

Upstate Update

NUMBER 72

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2006

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

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Greenville County Tree Policy Advisory Committee Upcoming Meeting Schedule

March 2

March 16

March 30

All meetings held at 8:00 a.m. at Greenville County Square.
Please attend and show your support for a sensible tree policy!

1. Spartanburg County Citizens Against the Landfill Organized

Is Spartanburg County destined to become the region's dumping ground? Waste Management's proposed landfill, which would be the largest in the state, is being actively opposed by a grassroots citizens' organization, [Spartanburg County Citizens Against the Landfill](#). Joe Lesesne, former Wofford president and *Upstate Forever* Board member, is the group's chairman, and *Upstate Forever* is actively involved in this fight (see [UU 70](#) for background information). The reasons for opposing this landfill are compelling:

- There is already a regional landfill in Union County, which is less than 10 miles from the proposed site! That landfill and another in Anderson County have 30-40 years of capacity and are begging for waste.
- Capacity at the existing county landfill in Wellford is adequate to handle Spartanburg's needs for the next 40-80 years
- The proposed landfill would import as much as 80% of its trash from outside the county
- Operating a mega-landfill will harm Spartanburg's ability to promote quality development
- Litter, dust, odor, contaminants, and vermin would be a by-product of both the landfill itself and of the 300 garbage trucks that would drive across the county each day
- Fifty-eight percent of Spartanburg County residents oppose the landfill

If you are a Spartanburg County resident, please contact your [County Council representative](#) and urge him or her to stop the landfill. And visit www.stophthelandfillnow.com for more information and to learn how to get involved.

Promoting sensible growth and protecting special places in the Upstate

2. New Format for Legislative Update

In the past, we have included a lengthy legislative update in the *Upstate Update* each month while the SC General Assembly is in session. To conserve resources, distribute time-sensitive information quickly, and help you access the information in which you are most interested, we will no longer include that feature in this monthly publication; instead we have begun sending out a separate weekly email linking to the excellent and timely “Hotlist” published by the [Conservation Voters of South Carolina](#), with a note at the top about any issues of particular concern to our membership. If you are on our email distribution list and do not wish to receive these electronic legislative updates, please email Nancy Fitzer (nfitzer@upstateforever.org) with a message to unsubscribe. Either way, however, our email subscribers will continue to receive the *Upstate Update* each month, which will now have space for some expanded features, such as book reviews and the Upstate House Guide to Sustainable Living (see below).

To view the latest “Hotlist,” visit www.conservationvotersofsc.org/hotlist.html. The SC Coastal Conservation League has an informative and easy-to-use online Legislative Action Center with summaries of pending legislation and links to decision-makers, available at <http://capwiz.com/scccl/state/main/?state=SC>.

3. Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium Wins State Award!

Congratulations to the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium, which was recently named “Organization of the Year” by the South Carolina Wildlife Federation for its many accomplishments in resource assessment, policy analysis, and regional cooperation. SRWC is a collaborative effort by organizations and individuals concerned about the impacts of changing land use on the purity and abundance of water in the Saluda-Reedy basin. A wide variety of partners from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors comprise the SRWC, including *Upstate Forever*, which also administers the project. These partners have not only developed breakthrough studies on water resource trends, land use analyses, and erosion and sediment control, but have also been enormously successful in creating an understanding of the critical importance of the watershed among area businesses, land owners and government officials. Over the past five years the SRWC has expanded its network of members, engaging dozens of key interested parties in watershed forums, educational workshops, and tours of the watershed and the issues affecting the region. To learn more about the consortium’s vital work, visit www.saludareedy.org.

4. Governor Sanford Addresses Conservation and Quality of Life

In his 2006 State of the State address on January 18, Governor Mark Sanford identified what he sees as the three fundamental issues affecting our state: jobs, education, and quality of life. In the category of quality of life issues, he touched on such varied topics as health care and property taxes, but also spoke about topics near and dear to *Upstate Forever’s* membership. He proudly touted two years of full funding for the SC Conservation Bank and the purchase by DNR of the 10,000 acre Bonneau Ferry property in Berkeley County. About conservation he said, “We have talked a lot about open space and have even proposed another \$10 million for timberland acquisition, because a high quality of life in my book means glimpses of the South Carolina many of us grew up with and means some alternatives to more buildings and more traffic in some of the more congested parts of our state.”

