A one-day conference presented by

Upstate Forever

HomeBuilders  
ASSOCIATION OF GREENVILLE

### 1. Action Alert: Improving Tax Incentives for Conservation Easements.

In Upstate Update 44, we reported the exciting news that the U.S. Senate had passed important tax incentives for conservation easements under the CARE Act of 2003. These incentives are awaiting action in the House of Representatives, and ***we need your help again.***

The House version of the bill, the Charitable Giving Act of 2003 (H.R.7), contains a number of important provisions to encourage charitable donations through tax incentives. However, it does not provide adequate incentives for conservation easements. ***Upstate For-***

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

**ever** supports adding the following provisions, already approved by the Senate, to H.R. 7 while it is under consideration by the House Ways and Means Committee:

- o Increase the limitation on the deduction of the value of the easement from 30 per cent to 50 per cent of adjusted gross income (100 per cent for certain farmers and ranchers).
- o Increase the carry-forward for deductions from 5 years to 16 years.
- o Provide a 25 per cent exclusion from capital gains tax for some sales made for conservation purposes. (President Bush supports a 50 per cent exclusion.)

**Please** contact Upstate Representatives Jim DeMint, 504 Cannon House Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 (202-225-6030) and Gresham Barrett, 1523 Longworth House Office, Washington, D.C. 20515 (202-225-5301) and ask them (1) to support the Senate bill's provisions and (2) to increase the capital gains tax exclusion from 25 per cent to 50 per cent, as President Bush has proposed.

For a comparison of existing law with incentives in the Senate and House bills, visit: <http://www.independentsector.org/PDFs/sidebyside03.pdf>

Maryland Congressman Wayne Gilchrest has circulated a letter to fellow Representatives asking them to support adding conservation incentives to the charities bill. You can read his letter here: [http://www.lta.org/publicpolicy/gilchrest\\_letter.doc](http://www.lta.org/publicpolicy/gilchrest_letter.doc)

## ***2. Most Oconee County Citizens Want To Protect Natural Resources and Plan for the Future.***

In a process that began with a series of public meetings earlier this year, Oconee County officials are continuing to solicit input from the public about their first-ever comprehensive plan.

Last spring, a series of public meetings was held by county officials to gather input from residents about the proposed comprehensive plan. Around the same time, resident property owners were randomly surveyed about existing conditions and services as well as future growth and development in the county.

The response rate was significant, with 53.7 per cent of the surveys completed and returned, and the results are encouraging. A majority of those surveyed place great value on protecting Oconee County's spectacular natural resources and prime farmland and support zoning and land use regulations as methods to direct growth toward desired areas. Here are some of the results:

- 88 per cent either strongly agree (62 per cent) or somewhat agree (26 per cent) that the health of the county's natural resources is a major concern.

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- 86 per cent either strongly agree (66 per cent) or somewhat agree (20 per cent) that county government should adopt regulations necessary to insure both the purity and quantity of Oconee's water supply.
- 78 per cent agree that the amount of development in sensitive areas (e.g., steep hillsides, pristine streams, areas with rare plants, etc.) should be limited (43 per cent strongly agree, 35 per cent somewhat agree).
- 69 per cent agree that community-centered zoning regulations should be considered as a tool to use in protecting property values (36 per cent strongly agree, 33 per cent somewhat agree).
- 66 per cent agree that reasonable, evenly-enforced land use regulations are needed to curb growing problems in Oconee (31 per cent strongly agree, 35 per cent somewhat agree).

Anyone who has ever visited Oconee County knows that it is one of the brightest jewels in the state and is home to some of the region's most breathtaking vistas and magnificent lakes, rivers, mountain ranges, and waterfalls. Growth and development have only recently become a major threat, and citizens obviously want these resources protected.

Historically, Oconee has been one of the Upstate's most sparsely populated counties, with its density level far below that of neighboring counties.<sup>1</sup> However, the most recent census estimates reveal that the population in Oconee County is increasing at a rate among the highest in the state, ranking ninth among the 46 counties. In 2001 and 2002, the population increased by 1.8 and 1.9 per cent, respectively. At that rate, Oconee will add approximately 15,000 people by 2010 and another 30,000 by 2020.<sup>3</sup> Officials and community leaders recognize that now is the time to plan for this future growth.

