

Upstate Update

NUMBER 87

SEPTEMBER
2007

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

In this Upstate Update:

1. Stumphouse is Saved!
2. Upstate Forever to Host Conference on Conservation Agreements
3. New High School Threatens Clemson Forest
4. Spartanburg County Moves Ahead with Parks Funding Plan
5. LID Audit Goes National
6. "Preserving Local Character" in Spartanburg
7. Cool Counties to Fight Global Warming
8. Greenville County Tree Ordinance Update
9. Spartanburg Mayor Barnet Honored
10. GCRD Recognized
11. Upcoming Events
12. Lots o' Links
13. Quote of the Month

1. Stumphouse is Saved!

Great news! The campaign to save a spectacular 950-acre tract on Stumphouse Mountain has succeeded! This property truly has it all -- Issaqueena Falls, the historic tunnels, Cherokee burial sites, rich biological diversity, and beautiful scenic views. All of it is now protected and will be available for public use and enjoyment forever!

The campaign has been one of *Upstate Forever's* top priority projects this year. We applied for and received a \$1.2 million grant from the South Carolina Conservation Bank that was paid to the City of Walhalla on August 14 for signing a conservation agreement with *Upstate Forever*, preserving the City's 450-acre tract on the Mountain.

Then, we worked closely with The Nature Conservancy and our other partners to raise over \$3.1 million to acquire the adjoining 511-acre tract. This property will be transferred later this year to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and managed as a Heritage Trust Site.

Public sources of funds for the 511-acre tract include DNR (\$1.5 million), South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (\$200,000), Oconee County (\$300,000), and the South Carolina Competitiveness Council (\$100,000). The balance was raised from over 1,000(!) donors whose contributions ranged from one dollar to \$300,000.

What an amazing and inspiring success story! Congratulations to all of the people, groups and agencies who worked so hard on the campaign, including *Upstate Forever* Land Trust Director Dana Leavitt and his staff!

2. Upstate Forever to Host Conference on Conservation Agreements

On **September 19**, *Upstate Forever* will host an important conference at the Carolina First Center in Greenville. Entitled "**Conservation Agreements: The Voluntary Protection of Land**," this conference will be devoted to explaining and discussing conservation agreements, one of the most popular and widely-used means of protecting natural, scenic, agricultural and historic lands in the United States.

The conference will provide information about the most dramatic improvements in the tax code for conservation agreements in over 25 years. However, unless current law is amended, these changes apply only to transactions closed in 2006 and 2007. The conference will end with a panel of owners who will explain why they decided to utilize conservation agreements to protect their properties.

Promoting sensible growth and protecting special places in the Upstate

Whether you are a landowner, professional advisor, or concerned citizen this conference will be of great interest to you. Continuing education credits will be available for accountants, attorneys, financial planners, and foresters. For more information or to register, visit www.upstateforever.org/join_events.html#consAgree, email info@upstateforever.org, or call (864) 250-0500. Please pass along this information to your friends and colleagues; we look forward to seeing you there!

3. *New High School Threatens Clemson Forest*

The Pickens County School District's plan for a new Daniel High School has raised a huge red flag for many area residents. The proposed site on Six Mile Road includes approximately 40 acres of the Clemson Experimental Forest, which, after the Sumter National Forest, is the single largest undeveloped tract of land remaining in the Piedmont. The 40 acres in question are right in the heart of the Forest, a place of stunning beauty, rich biological diversity, and home to a wide range of important scientific research and public recreational activities. (For more information about the Clemson Forest and a 2005 controversy over its use, see www.upstateforever.org/Newsletters/Spring05_Advocate/CClemsonSpr_05.html.)

Upstate Forever has submitted a letter to the superintendent and board of the Pickens County School District, as well as to the administration of Clemson University, expressing our concerns about the site. We asked the District to consider the far more sustainable solution of keeping Daniel High School at its current site and addressing future needs through renovation and expansion of existing buildings and facilities; we also urged the University not to sell or transfer any portion of the forest. We will continue to monitor this situation and keep our members informed. Another good source of information on this issue is the Friends of the Clemson Experimental Forest, available at www.friendsofthecfe.org.

