

2020 | SPRING/SUMMER

**UF** | UPSTATE  
FOREVER

# Upstate Advocate

THE UPSTATE'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON OUR ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE

# THE VALUE OF WATER

*Lake Jocassee by Landon Gingerich. View more of his work on Instagram at @landongingerich*

ON (& OFF) THE **CLOCK:**  
Upstate Forever staff at work and play



Engagement Coordinator Ginger Goldsmith poses with "Flat Brad" at the ForeverGreen Luncheon



Communications Director Sally Boman & husband Travis Leitko tubing on the Saluda



Database Coordinator Ava Thacker welcomed a new granddaughter, Kariyah Thacker, in January



Shelley Robbins, Energy & State Policy Director, looks sharp at the wedding of her daughter India



Protecting Land & Water | Advocacy | Balanced Growth

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[www.upstateforever.org](http://www.upstateforever.org)



Mission

Upstate Forever is a conservation organization that protects critical lands, waters, and the unique character of the Upstate of South Carolina.

Vision

To conserve our land and water resources, resulting in an environmentally healthy and economically prosperous region, with a high quality of life now and for future generations.

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR

# In unprecedented times, some things remain constant.

There is so much uncertainty right now in the Upstate, across the country, and around the world. As I write this letter, our Greenville and Spartanburg offices are closed while Upstate Forever staff work from home to help protect the health of each other, our families, and our communities. You can read more about our response to COVID-19 at [upstateforever.org/at-home](https://upstateforever.org/at-home).

However, you can rest assured our team is still working hard to achieve our mission. Thanks to your support, we are still working to protect the Upstate's land and water resources. We are still advocating for smart growth, energy, and conservation policies at the local and state levels, and we are still dedicated to protecting what makes our region so special.

In this issue of the *Upstate Advocate*, you'll find perspectives on the most fundamental of topics, and one that drives Upstate Forever's conservation and advocacy work: water. We put together the majority of this issue prior to the COVID-19 situation, but decided to proceed with publication because even during times of change and uncertainty, our need for clean and readily available water is a constant.

With rising population and development in our region, it will only become more of a challenge to safeguard our water. That's why Upstate Forever is working with landowners, utilities, developers, and other local leaders to protect critical land for water quality, such as headwater streams and watershed lands. While collaborative solutions are our first preference, we also don't shy away from taking legal action to ensure that bad actors are held accountable when they damage our waterways. *See page 16 for some of our water advocacy efforts.*

I hope this newsletter helps you think about what clean water means to your own life. If you're able, please take five minutes to fill out our online survey at [upstateforever.org/VOW-survey](https://upstateforever.org/VOW-survey) and give us your thoughts on the value of water. It will help our Clean Water team, and you'll be entered to win some great prizes! *See page 15 for details.*

Upstate Forever's necessary and time-sensitive work must continue even during the current health crisis. Your ongoing support remains essential to these local conservation efforts, and we thank you for being part of the solution. Upstate South Carolina's special character comes not only from natural beauty, but also from a legacy of collaboration, innovation, and generosity of spirit. We will get through this tough time together and emerge stronger than ever before.

From my family to yours, take care of yourselves and be well.



**Andrea Cooper**, Executive Director



## ON (& OFF) THE CLOCK:

*Upstate Forever staff at work and play*



*Director Andrea Cooper with her team from the Riley Institute's Diversity Leaders Initiative last December*



*Clean Water Advocate Megan Chase plants trees at a TreesUpstate / Save Our Saluda workday*



*Land Conservation Director Scott Park with Allove, his Chesapeake Bay Retriever puppy*

The **2020 ForeverGreen Awards Luncheon** was the biggest yet, with a capacity crowd of nearly 500 — in fact, tickets sold out several weeks in advance! In addition to the awards program, this year's luncheon featured a conservation update from Raleigh West, Executive Director of the newly revitalized South Carolina Conservation Bank, and a celebration honoring Brad Wyche, Upstate Forever's founder and senior advisor. Thanks to all who contributed to a successful event, and be on the lookout for updates about next year's luncheon. PHOTOS BY JACK ROBERT PHOTOGRAPHY

## 2020 Award Recipients



The 2020 ForeverGreen Award recipients (left to right):  
Tom Kester, Rep. Bill Sandifer, Norman Pulliam

### THE MARJORIE E. SCHMIDT STEWARDSHIP AWARD

**Tom Kester** was honored for his faithful ongoing support of Upstate Forever and other local conservation efforts.

### THE TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION

**Norman Pulliam** was recognized for his visionary leadership as South Carolina Department of Natural Resources board chair.

### PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR

**Rep. Bill Sandifer** received an award for his game-changing role in passing the Energy Freedom Act.

Learn more about this year's ForeverGreen Award recipients at [upstateforever.org/blog/forevergreen-luncheon](https://upstateforever.org/blog/forevergreen-luncheon) and watch the awardee videos at our YouTube channel **UpstateForever**.



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## Laura Townes, an easement owner with a conservation focus

### LAURA C. TOWNES

July 15, 1926 - February 11, 2020

Laura Townes was originally from Connecticut, but met her late husband George Franklin, a Greenville native, at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. The two moved back to the Upstate, making their home in Pickens almost 50 years ago.

Both George and Laura were avid lovers of the outdoors and particularly enjoyed quiet moments observing birds. While George was a member of the Wilson Ornithological Society, the Society for the Study of Reptiles and Amphibians, and the Archaeological Society of South Carolina, Laura complemented that as an English teacher, an astronomer, a gardener, and through her support of many local non-profits including Upstate Forever, The



“[She was] selfless, kind, generous, soft-spoken but strong-willed, with a passionate commitment to the protection of our natural resources.”