The comprehensive plan is the first step in preparing for the county's future growth and development. Once the plan has been adopted, the county can begin to implement regulations and programs to guide the construction of new roads, subdivisions, and commercial developments in the manner desired by most of the county's residents and leaders.

Oconee County is doing the planning process the right way - by including the public and listening to them.

To read the survey questionnaire and results in their entirety, visit the following Oconee County website: <http://www.oconeesc.com/planning/oddsandends/Survey%20Report.pdf>

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<sup>1</sup> In the 2000 U. S. census, population density in Oconee County was approximately 52 people per square mile, while the densities in Anderson and Pickens Counties were 102 and 93, respectively. Densities in other Upstate Counties were Greenville – 206, Spartanburg – 132, and Laurens – 42.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census estimates the 2002 population to be 69,174. Calculating a growth rate of 1.85 per cent per year yields a total population by 2020 of approximately 114,000.

### 3. Upper Sections of Lake Greenwood Severely Impacted by Sediment Deposits.

A new study shows that the upper sections of Lake Greenwood have been severely impacted by sediment. These sections of the lake have lost 45 to 60 per cent of their original capacity and now contain enough sediment to fill over one million dump trucks.

The study was performed by the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium, in collaboration with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Consortium is a broad-based group of non-profit organizations, universities, private consultants and public agencies, working together to protect and improve water quality in the Saluda-Reedy watershed. *Upstate Forever* serves as the Project Coordinator of the Consortium.

This study provides, for the first time, scientifically-based estimates of the amount of sediment deposited in the upper sections of Lake Greenwood. The results should be a wake-up call on the urgent need to take action to protect the lake.

Lake Greenwood, an 11,400-acre lake constructed in 1941, is a critically important economic and recreational asset to the region. It is the primary source of drinking water for the Greenwood community and contributes significantly to the area's economic well-being by attracting development, providing water-based tourism and recreation, and generating hydro-electric power. The lake has a watershed area of 1,165 square miles, including much of the rapidly growing urban Greenville area. The Reedy and Saluda Rivers are the lake's principal sources.

The results of the study are summarized in the following table:

Portion of Lake Surveyed	Area of Survey Unit (acres)	Estimated Volume of Sediment Accumulated Since Construction (cubic yards)	Percent of Lake Storage Volume Lost to Sediment
Rabon Creek	145	938,435	45
Reedy River	329	2,704,107	60
Saluda River, Turkey Crk, Mulberry Crk	196	1,672,592	60
Upper Lake Greenwood	152	1,027,692	46
Camp Branch	53	866,623	56
<b>Total – All Areas Studied</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>7,209,449</b>	<b>53</b>

The volume of sediment accumulated in these sections of the lake is roughly equal to:

- Six and one half times the volume of Ericsson Stadium in Charlotte, measured from the field to the top of the highest seats (roughly 1.1 million cubic yards).
- Enough to fill over one million dump trucks (standard 7 cu.yd. trucks).

- 13.6 tons of soil from every acre in the watershed (745,600 acres).

It is important to recognize that the surveyed areas represent only a small portion of Lake Greenwood (approximately 7%). Moreover, it does not take into account extensive areas that have accumulated so much sediment that they are now above the normal water level of 439 feet elevation and are vegetated. Thus, the results presented in this study are considered very conservative.

The study also measured water depths throughout the lake above the Highway 221 Bridge. These depths ranged from less than five feet in the upper reaches of the lake to 25 to 30 feet at the Highway 221 bridge. (There is a very small part of the lake at and near the bridge that is over 30 feet deep). These measurements suggest that the sedimentation problem is not confined to the upper sections but affects the entire lake (above the Highway 221 bridge).<sup>3</sup> Future studies will assess this issue in more detail.

Kim Kroeger, NRCS geologist who led the field survey, commented, "All lakes will eventually fill in, but under natural conditions that normally takes centuries to occur. What is happening at Lake Greenwood is that this process has been dramatically accelerated by land use activities and poor conservation practices in the watershed. Land is being disturbed and altered, and it's obvious that huge volumes of soil have ended up in the lake."