The governor also addressed issues of growth and planning, stating, “At the local level, one of our problems is that growth doesn’t pay for itself in this state...In high-growth areas of our state, people have connected growth with, indeed, paying for the new folks’ school, dealing with added traffic, and losing their favorite deer stand or fishing hole—and so they fight it. It shouldn’t be this way; **our growth should be sustainable**, and, therefore, embraced.” He went on to suggest that impact fees could be possible means of funding infrastructure needs in fast-growing areas.

Thank you, Governor Sanford, for bringing attention to these important issues. We look forward to

proposals and healthy debates as we decide out how best to ensure a high quality of life for future generations of South Carolinians.

5. Tree Committee Holds First Meeting

Nearly four months after its establishment by County Council, the Greenville County Tree Policy Advisory Committee held its inaugural meeting on Friday, February 3. The group scheduled its future meetings for every second Thursday at 8 a.m. at Greenville County Square, beginning February 16. All of these meetings are open to the public, and we strongly encourage *Upstate Forever* members to come observe the planning process in action and support efforts to ensure adequate tree cover in Greenville County. We are hopeful that the outcome will be an ordinance that responds to our citizenry's diverse concerns about air quality, stormwater management, home energy use, wildlife habitat, and quality of life. The Committee consists of the following members:

Diane Eldridge, Special Consultant to Upstate Forever
Sandra Hamann, Greenville Council of Garden Clubs
Doug Harper, The Harper Corporation
David Holmes, Attorney
Kim Kauffman, Freeland-Kaufmann, Inc.
Tom Keith, Arbor Engineering
Dan Rawls, Greenville County Planning Commissioner
Gordon Seay, Greenville Association of Realtors
Coleman-Shouse, Home Builders Association of Greenville
Steven Smith, Carolina Wood, Inc.
Todd Ward, Greenville County Planning Commission Staff
Non-voting facilitator: Jimmy Forbes, Director, Greenville County Planning Commission

We will include reports about the committee's progress in our monthly Upstate Updates. In the meantime, you may email Diane Eldridge at diane.eldridge@charter.net for additional information.

6. Upstate House Guide to Sustainable Living: Spray Foam Insulation

After having had traditional batt or blown-Fiberglas insulation in all of their previous homes, Carlton and Brenda Owen knew they wanted something different for their new residence, Upstate House. The Owens focused their research on spray foam insulation, which offers a host of benefits, among them 1) complete seals with no gaps, 2) none of the dust or airborne particles that persist forever with Fiberglas, 3) a "sound proofing" effect that far exceeds that of Fiberglas, and 4) moisture resistance that essentially eliminates the possibility of mold or mildew and other allergens. However, most spray foams are now produced with petroleum, a non-renewable resource. So the Owens chose BioBased System's spray foam (www.biobased.net), which has all of the same benefits of other foam products, but with a significant portion of the petroleum replaced with American-grown and renewable soybean oil.

Another benefit of spray foam is that insulation is applied directly to the underside of the roof. Thus, instead of having a layer of insulation in the ceiling, thus leaving the attic space to overheat in the summer and be cold and damp in the winter, the attic becomes a "semi-conditioned" space. Not only can one go into the attic without having to wear a mask and goggles to avoid Fiberglas particles, but the temperature of the space now varies from that within the house by perhaps only a couple of degrees in any season. The HVAC doesn't "compete" with the temperature in the attic or the unfinished basement, also semi-conditioned.

BioBased Insulating Foam is initially at least twice as expensive as traditional Fiberglas insulation. However, if one factors that cost into a mortgage and then considers the monthly savings in energy bills, the product actually begins paying off in the first month of operation.

In addition to being a private residence, Upstate House is also a joint project of *Upstate*

Forever and the Home Builders Association of Greenville. It is both a demonstration project promoting environmentally-friendly building practices and a fundraiser to promote the EarthCraft House green building standard in the Upstate. For more information about Upstate House, visit www.upstatehouse.org.

7. Reading List: Staff Pick

How to Be a (Bad) Birdwatcher by [Simon Barnes](#)
Reviewed by [Jennifer Rennicks](#), Watershed Project Coordinator

“Look out the window. See a bird. Enjoy it. CONGRATULATIONS! You are now a bad birdwatcher.” From the first words of his book, Simon Barnes shows us how simple and easy bird watching can be. Barnes, who is the chief sportswriter for the *Times* in London and an avid birder himself, explains to his readers that the only requirement to be a bird watcher is to develop the habit of looking. He implores you not to let the details bog you down: it’s not important to know exactly which “little brown bird” you are looking at, but simply to enjoy watching it swoop and flutter.