—BRAD WYCHE,  
UPSTATE FOREVER FOUNDER  
& SENIOR ADVISOR

Nature Conservancy, the League of Women Voters, the Humane Society, and Bat Conservation International.

Upstate Forever Founder and Senior Advisor Brad Wyche remembers Laura as “selfless, kind, generous, soft-spoken but strong-willed, with a passionate commitment to the protection of our natural resources.”

George and Laura lived on 585 acres in northern Pickens County. After George passed away in 1997, Laura wanted to make sure their property would continue to contribute to the natural beauty along Highway 11 and placed it into a conservation easement with Upstate Forever. Although not directly adjacent to Highway 11, their homestead expands the views and natural habitat beyond the South Saluda River, protecting a home that she and George loved most while protecting the area’s beauty forever.

“What a wonderful legacy she has left for all of us with the preservation of her beautiful property along the South Saluda River,” Wyche declared.

“We just lost a remarkable woman.” said Upstate Forever Land Trust Committee member Ted Sheheen. “I remember Laura as one of our strongest conservation advocates in Pickens and Greenville Counties. She was active in organizing the Bluegrass & BBQ event at Table Rock Lodge.”

She then continued to advocate for conservation efforts by working with others in a local outreach group in Pickens County to educate and encourage others to protect the natural resources in the Upstate. She lived a long and fulfilling 93 years, and the Upstate is better for it. Her considerable contributions will have lasting impacts for generations to come.

## NEW UPSTATE FOREVER STAFF MEMBER

For full staff bios, visit [upstateforever.org/team](https://upstateforever.org/team)



### Kerry Newberry

Office Manager / Executive Assistant

Kerry joined Upstate Forever in November of 2019. During her diverse career as a public school teacher, technical writer/editor, information technology business analyst, and educating naturalist, she has lived and worked in Texas, Minnesota, and Georgia. In her role at Upstate Forever, Kerry provides administrative support, facilities management, and receptionist duties. She takes pride in enabling other staff members to focus on fulfilling the organization’s core mission. In her spare time, Kerry enjoys kayaking, hiking, and birdwatching with her husband.

# THE VALUE OF WATER

A silhouette of a person carrying a child on their shoulders, looking out over a body of water at sunset. The child is wearing a colorful, patterned dress. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds, and the water reflects the light from the setting or rising sun.

**By Erika Hollis**

CLEAN WATER DIRECTOR

It can't be overstated. Water is the single most important resource on the planet. All life as we know it — everything you've ever experienced — exists because of water.

We are fortunate in the Upstate in that most of us have access to plenty of clean drinking water whenever we need it. In recent weeks, I've been even more appreciative of the fact that I have access to clean, reliable water with a turn of the tap. Think about how difficult a simple hygienic measure like hand washing would be without easy access to clean running water.

And yet, in this part of the world, in an era of modern convenience, it's all too easy to take clean water for granted. It's easy to forget the value of water and the immense role it plays in our daily lives.

We can't let that happen here. As our region grows, it's more important than ever to protect water quality in the Upstate.

*Continued on next page >>*

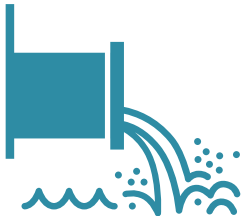
In its natural state, **land filters and absorbs stormwater** — wetlands & forests are especially good at this.



As development increases, natural land is converted into **impermeable** surfaces that water can't pass through (like parking lots, roofs, & roads)...



... so instead of being absorbed, water rushes along the land at high speeds.



Contrary to what many people believe, most stormwater is NOT treated. **This means whatever's on the ground ends up in our waterways.**



▲ WHY DOES SPRAWL IMPACT WATER QUALITY?

*Continued from page 7*

You've probably noticed that the Upstate is losing large tracts of land to development. In fact, the Upstate's pave-over rate is equivalent to almost one new Haywood Mall (and its parking lots) every single day.

Unplanned growth, aka sprawl, has serious negative effects on our water quality. Flooding, erosion, and pollution are just a few of the woes that come with paving over too many of the natural areas that filter and absorb water. (See "Why Does Sprawl Impact Water Quality?" graphic above)

So what can we do to reduce these impacts? The best solution is to leave land next to waterways undeveloped, creating a buffer that can filter pollutants, lessen the impacts of flooding, and safeguard our drinking water supplies.

Land protection is also the most cost-effective way to protect water quality. According to a study by the Trust for Public Land, every \$1 spent on land protection saves \$27 on water treatment costs, because it keeps our waters clean, naturally, without the need for costly

infrastructure upgrades. That's a great return — on any investment.

In this part of the state, most people get their drinking water from surface water, which is essentially water from a local river or reservoir. Currently, the majority of rivers and streams carrying the Upstate's drinking water are not protected. It's essential that we work now to find strategic ways to protect our drinking water sources.