4. *Spartanburg County Moves Ahead with Parks Funding Plan*

For many years, *Upstate Forever* has been a strong advocate for increased local funding for parks, greenways, trails and natural areas. We were an active member of the coalition that convinced Greenville County Council last year to approve a hospitality tax that will fund the "TRAC" plan for new and expanded parks in the county (see [UU 80](#)).

In Spartanburg, last year we released a study showing the severe shortage of parks in the county. Total parkland acreage in Spartanburg County is 2.44 acres per 1,000 residents; the national average is 6.25 acres. We made sure that Spartanburg County leaders knew what Greenville County had done and urged them to follow suit.

And that is happening! On August 20, Spartanburg County Council unanimously approved the first reading of a proposed 2 percent hospitality tax that would provide a dedicated and recurring stream of funding for parks and recreation projects. To all *Upstate Forever* members in Spartanburg County, please [contact your representatives](#) on Council and thanks them for their support of this important initiative.

5. *LID Audit Goes National*

Work by *Upstate Forever* as part of the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium (SRWC) has been shared around the country by the US EPA as a model for research that supports decision making. We were excited to learn recently that the state of Maine is studying SRWC's Pavement Standards Audit, which identifies ways to add flexibility to development standards and enable a reduction of impervious surfaces, in its Department of Environmental Protection.

In other water quality news, *Upstate Forever* has just been named a finalist for a grant through US EPA's national Targeted Watersheds Grant Program. The potential \$800,000 grant would fund a project utilizing market-based mechanisms to improve the health of the Saluda-Reedy watershed. Kudos to Jason Van Dreische and the *Upstate Forever* Clean Air and Water team!

6. “Preserving Local Character” in Spartanburg

A capacity crowd filled the Spartanburg Marriott on August 24th for a presentation on “Preserving Local Character” by Ed McMahon, Senior Resident Fellow for Sustainable Development at the Urban Land Institute, part of the Building Our Future speaker series co-sponsored by *Upstate Forever*, Partners for Active Living and the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce. A national authority on sustainable development, urban design and land conservation, McMahon emphasized the importance of preserving trees and open space and building high-quality developments that enhance local character. The result is growth that is good for the environment, the economy, and the community. With good planning, McMahon said, communities aren’t forced to choose between growth and conservation. Without good planning, “people want to slam the brakes on growth because they can’t see where we’re going—it’s like driving in the fog.” Let’s hope Spartanburg County and other Upstate communities heed his advice and ensure clear visibility into the future by instituting strong planning and development guidelines.

7. Cool Counties to Fight Global Warming

In [UU77](#), we described the Sierra Club’s “Cool Cities” initiative, in which cities make a commitment to stopping global warming by signing the [U.S. Mayor’s Climate Protection Agreement](#). The City of Greenville signed on a year ago, demonstrating environmental leadership along with nearly 600 other cities nationwide. Now, it is the counties’ turn.

Large counties from across the country have signed on to the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration, a major new initiative to combat global warming. These counties (led by King County, WA; Fairfax County, VA; and Nassau County, NY) pledge to reduce global warming emissions 80 percent by 2050, an achievable average annual reduction of 2 percent. The Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration also urges the federal government to adopt legislation requiring an 80 percent emissions reduction by 2050 and calls for fuel economy standards to be raised to 35 miles per gallon within a decade. Which Upstate county will be the first to join in?

8. Greenville County Tree Ordinance Update

In [UU 86](#), we reported that a long-awaited comprehensive tree ordinance for Greenville County had passed first reading by County Council. No real progress, however, has been made since then. The ordinance was sent back to the Public Works, Planning and Development Committee (PWPDP), which returned it to County staff for reworking. We are hopeful that a revised ordinance that includes *Upstate Forever’s* suggestions (www.upstateforever.org/prog_tree/0707TreeOrdinance.pdf) will soon be acted upon by the PWPDP Committee and sent to County Council for approval. We will continue to follow this issue closely. Read the August 30 op-ed piece in *The Greenville News* by Upstate Forever Executive Director Brad Wyche urging prompt enactment of the ordinance at www.greenvilleonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2007708300309.

