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Grant improves quality of Big Generostee Creek

BY ALISON GLASS
Anderson Independent-Mail

Wayne Hayes sometimes noticed excess water and an odor in his yard before he learned about a program that would help him pay for septic system repairs.

"It couldn't have come at a better time," Mr. Hayes said about the letter he received regarding the program.

The work at Mr. Hayes' home on Hazelwood Avenue in Anderson ended several months ago and cost him \$950 after he was reimbursed for half of the amount of the total bill, he said.

Others still can take advantage of the same initiative.

A \$250,000 federal grant that Anderson County and the Clemson University Co-

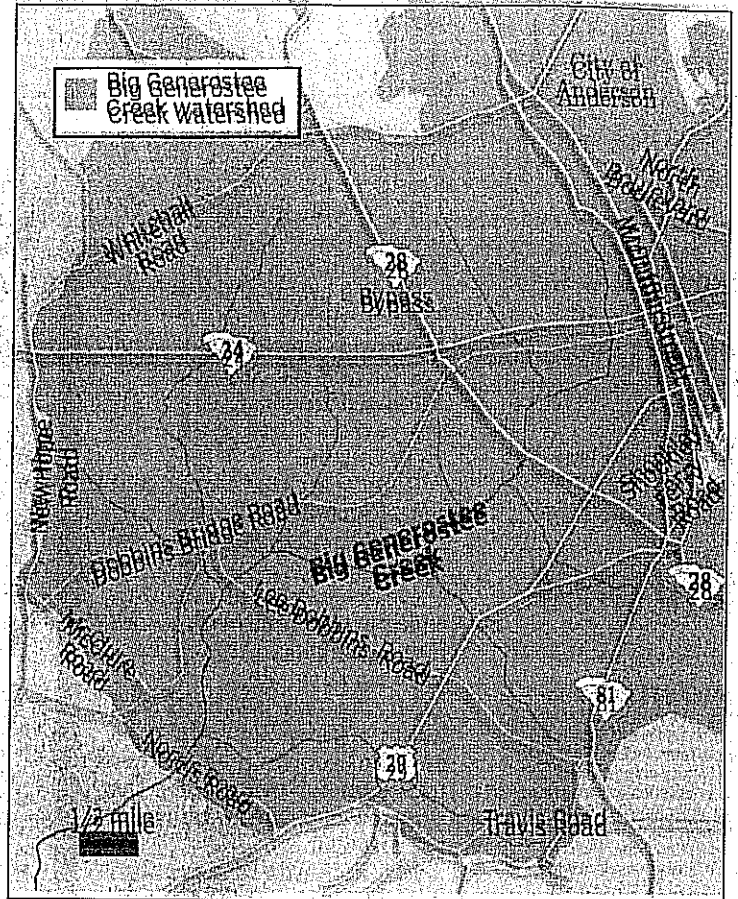
operative Extension Service received in March 2005 is supporting septic system repairs, education campaigns and other efforts to reduce pollution in the Big Generostee Creek.

"What we're trying to do is improve water quality in the Generostee watershed," said Morris Warner of the Extension Service.

Big Generostee Creek repeatedly has been in violation of federal guidelines for acceptable levels of fecal coliform bacteria, Mr. Warner said.

Fecal coliform is relatively harmless to humans, he said. But measuring levels of that subgroup of bacteria is an easy, economical way to monitor the presence of animal waste in a water

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Federal grant money is supporting efforts to improve water quality in the Generostee watershed.

Grant available until December

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system. Animal waste can carry a number of microorganisms that are quite harmful to people, Mr. Warner said.

Some of the grant money is available to help Generostee watershed residents pay for projects that will reduce fecal coliform levels.

A property owner can receive reimbursement, for example, for up to 50 percent of the cost of repairs to a failing septic system at a rural residence, Mr. Warner said.

Cost sharing also is available, he said, to install fences to keep cattle out of streams and to set up alternate water sys-

tems for cattle that use a stream as a water source.

The program has led to the repair of 15 septic systems so far, and five others are in line for fixes, Mr. Warner said. Money remains available for more cost sharing, he said.

The \$250,000 of federal money represents 60 percent of the total that will be spent when local money is included, Mr. Warner said.

The projects supported by the grant will end in December, Mr. Warner said. Call (864) 226-1581 for more information.

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