Fortunately, many groups in the area, including Upstate Forever, are working to safeguard our water through advocacy efforts, sprawl reduction, and land protection. (See "How Upstate Forever works to protect water" on the facing page)

The effort to ensure clean, abundant water matters to us all. **Here are some things you can do as a private citizen to help safeguard our water:**

**Monitor your local waterways** by becoming a citizen scientist through SC's Adopt-a-Stream program or by keeping a log of what's happening in your local creek, river, wetland, or lake. Learn more at [bit.ly/scaas](https://bit.ly/scaas) >>



**EVERY \$1 SPENT ON LAND PROTECTION SAVES \$27 ON WATER TREATMENT COSTS.**



Source: The Trust for Public Land

**Unchecked stormwater from development causes a lot of problems:**

**EROSION** wears away at river & stream banks, which is dangerous & costly to repair.



**POLLUTION** like trash, oil, pet waste, & fertilizer is picked up & carried into nearby rivers or streams.



**SEDIMENT** clogs waterways & carries pollutants like bacteria, heavy metals, & nutrients.



**FLOODING** is extremely dangerous & destructive and becoming more common in the Upstate.

**The good news? Upstate Forever & our partners are working on solutions.**

**>> Tell your state representatives that water matters to your community.**

Our state legislators like to hear from their constituents – and this is an election year, so they will be paying extra close attention. It doesn't have to be complicated – a quick call or email gets the message across. Find your state officials at [bit.ly/sclegislators](https://bit.ly/sclegislators).

**Tell your local elected officials too!** City and County officials often set priorities based on what they hear from their constituents. If protecting green space and water quality are important issues to you, your local officials need to hear that! Consider writing them a letter, sending an email, or picking up the phone to make your voice heard. We've put together a resource to help you at [upstateforever.org/local-officials](https://upstateforever.org/local-officials).

**Pay attention to other local city and county council issues** and participate when you can. Remember, many policies governing how we manage land, construction, and transportation can impact our local waterways. UF currently offers e-newsletters with updates and alerts related to Greenville and Spartanburg growth issues; sign up at [upstateforever.org/email](https://upstateforever.org/email).

**Be on the lookout for alerts from UF and our partner organizations.**

We will let you know when action is needed on issues affecting our water resources. Follow us on social media and sign up for our water issues e-newsletter, The Water Log, at [upstateforever.org/email](https://upstateforever.org/email). 🌱



*Erika Hollis is the Clean Water Director at Upstate Forever and can be reached at [ehollis@upstateforever.org](mailto:ehollis@upstateforever.org)*

*To learn more about how you can become an advocate for our threatened water resources, visit [upstateforever.org/ValueofWater](https://upstateforever.org/ValueofWater)*

## OUR WATER WORK

## How Upstate Forever works to protect water

### Critical land protection

Water quality drives our land protection work. Because of your support, we're working to permanently protect an additional 15,000 acres of our region's most critical lands to positively impact water quality.

### Watershed-based planning

Our Clean Water Team partners with drinking water utility providers on strategic plans to protect and improve water quality right here in our local watersheds.

### Clean water advocacy

We advocate at the local, state, and federal levels to advance policies that protect our drinking water, as well as the places we love to fish, hunt, swim, and explore. *See page 16 for details*

### Slowing the rate of sprawl

UF's Land Policy team works to enact plans that slow the rate of sprawl and steer development away from the sensitive areas that naturally protect our water quality.

### Supporting 100-foot buffers

The most cost-effective way to protect drinking water quality is by keeping land next to waterways natural and intact. We support an initiative to require 100-foot buffers alongside the Reedy River in Greenville County.

### Bacteria reduction in rivers

Thanks to SCDHEC funding, we help landowners in critical areas by offsetting costs on projects that reduce bacterial pollution, such as septic tank repair and replacement and fencing cattle out of streams.

Visit [upstateforever.org/Clean-Water](https://upstateforever.org/Clean-Water) to learn more about our work

Too often, you seem to only appreciate the vast importance of water when it becomes scarce. As a farmer, I have learned to respect water in a way that I never put myself in that position of scarcity.

— **BRUCE ADAMS**, DIRECTOR OF FURMAN FARM

**FARMING + AGRICULTURE**

## Water is essential for local food

**Bruce Adams** is a 4th-generation farmer and Director of Furman Farm. The sustainable agriculture practices he employs on this 1/4-acre farm supply Furman University's dining hall with fresh produce all year-long without the use of an irrigation system.

Water is a life source — for humans, for animals, for plants. Without water, we would cease to exist. But too often, you seem to only appreciate the vast importance of water when it becomes scarce.


As a farmer, I have learned to respect water in a way that I never put myself in that position of scarcity. If you were watering our 1/4-acre plot in a traditional way, you could be using upwards of 50-75 gallons a day in the summertime. But our garden is arranged in a way that we can maximize each rainfall — in fact, we often have an excess of water that flows from the farm straight into Swan Lake. We go to a great extent to conserve water, and our systems have become a model for campus farms for just about every university in the Southeast and beyond — even Princeton. 🌱

**STATE WATER PLAN**

## Ensuring enough water

Each day, businesses and individuals in SC tap **1 billion gallons of surface water and 333 million gallons of groundwater**. Population and economic growth will increase competition for water. SC DNR is updating our State Water Plan to ensure that an adequate and reliable supply of water will be available into the future. Learn how to participate at [upstateforever.org/state-water-plan](https://upstateforever.org/state-water-plan)




 A photograph of Brooks and Kay Wade on a boat. Brooks, an older man with glasses and a blue jacket, is sitting in the foreground. Kay, a woman with short grey hair and a brown jacket, is leaning over his shoulder. A dog, Mica, is sitting on the boat to the right. The background shows a lake and mountains.
 

My favorite part of sharing Lake Jocassee with visitors is their reactions. Joy. Wonder...Lake Jocassee is our Grand Canyon, our Yosemite Valley.