The amount of sediment in the upper reaches of Lake Greenwood is very troubling for several reasons: 1) the accumulation of sediment displaces storage capacity for the local water utility (thus far nearly 4,469 acre-feet (1.45 billion gallons) in just the upper portion of the lake); 2) lakefront property values can be harmed by sediment-choked waters; 3) sediment impairs fish habitat and interferes with recreation; 4) shallow conditions create a warming effect that can contribute to algae blooms; and 5) the overall ecological balance of the lake can be significantly altered.

The study was funded by a grant made last year by the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation to the Consortium. NRCS provided matching funds in the form of technical assistance, equipment, and expertise.

On March 7, 2003, the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation announced the award of a \$1 million grant to the Consortium to launch more work and studies in the Saluda-Reedy watershed. On the same day, Fujifilm, Inc. announced a \$500,000 grant to the Consortium for educational programs in the watershed. For more information, see the article in our June 2003 newsletter, the *Upstate Advocate*.

The Foothills Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council and the Ninety-Six RC& D Council, nonprofit organizations whose members include the county Soil and Water Conservation Districts in upper South Carolina, also provided support for the study.

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<sup>3</sup> The drought was not a significant factor in this study. The survey was conducted when the elevation of the lake was 438.4 feet (April 15) and 438.5 (April 16); the normal lake level is 439 feet.

#### 4. *Town Creek Walking Trail Opens in Pickens.*

After years of planning and hard work, the City of Pickens dedicated its new 2-½ mile greenway along Town Creek in June. Nearly completed, the trail is open to walkers seeking exercise or simply a stroll among the abundant Southern flora that surround the trail.

Funding from a United Way grant and a matching donation from Cornell-Dubilier paid for materials, and labor was provided by an all-volunteer force that ranged from children to seniors.

The trail winds along Town Creek in the Pickens Jaycee Park near the Playground of Promise and will ultimately link the playground to a new gymnasium to be built for the city's youth. Pickens officials hope to later connect the trail to Cannon Memorial Hospital's fitness trail and to several downtown walking paths and provide residents and visitors a safe and scenic way to get exercise.

Local naturalist and *Upstate Forever* member Dennis Chastain assisted the city in identifying trees, shrubs and wildflowers along the trail. This fall, students at Pickens Middle School will begin using the trail as an outdoor classroom, and eventually signs and markers will identify species along the route.

No one is more delighted with the opening of the new trail than Pickens City Administrator Chris Eldridge, who has been behind the project since its inception and who personally helped clear vegetation and debris for the trail. Chris praised the area's residents for their contributions of labor and materials to build the new trail and cited it as a wonderful example of how a community can use its own resources to get things done.

#### 5. *Four Upstate Cities Rank Among State's Fastest Growing.*

According to the most recent Census population estimates for the period from April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2002, four of the state's top 15 fastest growing cities with populations over 10,000 are in the Upstate. Mauldin was ranked third followed by Greer (5), Easley (11), and Simpsonville (15).

These cities' success in drawing new residents is no coincidence - all four have diligently planned and implemented projects to enhance their downtowns and surrounding areas and to attract infill projects close to their central business districts. Their efforts are paying off - the population in these four cities has increased by more than 3,700 in just over two years.

Here are just three of the reasons that this is great news:

- o First, when people choose to live in cities, there is less demand to develop "greenfields" in rural areas of the county. This not only saves natural landscape and open space, it also saves dollars associated with providing and extending infra-

structure (e.g., water and sewer lines, roads) and services in the “greenfields.”

- o Second, city residents often drive less to work, school, shopping, and recreation than their suburban counterparts, thereby reducing road congestion and polluting emissions. In addition, they often have access to more sidewalk and greenway networks that provide opportunities for outdoor exercise and recreation.
- o Third, good downtown development attracts residents and visitors, which create a demand for housing and shopping in and around the central business district. This, in turn, results in more jobs closer to transit networks. Increased densities in the urban areas can eventually lead to more sophisticated transit like light rail.

Not everyone wants to live in urbanized areas, but the ones who do are now finding more opportunities in Upstate South Carolina.

