

The Saluda-Reedy WATERSHED NEWS



Photo Courtesy of John Tynan

This vegetated lawn on Lake Greenwood reduces the amount of runoff entering the lake. The riparian buffer to the right helps prevent shoreline erosion as well.

WHERE GREEN MEETS BLUE: Lake-Friendly Landscaping Helps Protect Water Quality

South Carolina's lakes and rivers are among our most valuable resources, supplying us with drinking water, fueling our economic growth and providing places for recreation and scenic beauty. Our lakes and rivers are not without threats, however, and one of the easiest threats to address is the affect lakeshore landscaping has on water quality.

Typical shoreline landscaping includes a wide lawn with short grass usually planted all the way down to the shoreline. In this type of landscape, rain easily sweeps pollutants from pesticides and fertilizers right into the lake, which diminishes water quality and can cause harm to wildlife. Furthermore, bare shorelines are easily eroded and often need to be reinforced

with expensive retaining walls. Luckily, there is an effective and economical alternative to typical lakeshore landscaping—lake-friendly landscaping.

Lake-friendly landscaping techniques are a viable alternative to typical lakeshore landscape practices and can mitigate the problems associated with typical landscaping while providing a tool for managing water quality in Lake Greenwood.

For example, lake-friendly landscaping can reduce the need for fertilizers and pesticides in a yard since it emphasizes planting native, water tolerant vegetation along the shoreline in what is known as the riparian zone. The plants in this buffer zone simultaneously filter contaminants from runoff as it flows (*Continued on Page 3*)

WELCOME TO THE SALUDA-REEDY WATERSHED NEWS!

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep citizens and leaders throughout the Upstate up to date on the progress of the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium's efforts to ensure clean, healthy, and abundant water for all.

Each issue includes updates on a variety of Consortium projects, as well as information on upcoming events of interest to watershed professionals, local officials, and concerned citizens.

WHAT IS THE SALUDA- REEDY WATERSHED CONSORTIUM?

The Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium 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 rivers and lakes of the Saluda-Reedy watershed.

As our region grows, the shift from rural to urban land use has the potential to do lasting damage to rivers, lakes, and streams - unless we develop with care.

The goal of this project is to provide local leaders and the public as a whole with the tools and information they need to take good care of our rivers and lakes.

FACES OF THE WATERSHED:

Greenwood County Engineer Larry Smith



Larry Smith is the Greenwood County Engineer. He recently shared his thoughts on the importance of Lake Greenwood to the watershed with us.

Can you describe the work you do as the County Engineer and how it is important to Lake Greenwood and the Saluda-Reedy Watershed as a whole?

Well my job actually encompasses a broader scope than just Lake Greenwood, including a number of county functions from floodplain management to subdivision approval and management of county property. Within the areas of work that I do there is great possibility for improving protection of Lake Greenwood and the watershed. For example, we can do work to limit peak flows of stormwater in floodplains through requirements for detention and proper enforcement of existing regulations. In addition we can we can also enforce standards for silt control.

What steps is Greenwood County taking to maintain water quality in Lake Greenwood?

Currently, we are working through our pier-permitting program to detect point source releases of pollution into the lake that can be controlled and requiring that land-owners address these problems.

What do you see as the biggest threat to Lake Greenwood and the Saluda-Reedy Watershed?

To me the biggest long-term threat we face is population pressure leading to an increased demand for the water flows that feed the watershed. In spite of the many other threats facing the watershed, this problem worries me the most because its impact is long term and requires multi-faceted solutions.

Why do you believe it is important to carefully manage development around our lakes and rivers?

Well, because development done properly has less of an impact on our lakes and rivers. Improper development, on the other hand, can be extremely detrimental to water quality in the watershed, leading to problems with sedimentation and contaminants in our water.



Photo courtesy of Ben Keys

Lake Greenwood shown at early morning.

Why is water quality in Lake Greenwood dependent on the actions of businesses and residents upstream along the Saluda and Reedy Rivers?

Our society uses our waterways as its disposal system. For those of us downstream, that means we are the disposal system for the entire Upstate. We are the repository for what upstream residents decide to discard as litter.

What advice do you have for residents living along the lake and those elsewhere in the watershed to protect the water quality in Lake Greenwood?

Examine your own actions first. We all add silt, sediment and nutrients to the water in our watershed. While not all of us are the major offenders, we each need to do our part and clean up our own yards and properties first before we can effectively tackle the major issues.