— BROOKS WADE, JOCASSEE LAKE TOURS

## ICONIC PLACES

# Our lakes, rivers, & streams make the Upstate beautiful

**Brooks and Kay Wade** own Jocassee Lake Tours. They (along with Official Ship's Dog Mica) offer year-round tours of Lake Jocassee, a 9,000-acre, 385-foot deep reservoir located in Oconee and Pickens Counties.

**Brooks:** I remember our first sight of Lake Jocassee like it was yesterday. Kay and I came camping at Devils Fork State Park ten years ago. We were escaping yet another Florida hurricane, since we lived for many years on a barrier island in the northern Gulf of Mexico. Our first morning here I got up early, walked down to the shore of Lake Jocassee at sunrise, and literally fell to my knees. I had never seen anything, any place so beautiful in my entire life. We were living here six months later.

**Kay:** We found our 'forever place' at Lake Jocassee. First time visitors consistently remark on how clear the water is, and it isn't just clear... the water is also some of the cleanest in the eastern United States, fed by rivers and streams that originate in springs and travel through land largely undeveloped. When water leaves Lake Jocassee to make hydroelectric power on its way to Lake Keowee, it is about as clean as water can be.

**Brooks:** Thanks to the protection the Jocassee Gorges

receives, the quality of Lake Jocassee water remains excellent, and with the help of Friends of Jocassee, SC Adopt-a-Stream and organizations like Upstate Forever, we are working to keep it that way.

**Kay:** The Jocassee Gorges is part of the upper Savannah watershed. Somewhere between the headwaters of Jocassee and the Atlantic Ocean, the Savannah River becomes the fourth most polluted river in the country. It insults us to the core that we treat the most valuable asset on Earth like a toilet, flushing industrial pollutants downstream to become someone else's problem. It's outrageous. We need more protection for our water, not less.

**Brooks:** The practical value of water is obvious. For drinking, for irrigation, for recreation. The list is endless. It is the aesthetic qualities, the ethereal qualities, that draw me most to water. And water does not stand alone. To be magical, it requires light, and in this part of the world, the surrounding arms of mountains. My favorite part of sharing Lake Jocassee with visitors is their reactions. Joy. Wonder. Sometimes the sharing is wordless, like watching sunrise at the Grand Canyon. Lake Jocassee is our Grand Canyon, our Yosemite Valley. 🌿



Reedy Falls, February 6, 2020

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

# Clean water is a basic human right

**Mary Duckett** is a lifelong activist and resident of Greenville's Southernside community. As president of Southernside Neighborhoods in Action, she has joined community leaders and environmental justice advocates to call for the cleanup of toxic coal tar along the Reedy River, the left-behind results of a manufactured gas plant in the area that closed in 1952. While this contamination has not yet been resolved, Mary has been instrumental in bringing this environmental justice issue to light and engaging the community to ask Duke Energy to clean up the former gas plant site on Bramlett Road.

## WATER ADVOCACY NEWS

### Planning for future floods

**During a flood event on February 6, 2020, the Lake Conestee Dam saw 7,161 cubic feet of water per second at peak flow. That's enough water to fill an Olympic sized pool in 12 seconds.**

Recent flooding around the Upstate has sparked a conversation about how land use and rapid growth have led to increased runoff from storm events.

Fortunately, experts from around the state, including staff from Upstate Forever, are working to plan for future flood events. Learn about their plans and what you can do to support flood reduction efforts at the local level at [upstateforever.org/floodwater](https://upstateforever.org/floodwater).

### Clean Water Act Rollbacks

The EPA's recent attacks on the Clean Water Act have made national headlines, leaving many of us wondering how this impacts our local waterways and drinking water sources. The short of it: Our water resources are left vulnerable by these rollbacks. Learn about the controversy surrounding these rollbacks and how they will affect your local waterways and drinking water sources at [upstateforever.org/CWArollbacks](https://upstateforever.org/CWArollbacks).

I was raised right there in the middle of the coal ash contamination in Southernside. When we were growing up, we were told not to play in it — but just because it made a mess. If you walked in the coal tar you were told not to walk in the house because it would get all on your clothes and your mom didn't want that tracked through the house. We played in it anyway.

People actually ate fish out of the Reedy, too. That was our way of survival. When I was growing up, there were hogs, pigs, cows, chickens, you name it, down in that area along the river. We ate the eggs, the hogs, drank the milk from those cows — and I'm sure that all of that was contaminated, too, because they drank the water out of the tributary down there.

We didn't know then that the coal tar was dangerous. There was no one checking on the environment at that time, especially since ours was a neighborhood of people of color in segregated times. There was no one around to tell us, "This is hazardous to your health." Southernside was an underserved neighborhood, and our area was the dumping ground.

But now we know. There is a massive number of black people that lived in this area who have died or fought cancer that lived right in that contaminated area. I was diagnosed with cancer in 2012.

But I've always been vocal. It's in my DNA to be vocal. I had many mentors that taught me how to be vocal. And I've been saying that mess needs to be cleaned up for some time. I want to make sure that the next generation doesn't come up in the same environment that I did. It's important that we make sure that the quality of life for our youth is one that is going to enhance their lifestyle and their longevity. I want the children to be healthy.

The good news is we have gotten the community's attention. There is a new president here for Duke Energy who is adamant about working with us through SCDHEC and some other neighborhood entities to get that cleaned up. As a matter of fact, they are drilling some more wells right now in the area where I live and grew up.

Rome wasn't built in a day and this mess didn't happen overnight, but I have hope. I want the young people to have a chance at a brighter future and an environment that is safe and healthy. We are on our way. 🌱

I've always been vocal. It's in my DNA to be vocal... And I've been saying that mess needs to be cleaned up for some time. I want to make sure that the next generation doesn't come up in the same environment that I did. I want the children to be healthy.