Below is a chart summarizing the population increase in all South Carolina cities with more than 10,000 residents for two separate time periods. Cities that fall within the six-county region served by *Upstate Forever* are highlighted.

Change in Population in SC Cities with Population Over 10,000						
City	April 1, 2000 - July 1, 2002			July 1, 2001 - July 1, 2002		
	Numerical Population Change	Per Cent Population Change	Rank	Numerical Population Change	Per Cent Population Change	Rank
Aiken city	637	2.5	12	406	1.6	11
<b>Anderson city</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>26</b>
Beaufort city	-24	-0.2	26	67	0.5	20
Cayce city	219	1.8	17	266	2.2	8
Charleston city	2,145	2.2	13	1,010	1.0	14
<b>Clemson city</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>29</b>
Columbia city	1,116	1.0	18	284	0.2	25
Conway city	232	2.0	16	90	0.8	16
<b>Easley city</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>13</b>
Florence city	-79	-0.3	27	159	0.5	21
Forest Acres city	-162	-1.5	32	-19	-0.2	30
Gaffney city	-45	-0.3	28	8	0.1	28
Goose Creek city	842	2.9	9	521	1.8	10
<b>Greenville city</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>-251</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>31</b>
Greenwood city	73	0.3	21	70	0.3	24
<b>Greer city</b>	<b>1,425</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>5</b>
Hanahan city	-95	-0.7	29	16	0.1	27
Hilton Head Island town	739	2.2	14	527	1.5	12
Irm o town	27	0.2	22	50	0.5	22
Lexington town	1,134	12.3	1	519	5.3	1
<b>Mauldin city</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>2</b>
Mount Pleasant town	5,434	11.4	2	2,294	4.5	3
Myrtle Beach city	1,442	6.2	8	140	0.6	19
Newberry city	100	0.9	19	96	0.9	15
North Augusta city	490	2.8	10	342	1.9	9
North Charleston city	154	0.2	25	520	0.6	17
North Myrtle Beach city	1,044	9.5	5	487	4.2	4
Orangeburg city	-197	-1.5	33	-93	-0.7	33
Rock Hill city	4,801	9.6	4	1,797	3.4	7
<b>Simpsonville city</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Spartanburg city</b>	<b>-721</b>	<b>-1.8</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>-296</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>34</b>
Summerville town	2,194	7.9	7	1,125	3.9	6
Sumter city	-350	-0.9	30	132	0.3	23
West Columbia city	-138	-1.1	31	-70	-0.5	32

Data Source: U. S. Bureau of Census

## 6. *Upstate Forever Adds New Board and Staff Members.*

We are pleased to announce that Erwin Maddrey of Greenville has joined *Upstate Forever's* Board of Directors. Erwin co-founded Delta Woodside Industries and served as its President and CEO from 1983 to 2000. He now does consulting work through Maddrey and Associates. Erwin is an exemplary leader in both the business and community sectors. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Blue Cross/Blue Shield of South Carolina, Kemet Corporation, the Palmetto Project, South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts, Urban League of the Upstate, Greenville County Museum, and the Alliance for Quality Education. He is a graduate and former trustee of Davidson College and also received an MBA from the University of North Carolina. Erwin and his wife, Nancy, have been members and supporters of *Upstate Forever* from the very beginning and strongly believe in our mission. It will be wonderful to have him sharing his time and talents with us.

We are also delighted to report that Jason Van Driesche will be joining the *Upstate Forever* staff as the Watershed Manager for the Saluda-Reedy Watershed project. Jason graduated from Bard College with a degree in Community, Regional and Environmental Studies and recently earned two Master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison - one in Urban and Regional Planning and the other in Land Resources. He is the author of several articles and co-authored with his father a book entitled *Nature Out of Place: Biological Invasions in the Global Age* (Island Press, 2000). His wife is joining the faculty at Furman, and Jason will begin work here next month.

## 7. *Upcoming Events.*

### Upstate Forever Events

**Haynie-Sirrine Neighborhood Cleanup** - October 18, Greenville. *Upstate Forever* is partnering with the Haynie-Sirrine Neighborhood Association, First Baptist Church, and the City of Greenville to help clean up the streets and streams in this urban neighborhood.