Barnes explores why we enjoy watching birds - wondrous colors, ease of viewing and the magical power of flight - and even pokes fun at the serious birdwatchers, known as “twitchers” in the United Kingdom. Barnes’ most important message, though, is towards the end of the book. Whether you are watching a common chickadee in the woods near your home or seeing a majestic crane at a tropical wildlife preserve, the act of bird watching immerses and connects you to the natural world, enabling you to observe the concepts of biodiversity, ecology, and animal behavior in action. His hope is that an ever-growing group of people armed with this knowledge will put it to good use and become active stewards in protecting and restoring our natural areas.

Humorous, irreverent and inspiring, *How to Be a Bad Birdwatcher* makes clear that professional grade binoculars and a library of field guides are not prerequisites for entering the realm of bird watching. It’s enough to open your eyes and enjoy!

8. Upcoming Events

Upstate Forever Events

June 16, Starting with What We Have: Reinvestment and Redesign of Existing Commercial Districts to Create Economic Impact, Azalea Ballroom, Spartanburg Marriott, Spartanburg, SC, 7:30 a.m. Charleston Mayor Joe Riley will speak about the revitalization of commercial areas as part of a quarterly speaker series sponsored by *Upstate Forever* and the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce. If you’ve never before heard the informative and inspiring Mayor Riley in person, you are in for a treat! The “Building Our Future” series offers a forum to address the economic benefits of planning for sensible growth and development as they relate to Spartanburg County.

The series will raise awareness of how other communities are approaching the issue of significant growth and create a local dialogue about how our area might deal with similar issues. Together, the events will offer an overview of issues related to residential and commercial land use. Each will feature an individual recognized as a leader in a particular aspect of business, planning, or development. In addition to a Q&A session, each event will include ample time for open discussion.

There is no charge for the Joe Riley event, but reservations are requested. Please call the *Upstate Forever* Spartanburg office at (864) 327-0090 to register, or e-mail spartanburg@upstateforever.org. For more information about this and other “Building Our Future” events, visit http://www.upstateforever.org/ufs_event.html.

Other Events

February 21, The Biological Importance of the Clemson Experimental Forest, J. Verne Smith Auditorium, Greenville Technical College, Greenville, SC, 7:00 p.m. This talk by the Patrick McMillan, curator of the Clemson University Herbarium, concerns the value and future of the 17,500 acres of forest managed by Clemson University. Sponsored by the SC Native Plant Society. Free. www.scnps.org

February 23-26, Surviving Ourselves: Can the Wild South Survive the Human Population Boom? Andalusia, AL. This year's annual meeting of the Southeastern working group of Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation will focus on the single most fundamental threat to conservation in the Southeast. <http://www.separc.org>

March 21, South Carolina Champion Trees, Hayden Conference Center, SC Botanical Garden, Clemson, SC, 7:00 p.m. Dr. Vic Shelburne of Clemson University will talk about tracking down, documenting, and encouraging the protection of South Carolina's oldest and largest citizens. Sponsored by the SC Native Plant Society. Free. www.scnps.org

March 25, Reedy River Paddlefest, Brashier Campus of Greenville Technical College, Simpsonville, SC, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Race or float down Class 2 and 3 rapids on a scenic stretch of the Reedy and qualify for prizes. Cheer on boaters, check out gear demonstrations and learn about the river through activities for the whole family. The second annual PaddleFest is organized by the Greenville County Recreation District, Friends of the Reedy River, the South Carolina Water Resources Center and area paddlers. There is a registration fee for boaters. The event is open to all, and spectators are encouraged. Proceeds from the event benefit Friends of the Reedy River. Contact Rebekah Guss for more information at (864) 508-0442.

April 8, Native Plant Sale, Buncombe Street United Methodist Church parking lot, Greenville, SC 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Sponsored by the SC Native Plant Society. www.scnps.org

April 22-29, Greenville County Pride Week, Greenville, SC. Organize a litter cleanup in your neighborhood. To get involved, call Sarah Robinson of PalmettoPride at 1-877-725-7733 or visit www.palmettopride.org.