— **MARY DUCKETT**, PRESIDENT OF SOUTHERNSIDE NEIGHBORHOODS IN ACTION, ON TOXIC COAL TAR ALONG THE REEDY RIVER





CJ Golobish of Liability Brewing

We are spoiled with the quality of water in the Upstate, and I'm thankful for it every day. Let's not take it for granted.

— CJ GOLOBISH, LIABILITY BREWING

#### BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

The availability of abundant, clean water was a key contributing factor when Fujifilm selected Greenwood, SC, as the location for its North American manufacturing facility over thirty years ago. And to this day, water conservation is a priority issue for Fujifilm globally as well as locally. Fujifilm remains committed to the protection and preservation of our precious natural resources, and Upstate Forever plays a key role in this for our watershed and the Upstate in general.

**PAMELA VAUGHN**, FUJIFILM MANUFACTURING U.S.A.

Water plays a vital role in the production of many Milliken products. We use water to purify, transport, clean, cool and protect our operations. In some cases, water is a vital component of our final product that we supply to our customers. Our intent is to responsibly use the water in our operations and return it to the environment in as good a condition as it was supplied to us. We monitor our water consumption and challenge ourselves to continue to reduce this consumption.

**ALLEN JACOBY**, MILLIKEN & COMPANY

Water is the most important ingredient in beer. Beer is a magical explosion of chemical reactions and amazing life processes that happen on a microscopic level. From growing barley and hops - to carrying enough calcium for yeast to live their best life, water is in every step of the process. We spend so much time sourcing quality grains and hops, yet if we get middling ingredients we can still make great beer. If we ever received mediocre water, our beer could never be above average. We are spoiled with the quality of water in the Upstate, and I'm thankful for it every day. Let's not take it for granted.

**CJ GOLOBISH**, LIABILITY BREWING COMPANY IN GREENVILLE



Lake Greenwood / jon holloway

## ECONOMICS OF ECOLOGY

## We should see waterways & forests as economic assets



*Dr. John Quinn is an associate professor of Biology at Furman University and has worked with Upstate Forever to map and identify the most critical lands for water quality protection.*

The proud form of a solitary pine. The flowing curves of a headwater stream. The environmental aesthetic of the Upstate is something most, if not all, of us value, but it can be difficult to quantify. However, the benefits provided by trees and water are important to consider as we anticipate future growth in the Upstate.

My colleagues at Furman and I work to capture multiple values of nature — both relative value and a simple dollar value. For example, our work and others have shown that a forest buffer around waterways mitigates the effects of sediment and nutrient export on water quality. These data suggest that protecting and restoring headwaters and stream corridors will have an outsized impact on water quality throughout the region.

We also found that Greenville residents are willing to pay over \$18 per year over 10 years to support forest restoration. Shifting to water quality, we found a parallel economic value in demand for water quality for both farmers and consumers, suggesting that these groups share a common interest.

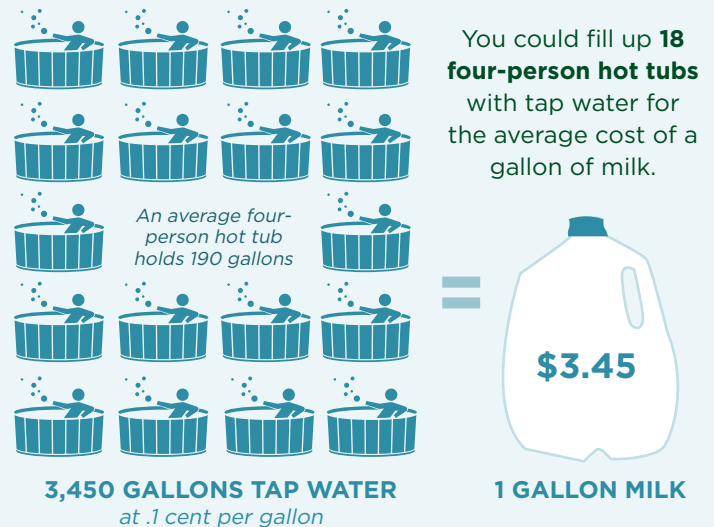
What's next? We need to make these values (economic and otherwise) clear to all citizens of the Upstate. We need to understand what people value in their water, forests, and grasslands, and consider unique ways to collect these data.

However, we need to be careful to not overemphasize economic metrics. Nature, including forests, Piedmont grasslands, and mountain streams, is worth more than a simple economic dollar value. 🌿

## BY THE NUMBERS

### What is clean water 'worth'?

The average cost per gallon of tap water in the Upstate<sup>1</sup> is less than 1 cent. That's pretty low. To put it in perspective,



If soda & tap water cost the same per gallon, your water bill would skyrocket more than **10,000%**<sup>2</sup>



**Yet water is essential for life, food, and prosperity.**

**\$33.4 BILLION**  
**218,719 JOBS**

Contributed by the natural resource-based sectors annually to South Carolina's economy. All of these sectors are dependent on clean and adequate water.<sup>3</sup>



Portion of the US economy that would *immediately* grind to a halt without a reliable & clean source of water.<sup>2</sup>

**19 GALLONS** =

Water needed to grow one apple<sup>4</sup>



Sources:

1. UF Staff Analysis 2. TheValueofWater.org 3. Clemson University 4. Science Media Center

## Take our 5-minute survey for a chance to win!

We want **your** perspective on the value of water! Take our brief survey & be entered to win a \$100 Visa Gift Card, an Upstate Forever 16oz Nalgene® bottle & an Upstate Forever "Be the Upstate" tshirt: [upstateforever.org/VOWSurvey](http://upstateforever.org/VOWSurvey)

WIN A \$100 VISA GIFT CARD & LIMITED EDITION GEAR



OUR WATER ADVOCACY

## Fighting threats to our water

Upstate Forever advocates at the local, state, and federal levels to advance policies that protect our drinking water, as well as the places we love to fish, hunt, swim, and explore. While we look to collaborative solutions first, we also sometimes take legal action to ensure that bad actors are held accountable for causing damage to our waterways. Below are just a few of our recent advocacy efforts.