For more information about the Greenwood County Engineering Department, visit <http://www.co.greenwood.sc.us/engineering.aspx>. For more information about Lake Greenwood, visit South Carolina State Parks at www.southcarolinaparks.com.

RESTORING NATIVE HABITATS:

Partners for Trout help Palmetto Bible Camp Retrofit Lake's Dam

When the Palmetto Bible Camp in northern Greenville County ended last summer, a construction crew went to work retrofitting Lake Friddle to help improve trout streams. A structure, built in the 16 acre canoe and swimming lake, now siphons cold water from the bottom of the reservoir to release into the creek below the dam. This colder water is not only a favorable spawning habitat for trout but also for the aquatic insects that the fish eat. This is good news for anglers and the economy too: trout fishing contributes \$17 million annually to the state's economy.

This work is part of an ongoing project known as *Partners For Trout*, a collaborative effort begun in 1998 to improve "quantity, function and sustainable productivity...as it pertains to coldwater mountain trout resources in SC." This particular dam retrofitting project was completed with support from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service,

the Foothills RC&D Council, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the SC Dept. of Natural Resources, Upstate Forever, the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium the Oconee, Pickens and Greenville Soil and Water Conservation Districts and several private groups.

The existence of trout in a stream is an indication of pristine water conditions. However, as trees have been cleared from stream banks prior to agriculture or development in the past few decades, shady riparian areas have disappeared, making water warmer. Streams in Greenville, Pickens and Oconee counties above Highway 11 are now being monitored for temperature, turbidity and oxygen levels to gauge the favorability for trout habitat.

Palmetto Bible Camp is the fifth site in Greenville County where this type of apparatus was constructed in the *Partners For Trout* project. Other bottom water release structures were built at Asbury Hills Methodist Camp, Croft Stone's Pond and two at Camp Old Indian.



Photos courtesy of Greenville Soil and Water Conservation District

Pictures showing the construction phase and completed retrofit, which will restore the creek to a trout-friendly habitat below the dam.

WHERE GREEN MEETS BLUE

(Continued from Page 1) into the lake and minimize erosion by providing cover to the shoreline. This riparian buffer is reinforced with other shrubs and trees planted throughout the yard, creating additional habitats for native plants and animals.

You don't even have to sacrifice your view, access to the lake or the beauty of your lawn in order to utilize lake-friendly landscaping techniques! A variety of low-growing native vegetation planted along the shoreline can have tremendous benefits for water quality and erosion prevention. Additionally, many of the plants appropriate for lakeshore landscaping are ornamental and can be planted along with other aesthetic vegetation, making a lakeshore lawn beautiful and functional.

Interested in learning more? Come to the next Wa-

tershed Leaders Forum at Lake Greenwood State Park in September (details found at <http://www.saludareedy.org/events.html>) and visit the Resources and Reports section of our website at <http://www.saludareedy.org/resources/resourcesandreports.html#lakefriendly>.



Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*) is one of numerous regionally native plants that can be planted in lakeshore buffers to reduce runoff and erosion.



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WANT MORE INFO ABOUT THE PROJECT?

Contact Upstate Forever,
 Saluda-Reedy Project Coordinator, at
 (864) 250-0500 or srwc@upstateforever.org

Interested in attending the next
 Watershed Leaders Forum?

Treading Lightly on the Shore: The Role of Residents & Developers in Keeping Lakes Healthy

September 21, 2006 4:00-7:30 p.m.
 Lake Greenwood State Park

Contact John Tynan (jtynan@upstateforever.org)
 or visit the project website at
<http://www.saludareedy.org/outreach/forums.html>

LEARNING IN THE FIELD: Outings Highlight Key Issues



Water Quality Field Trip attendees learn about stormwater management.

The Saluda Reedy Watershed Consortium recently completed a series of Water Quality Field Trips and Watershed Tours highlighting topics from “Innovative Stormwater Management on Small Urban Sites” to “The Impacts of Land Use Change on Lake Greenwood.” Organized by Consortium-partner Upstate Forever, these events drew more than 100 attendees. Toni Able, a Lake Greenwood resident, commented, “I have been exposed to a great deal of information through these programs. Please consider attending an event so you too can learn about what’s happening in our watershed.” A new series of field trips and tours begins in the fall. Visit <http://www.saludareedy.org/events.html> for more info!