9. Lots o' Links

[Come October, Baby Will Make 300 Million or So.](#) The US population is quickly closing in on the 300 million mark, just as the first Baby Boomers are celebrating their sixtieth birthdays.

[Greenville Green Schools Program Falls Short.](#) The \$933 million school building program in Greenville County has disappointed advocates of energy-efficient design; this article from *MetroBeat* features *Upstate Forever* Executive Director Brad Wyche.

[Administration Proposes to Sell Off National Forest Lands.](#) A plan is underway to sell more than 300,000 acres of public forest land in 32 states, including South Carolina, to fund rural schools. This land represents less than 0.5% of the total acreage in the national forest system. Click [here](#) to access the US Forest Service's website, which promises maps of the affected areas later this month.

[Tax Credits for Energy-Efficient Products.](#) Learn the specifics about qualifying for new tax credits for your home or business while simultaneously reducing your energy bills.

[Atlanta Plans Greenbelt.](#) An ambitious plan to redevelop 22 miles of rail corridors encircling downtown Atlanta into parks, transit, and new communities is gaining steam.

[Free Subscription to "Land&People."](#) The Trust for Public Land publishes an excellent bi-annual magazine highlighting ideas and techniques through inspiring stories about how people and communities are creating new parks, playgrounds, and greenways and protecting open space.

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[It's a Jungle—No, It's a Wall!](#) Biowalls are polyester-mesh wall structures embedded with live plants, developed by a Canadian scientist to beautify indoor environments while cleaning the air. Recently, the United States' first green wall was installed in a Baltimore office building.

[Texas Instruments is Living the Green American Dream.](#) NY Times columnist Thomas Friedman writes about how one company is using green design and manufacturing techniques to increase profitability and keep jobs in the U.S.

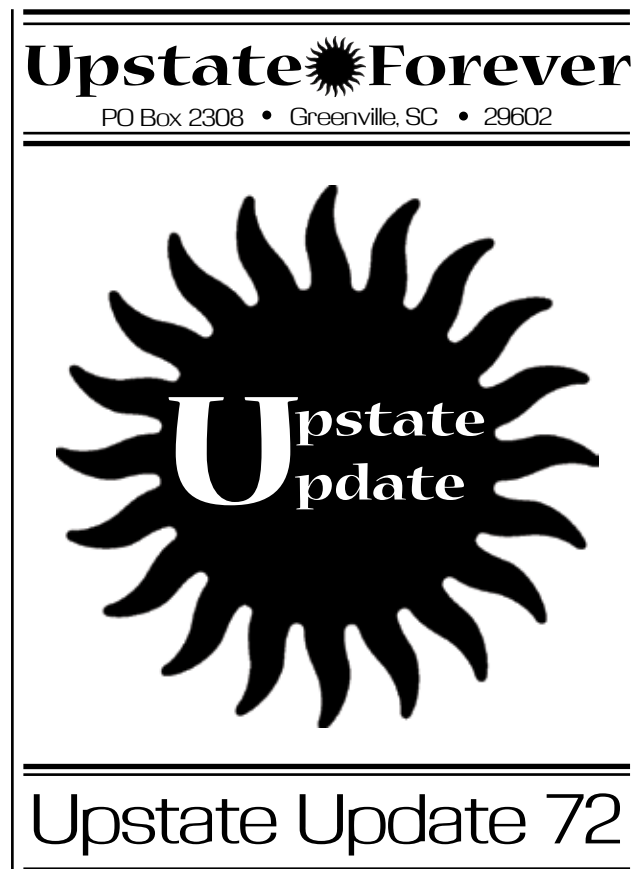
[Half of Active Children Pursue Non-traditional Physical Activities.](#) Research has found that many children do not get their exercise participating in organized sports, but by bicycling and other informal physical activities, although barriers exist in the form of cultural attitudes and physical environment.

[How a Failing Suburban Mall Became a Beloved Indoor Town Square.](#) Third Place Commons is the heart of Lake Forest Park, Washington.

10. Quote of the Month

“We need to talk about the vision for Spartanburg County. Gov. Sanford talks a lot about the quality of life and making the state more competitive. Can anybody tell me how another landfill improves the quality of life and makes Spartanburg County more competitive? They can't, because it doesn't.”

- Rep. Phil Sinclair, R-Woodruff, quoted in the *Spartanburg Herald-Journal*, 2/1/06.



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