### Upstate Forever vs. Kinder Morgan

Upstate Forever is partnering with the Savannah Riverkeeper and the Southern Environmental Law Center to hold Kinder Morgan accountable for cleaning up the site of the 2014 spill of 364,000 gallons of diesel and jet fuel near Brown's Creek in Anderson County. Our Clean Water Act lawsuit win in the U.S. Fourth Circuit is currently pending before the U.S. Supreme Court (docket number 18-268).



### Bunched Arrowhead Preservation

Upstate Forever is working with Naturaland Trust, ReWa, and community advocates to identify and protect populations of the endangered Bunched Arrowhead plant. With our partners and local citizens, we opposed two subdivisions that would have been located just feet from the plant's critical habitat. Currently, we are working with ReWa to implement a mitigation project that will improve the quality of the plant's rare habitat, and efforts are underway to expand this area as a protected preserve.



### Coal Ash Removal

Upstate Forever worked with the Southern Environmental Law Center to secure a voluntary agreement with Duke Energy in 2015 for the excavation of the Lee Steam Station coal ash ponds located along the Saluda River in Anderson County. Work is ongoing to move all coal ash to a new lined on-site landfill, but removal of ash from the ponds most at risk for flooding has been completed. We also helped with the effort to stop a proposed coal ash landfill in Pickens County.



### Dominion Pipeline construction damage

Upstate Forever documented and reported significant construction violations at water crossings in Spartanburg County along the path of the 55-mile Dominion Transco to Charleston natural gas pipeline in 2018. These violations caused sedimentation significant enough to shut the intakes at a water utility on the South Tyger River. SCDHEC ultimately fined Dominion for these violations in 2019. Upstate Forever opposed the project from its inception.

***Want to get updates and action alerts when an issue threatens water quality in the Upstate? Go to [upstateforever.org/email](https://upstateforever.org/email) and sign up to receive The Water Log e-newsletter.***

A single acre of wetlands can store approximately 1 million gallons of floodwater.

Source: EPA Report

The Rocky River wetlands in Anderson are prime habitat for many species of plants and animals.

PHOTO BY MAC STONE

#### HABITAT + FLOOD REDUCTION

## Wetlands are the Upstate's unsung heroes



**By Megan Chase**

CLEAN WATER ADVOCATE  
mchase@upstateforever.org

Have you thanked your local wetland lately? No? Just me?

Let's step back; have you even THOUGHT about wetlands lately (or ever)? Wetlands don't always get the respect they deserve, but we should all be celebrating them for the many benefits they provide for our community — naturally and free of charge.

Think of wetlands as a natural sponge — they catch and slow down the flow of water and slowly release it over time, which reduces flooding and erosion downstream. Wetlands also act as natural filters by trapping sediment and removing pollutants through their dense root systems and absorbing excess nutrients through plant uptake. In this way, wetlands are like the kidneys of watersheds, vital to our health and often overlooked.

Wetlands are so effective at cleaning up pollution, in fact, that they are sometimes used to treat wastewater and they make a difference when it comes to treating our drinking water. Forested wetlands even reduce treatment costs for drinking water sources, making them a critical part of our natural water infrastructure.

Here in the Upstate, wetlands provide essential habitat for unique plants, fish, and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species. In the foothills, where there is some of the highest salamander diversity in the world, wetlands and ephemeral pools provide spawning habitat away from predatory fish. In Travelers Rest, rare seeps provide one of only two habitats in the world where the endangered Bunched Arrowhead grows.

With all the benefits we enjoy from wetlands, the successful functioning of our communities is dependent on the health of these special ecosystems. We are all part of a watershed and it is all of our responsibility to protect it. Get to know your watershed like you know your own neighborhood. 🌿



## RECENTLY PROTECTED LAND

## Critical wetlands, streamside properties, and a peaceful forest oasis

Upstate Forever's land trust recently completed five conservation projects, totaling 624 acres of land that are now protected forever.

In Union County, Upstate Forever has helped protect two wetland mitigation projects totaling over 352 acres, which will include wetland restoration and preservation projects providing water quality benefits to Gilkey Creek and the Broad River.

Further, another recent Union County project protects more than 161 acres and over a mile of streambank along Fairforest Creek. This area of Union County is very active with existing, ongoing, and future projects targeting the wide expanses of the Fairforest Creek floodplain.

We also were successful in helping a private landowner expand protections to the historic Mills-Screven Plantation outside of the Town of Tryon, North Carolina. This 75-acre property includes bluffs overlooking the North Pacolet River and other easements stewarded by Upstate Forever. While we typically focus our conservation efforts in the ten-county Upstate region, this property protects headwaters that contribute to watersheds in the Upstate. Ultimately, the property will be owned by an Upstate Forever conservation partner, Conserving Carolina.

Most recently, Upstate Forever permanently protected Kings Mountain Preserve, a 36-acre property in Cherokee County. This peaceful forested oasis will be home to the state's newest green burial cemetery.