**Affordable Housing in the Upstate: Building for the Future** - September 16, Palmetto Expo Center, Greenville. One-day conference presented by *Upstate Forever* and the Greenville Home Builders Association. For more information, contact our office by phone at (864) 250-0500, or by email at [info@upstateforever.org](mailto:info@upstateforever.org).

### Upstate Forever Field Trips

**Chattooga River Paddle and Picnic** - August 30. This all-inclusive day trip is being arranged by the Nantahala Outdoor Center. Space is limited - call for reservations. Cost: \$90 per person. *For Upstate Forever Members.*

**Blue Ridge Escarpment Geology Tour** - September 13. Bill Ranson of Furman University's Earth and Environmental Science Department will explain the geology of the Blue Ridge Escarpment and discuss the impacts of human activities on mountainous regions. Space is limited -

call for reservations. Cost: \$20 per person. *For Upstate Forever Members.*

## Other Events

**Institute of Transportation Engineers Annual Meeting** - August 24-27, Seattle, Washington. <http://www.ite.org/AnnualMeeting/>

**National Urban Forest Conference** - September 17-20, San Antonio, Texas. Conference theme: Engineering Green in metropolitan America is the recipe for a healthy city. <http://www.americanforests.org/graytogreen/conference/>

**Building for Greener Communities** - September 29-August 1, Nebraska City, Nebraska. Presented by the National Arbor Day Foundation, the National Association of Home Builders, and Firewise Communities. Bringing a greener approach to the planning and management of our communities is the focus of this conference. <http://arborday.org/programs/conferences/greenercommunities/>

**Rail-Volution 2003** - September 11-14, Atlanta, Georgia. A national conference to explore how transit and land use can work hand-in-hand to shape the best and brightest of livable communities. <http://www.railvolution.com/>

**Brownfields 2003: Growing a Greener America** - October 27-29, Portland, Oregon. A national conference presented by the International City/County Management Association and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.brownfields2003.org/index.aspx>

## 8. Lots o' Links.

**Bringing the Community into the Development Process.** The most successful in-town housing development efforts occur when the public sector and the private development community work together. [http://realtytimes.com/rtcpages/20021017\\_develprocess.htm](http://realtytimes.com/rtcpages/20021017_develprocess.htm)

**We Should Control Growth.** An article by S. C. House District Representative Becky Richardson about the need to control residential growth in York County with a building permit allocation program. [http://www.charlotte.com/mld/observer/news/local/states/south\\_carolina/counties/york/6242767.htm](http://www.charlotte.com/mld/observer/news/local/states/south_carolina/counties/york/6242767.htm)

**Good Schools - Good Neighbors: The Impacts of State and Local School Board Policies on the Design and Location of Schools in North Carolina.** New report published in June 2003 from the University of North Carolina's Center for Urban and Regional Studies. <http://www.unc.edu/depts/curs/goodschoolsreport.pdf>

**Safe Routes to School.** From the National Center for Bicycling and Walking. Lots of information and links on this website. [http://www.bikewalk.org/safe\\_routes\\_to\\_school/SR2S\\_introduction.htm](http://www.bikewalk.org/safe_routes_to_school/SR2S_introduction.htm)

**When Boomers Retire.** What kinds of communities will the sixty-seven million boomers require? How will they redefine service, quality, and the environment? <http://www.archnewsnow.com/features/Feature115.htm>

**And Now, For Something Completely Different - Greenville/Spartanburg Named 43<sup>rd</sup> Sweatiest City by the Sweat Experts at Old Spice.** [http://www.oldspice.com/pdfs/first\\_day\\_summer\\_PR.pdf](http://www.oldspice.com/pdfs/first_day_summer_PR.pdf)

## 9. Quote of the Month.

"You'll look up and down streets. Look 'em over with care.  
About some you will say, "I don't choose to go there."  
With your head full of brains and your shoes full of feet,  
you're too smart to go down any not-so-good street.  
And you may not find any you'll want to go down.  
In that case, of course, you'll head straight out of town."

- Theodore Geisel (aka Dr. Seuss) from the book  
Oh, the Places You'll Go, (Random House 1990).