9. Spartanburg Mayor Barnet Honored

Spartanburg Mayor Bill Barnet has been honored with this year’s Drummond Award for Statesmanship, awarded by the Drummond Center at Erskine College to recognize individuals demonstrating outstanding leadership and character in public service in South Carolina. Congratulations, Mayor Barnet!

10. GCRD Recognized

The Greenville County Recreation District has been selected by the South Carolina Recreation and Parks Association as the Parks and Recreation Agency of the year. Congratulations, GCRD!

11. Upcoming Events

Upstate Forever Events

September 6 - October 25 (Thursdays), Green Screen Film Series, Hub-Bub Showroom, Spartanburg, SC, 7:00 p.m. Join *Upstate Forever*, Hub-Bub, Partners for Active Living, and the Spartanburg Nutrition Council for free Thursday screenings of eight films focusing on conservation and community:

- September 6: *Subdivided*
- September 13: *The Future of Food*
- September 20: *Blue Vinyl*
- September 27: *We Are Traffic*
- October 4: *A Man Named Pearl*
- October 11: *Kilowatt Ours*
- October 18: *Turn Here Sweet Corn*
- October 25: *Third Ward TX*

For more information, contact *Upstate Forever's* Spartanburg office at (864) 327-0090 or spartanburg@upstateforever.org.

September 15, *Upstate Forever Hawk Watch*, Caesar's Head State Park, Cleveland, SC, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Come marvel with us at the unforgettable sight of hundreds of soaring, swirling migrating raptors - hawks, kites, falcons, eagles and more - at *Upstate Forever's* first Hawk Watch! We'll begin the day with a short hike from Caesar's Head State Park and will return to the visitor's center in time for lunch. In the afternoon, Tim Lee, Interpreter/Naturalist for the Mountain Bridge Wilderness, who will offer a private program and help with identification of numerous raptors right in the middle of their fall migration! Carpoolers will meet at the *Upstate Forever* office at 7:30 a.m. **Advanced registration is required as attendance is limited to 25 *Upstate Forever* members.** For more information or to register, contact Gretchen Wilson at gwilson@upstateforever.org or (864) 250-0500.

September 19, Conservation Agreements: The Voluntary Protection of Land, Carolina First Center, Greenville, SC, 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. *Upstate Forever* invites landowners, professional advisors and citizens concerned about conservation to this conference devoted to explaining and discussing conservation agreements, one of the most popular and widely used means of protecting natural, scenic, agricultural and historic lands in the United States. Sessions will cover the tax benefits of conservation agreements, appraisals, and case studies, and will include a panel discussion by property owners who have protected their land with conservation agreements. Continuing education credits will be available for accountants, attorneys, financial planners, and foresters. Cost: \$50. For more information or to register, visit www.upstateforever.org/join_events.html#consAgree or contact *Upstate Forever* at info@upstateforever.org or (864) 250-0500.

September 22, National Hunting and Fishing Day: An Outdoor Family Adventure, Duke World of Energy, Seneca, SC, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Come one, come all to the Upstate's first celebration of National Hunting and Fishing Day, sponsored by *Upstate Forever*, the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, 4-H Shooting Sports, Trout Unlimited, SC Department of Natural Resources, and Duke Energy. The free event offers participants the opportunity to experience a wide variety of outdoor activities including kayaking, boating, fishing, archery, air riflery, fly-tying, butterfly observation and tree stand safety. Food will be available for purchase. For directions to the World of Energy, visit www.duke-energy.com/visitor-centers/world-of-energy.asp. For other information, contact Angela Viney at aviney@upstateforever.org.