To date, Upstate Forever protects more than 23,500 acres across the ten-county Upstate region.

### DO YOU OWN LAND YOU'D LIKE TO PROTECT FOREVER?

*Our Land Trust helps landowners preserve their legacy through voluntary conservation easements. You continue to own the land, and you may realize significant tax benefits. Funding may also be available. For more information, email Scott Park, Glenn Hilliard Director of Land Conservation, at [spark@upstateforever.org](mailto:spark@upstateforever.org).*

### HELP US PROTECT EVEN MORE LAND

*Land protection is the key to protecting what we love about the Upstate. When undertaken strategically, land protection promotes high drinking water quality, recreational opportunities, local food production, biological diversity, and future environmental health.*

*In the face of rapid growth, more funding is needed to protect the Upstate's special places while we still have the opportunity. To take action, visit [upstateforever.org/protect-more-land](https://upstateforever.org/protect-more-land)*

## LAND TRUST ALLIANCE

## Upstate Forever's land trust renews national accreditation

Following a rigorous application process, Upstate Forever's land trust has renewed its accreditation through the national Land Trust Alliance. This process includes a comprehensive review to ensure our organization upholds strong standards and demonstrates sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance, and lasting stewardship.



Accreditation verifies that we are doing our part with the best interests of our stakeholders like our donors, members, and partners in mind, but first and foremost, it is a verification for those landowners that trust us with one of their most precious assets — their land, now and forever.

Our land trust is stronger than ever for having gone through the rigorous accreditation renewal process once again. Our strength means our region's natural assets — from iconic lands like Stumphouse Mountain, Chauga Heights and Nine Times Forest to working farms and special places across the Upstate — will be protected in perpetuity.

In 2008, Upstate Forever became the first land trust in South Carolina to achieve this esteemed distinction that recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. Of more than 1,300 land trusts in the United States, we are proud to be one of just 400 that have earned accreditation through the Land Trust Alliance.



## NEW BOARD MEMBER

### Margaret Harrison

Margaret Harrison, of Pelzer, SC, is retired after a 35-year career as a research administrator with Mitsubishi Polyester Films of Greer, South Carolina. Now a full-time farmer, she is the co-owner of H & G Produce, a family-owned farm established in 2012 that provides a variety of vegetables to the public and to local businesses.

A passionate advocate for local farmers and agricultural issues, Margaret currently serves as the co-chair of the Farm Bureau Women Committee and as an advisor for the USDA FSA committee of Greenville/Pickens County.

Margaret is also currently serving as a member of the Upstate Forever Land Trust Committee. She is married to Bryant Harrison, and they have four daughters and six grandchildren.

She is a long-time member of St. Matthews Baptist Church, where she serves as president of the deacons' wives.

To view all board members' bios, visit [upstateforever.org/board](https://upstateforever.org/board)



*UF Land Conservation Manager Chris Starker (left) with Don & Bettina George on a stewardship visit to their protected property in Oconee.*

 **THE WYCHE SOCIETY**

Membership in the Wyche Society is open to all who support Upstate Forever annually at a level of \$2,500 or above.  
To join, email Aldon Knight, Director of Development and Community Relations, at [aknight@upstateforever.org](mailto:aknight@upstateforever.org)

**BLUE RIDGE**

\$500,000 - \$999,999

Alice Wald

**PIEDMONT**

\$100,000 - \$249,999

Hollingsworth Funds

Diane Smock &  
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**GREENBELT**

\$50,000 - \$99,999

Jolley Foundation

Pete & Sally Smith Foundation  
SCDHEC

**VISIONARY**

\$25,000 - \$49,999

James & Kathleen Barr  
Glenn & Heather Hilliard

**GUARDIAN**

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The Daniel-Mickel Foundation  
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\$5,000 - \$9,999

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Howard Foundation  
Fujifilm Manufacturing USA  
Greenville Housing Fund  
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Neal & Faye Workman

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Hank McCullough & Merietta  
McKenzie  
Charles & Rachelle Mickel  
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Parrott Wealth Management  
Consultancy  
Natural Investments LLC  
Leon & Barbara Patterson  
Piedmont Natural Gas  
Renewable Water Resources  
Riverbend Shoals LLC  
ScanSource  
Linda Schmidt  
Ron Smith  
Spartanburg Area  
Chamber of Commerce  
Spartanburg Sanitary  
Sewer District  
SynTerra Corporation  
Charles & Nancy Thomas  
Jack & Jane Turner  
Adam & Liz Tyson  
William Webster

**SUSTAINER (\$1,000 - \$2,499)**

Ag South Farm Credit, ACA  
Dennis & Judith Allen  
Lukas & Ivey Allen  
Kelley Barnhardt  
Neil Batavia  
John Blair  
Margaret Blair & James Boman  
Blue Ridge Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.  
Robbie & Harold Boman  
Lawrence & Sue Brown  
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Thomas Craig  
Judy Cromwell  
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Earth Design  
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Cecilia Franko  
Friends of the Reedy River  
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Thomas & Mary Lou Hartness  
William & Loretta Hartzell  
Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, PA  
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Emily Hitchcock & Dickey  
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Ed & LeAnne Holcombe  
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Carson & Andrea Johnson  
Mary Etta Johnston  
John & Karen Keith  
Michael & Joan Kellett  
Linda Ketelaar  
Laurens County Water &  
Sewer Commission  
Edwin & Mozelle Lee  
Legacy Advancement  
Miriam Shelden & Lou Kinsey

Joseph & Carole Lyles  
Reverend Al Masters  
John & Stacy McBride  
Marshall & Jennifer Meadors  
Lee Meeder  
Dail Mengelkoch & Gary L Davis  
Steven & Phyllis Morgan  
Edward O'Keefe  
Margaret Pearce  
Dabney Peoples  
Frank & Ashley Phillips  
Marshall & Barbara Pickens  
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Martial & Amy Robichaud  
Herman & Thelma Senter  
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Elizabeth Stall  
Jim & Emelia Stephenson  
Walter Stuckey  
Spartanburg Area  
Transportation Study  
The Spinx Company  
United Community Banks  
John & Janne Vann  
Jack & Kathy Varadi  
Visit Greenville SC  
Herman & John Walker  
Bogue & Elizabeth Wallin  
Wyche Law Firm



Members of Upstate Forever's Wyche Society attended a fall reception hosted and sponsored by McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture in their beautiful office on Augusta Road in Greenville. The event was also sponsored by Money With A Mission, an organization specializing in socially responsible and impact investing. At the event, UF announced that the Land Conservation Director position would be named in honor of Glenn Hilliard to recognize his contributions to conservation in the Upstate. For more information, visit [upstateforever.org/wyche-society](http://upstateforever.org/wyche-society). PHOTOS BY MORGAN YELTON

#### BENEFACTOR (\$500- \$999)

Jay Alden & Mary Jane Simpson  
Robert Ashcraft  
Paula & Stanley Baker  
Richard & Sherry Barrett  
Ada Lea Birnie  
Elaine Brummett  
John & Virginia Cebe  
Elliott Close  
Cornell University  
Crow & Bulman Engineering  
Howard & Kay Daniel  
Zermah Dawes  
Eric & Sara Dellinger  
Dorothy & Steve Dowe  
Alice Eberhardt

Samuel & Margaret Erwin  
William Evins  
Abby Fowler  
Kyle & Carol Gilley  
James & Laura Gossett  
Jennings & Jean Graves  
Bob & Jo Hackl  
Dexter & Marcy Hagy  
Half-Moon Outfitters  
John Hammes  
Jim & Elizabeth Haswell  
Francis & Kellen Heidt  
Joan & William Herlong  
William & Emily Holt  
Terry & Kathy Huggins  
IBM Corporation  
Roy & Margaret Ivey

Ann Jaedicke  
Jain Chem Ltd  
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Anne & Tom Johnson  
Scott & Kim Johnston  
Jason & Amy Johnston  
Lewis & Mary Lou Jones  
Jon René Josey  
Charles & Virginia Lane  
Gloria Larkin  
Laurens Electric Cooperative  
Wood & Janiec Lay  
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Heather Lyndon  
Kenneth Marsh  
Ann McCord

Tom & Suzanne McDaniel  
Foster & Murray McKissick  
Bern & Candis McPheely  
Rex & Wanda Meade  
MUFG Union Bank, NA  
Linda Newman  
Jonathan & Susanne Norwood  
Conyers Norwood  
Pace Jewelers  
Nicola Page  
Partners for Active Living  
Cecilia Radford  
Terry Schager & Stacey Lindsay

Joel & Gaye Sprague  
Mac & Hannah Stone  
Amy Sutherland  
Joelle Teachey  
Arlene & Raymond Teaster  
Reid Thomas  
Tom & Diane Triplitt  
Dean & Beverly Trytten  
Jeannine Varenhorst  
Pamela Weekes  
Chandler Weekes  
The Westin Poinsett  
James Woodside  
James & Margaret Young  
Steven & Teri Zahn

#### TAKE OUR SURVEY

**You could win a \$100 Visa gift card & some limited edition UF gear!**

*Details on page 15*



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L B & Peggy Adams  
Donald & Linda Aldworth  
Michael Aleksinas  
Cliatt & Elizabeth Alewine  
Gilbert & Barbara Allen  
Steve & Justine Allen  
Alexander & Carol Alperin  
David Amberg  
Carl Anderson  
William Anderson  
William & Barbara Anderson  
Joanna Angle & Billy Altman  
Benjamin & Caroline  
Ansbacher  
Arkwright Foundation  
Allen Armstrong  
The Armstrong Law Firm  
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Bruce Bannister  
Jeffrey & Jan Barker  
Scott & Lezlie Barker  
Barbara Barnes & Terry Mitchell  
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Ned & Christy Barrett  
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Lynn Chandler  
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Tim Finley  
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Nick Fisher  
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## At Upstate Forever, protecting our water is personal.

We live, work, and play in the Upstate alongside our families and loved ones. Water is essential to life, prosperity, and happiness — and we're working hard to safeguard our water supply both now and for future generations. Help us protect water by becoming a member of Upstate Forever at [upstateforever.org/donate](http://upstateforever.org/donate).

A photograph of three women standing on a wooden bridge over a body of water, surrounded by trees. They are all smiling and laughing. The woman on the left has long blonde hair and is wearing a black top and a beaded necklace. The woman in the middle has curly blonde hair and is wearing a dark blue sweater. The woman on the right has long dark hair and is wearing a light blue and white striped sweater.

**Our Clean Water team enjoying the view at Lake Conestee Nature Preserve.** (These days we're all working from our homes, but we still have a good time!) From left to right: **Megan Chase** - Clean Water Advocate; **Erika Hollis** - Clean Water Director; **Katie Hottel** - GIS Coordinator



*Pacolet Milliken is pleased to support Upstate Forever in improving the quality of life for all Upstate residents.*