September 22 - October 27 (Saturdays), Flicks at Furman: A Series of Environmental and Agricultural Topics, Furman University Amphitheatre, Greenville, SC, 8:00 p.m. Join *Upstate Forever*, Greenville Organic Food Organization, and Furman University for free Saturday showings of six wonderful films:

- September 22: *Gimme Green*
- September 29: *Alternative Agriculture*

Upstate update

NUMBER 87
SEPTEMBER
2007

- October 6: *Freedom Fuels*
October 13: *The Future of Food*
October 20: *Blue Vinyl*
October 27: *Beyond Organic: The Vision of Fairview Farms*

Admission to the films is free of charge. In case of inclement weather, movies will be shown in Furman's University Center. For more information, contact John Tynan at jtynan@upstateforever.org or (864) 250-0500.

October 12, Design-Based Planning Models, Spartanburg Marriott at Renaissance Park, Spartanburg, SC, 7:30 a.m. The next "Building Our Future" speaker series event, hosted by *Upstate Forever*, Partners for Active Living and the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce, will feature Rick Bernhardt, Director of Planning for Nashville/Davidson County. For more information, contact *Upstate Forever's* Spartanburg office at (864) 327-0090 or spartanburg@upstateforever.org.

November 10, Upstate Forever Annual Meeting, Camp Spearhead, Cleveland, SC. Mark your calendar for *Upstate Forever's* annual celebration of the year's accomplishments, complete with good food, good company, and beautiful hikes.

Other Events

September 7-9, Women's Outdoor Recreation Retreat, Camp Bob Cooper, Summerton, SC. Sponsored by the SC Wildlife Federation, the Women's Outdoor Recreation Retreat is a multi-faceted opportunity to challenge the "woman within you" with nature hikes, kayaking, birding, canoeing, fishing, and many more outdoor adventures. Open to females aged 16 and older. Registration fee is \$75; all equipment and supplies are provided. For more information and to register, visit www.scwf.org/images/PDFs/wor_registration07.pdf or call (803) 256-0670.

September 15, Beach Sweep/River Sweep, 9:00 a.m. - noon. South Carolina's annual waterway clean-up includes events statewide, including one in Spartanburg along the Pacolet River. For more information, visit SPACE at www.spartanburgconservation.org or call (864)948-0000.

September 18, Savannah River at Risk, Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy, Savannah Rapids Pavilion, Augusta, GA, 8:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. This public forum brings together scientists, environmentalists, engineers, regulatory agencies, economic developers, and other stakeholders from the 44 counties in the Savannah River watershed (Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina) to foster discussions on river issues. For more information or to register, visit www.naturalsciencesacademy.org or call (706) 828-2109.

October 25, LEED for Homes Technical Review, Buck Mickel Center, Greenville Technical College, Greenville, SC, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. LEED for Homes is a voluntary rating system by the US Green Building Council that promotes the design and construction of high performance "green" homes. This workshop will give builders, designers, and consultants the knowledge needed to enter the rapidly growing green building market. Cost: \$275 (\$150 students). For more information, contact workshop@usgbc.org or call (202) 742-3820. To register, visit www.usgbc.org/workshops/register.

12. Lots o' Links

State Panel Dealing with Climate Change. The Climate, Energy, and Commerce Advisory Committee is proposing ways South Carolina can prepare for climate change.

Long-Range Transportation Plan. View the Greenville Pickens Area Transportation Study draft plan for 2030 online; comments can be submitted by clicking on the "public involvement" tab.

Cooler Pavement. New pervious pavements may reduce urban heat-island effects.

Upstate Update

NUMBER 87
SEPTEMBER
2007

[Packaging Goes Green](#). Suddenly, less is more in consumer packaging as both demand for greener products and increased costs of materials drive design changes.

[Green Renovation Costing Less Green](#). This *L.A. Times* article describes both big-budget and small-budget efforts to go green.

[Play the Watershed Game](#).

13. Quote of the Month

“This agreement will protect the land’s historic and conservation values. People from across the state, country, and world will always have the opportunity to experience the breathtaking beauty of Issaqueena Falls and Stumphouse Tunnel. People will always have the opportunity to learn about, see, and experience the historic value of this land in person. Finally, people will always have the opportunity to see first-hand the many different species of plants that grow naturally on this land.”

-- Ron Mattox, Walhalla City Council Member,
on the City’s conservation agreement with *Upstate Forever*, 8/14/07

