

February 16, 2006



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium produces
the first ever State of the Watershed report**

The Saluda-Reedy Watershed, stretching from the Blue Wall in northern Greenville and Pickens counties to the dam at Lake Greenwood, has become the best-studied watershed in the state. For more than two years, teams of scientists and researchers from universities, state agencies, consulting firms and non-profit organizations have studied the watershed from multiple angles. When more than a dozen research projects concluded in mid-2005, the findings were pulled together in a comprehensive, yet user-friendly report called the State of the Watershed 2005.

What does the report say?

The State of the Watershed 2005 provides a historical overview of the watershed and examines the key threats to water quality today. The two most significant threats are erosion and sedimentation and increased stormwater and flooding, primarily caused rapid, poorly-planned development throughout the watershed. The report then discusses a range of strategies to improve water quality, including better enforcement of erosion and sediment controls rules, implementing innovative stormwater management techniques, and protecting our floodplains as parks and open space.

What is the Saluda-Reedy watershed, and why is it important?

The Saluda-Reedy Watershed is the entire land area that drains to Lake Greenwood. It encompasses over 1100 square miles, includes nearly 1500 miles of streams, and is over 80 miles long. "Though its boundaries are subtle and pass unnoticed by most of its residents, what happens within our watershed has a real impact on our rivers – and on our quality of life," explains Jennifer S. Rennicks, project coordinator for the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium.

From the falls of the Reedy in downtown Greenville to Lake Greenwood's tranquil shores, the rivers and lakes of our watershed are central to what makes the Upstate such a special place. They are also a critical element of the natural infrastructure that keeps our economy strong. "Future growth depends on protecting water quality – not just in the rivers themselves, but across the watershed as a whole," Rennicks said.

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 quality and abundance of water in the Saluda-Reedy basin. The Consortium includes a wide variety of partners from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors that are working together to provide assistance, support and science-based information to state and local agencies and the public in addressing the immense challenges that confront the watershed.

The work of the Consortium is made possible by the generous financial support of our funders, the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation and Fuji Photo Film Inc. The V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation is a charitable foundation that supports causes in Greenwood and throughout South Carolina. Fuji Photo Film Inc., whose principal U.S. manufacturing facility is in Greenwood, also supports this project and others in the Greenwood community and throughout South Carolina.

Who can I contact for more information or to obtain a copy of the report?

The State of the Watershed 2005 can be accessed online through a specially created Web Portal on the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium's website: <http://www.saludareedy.org/sotw.html> or by contacting the Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium.

Jennifer S. Rennicks
Project Coordinator, Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium
Upstate Forever, P.O. Box 2308 Greenville, SC 29602
864-250-0500
jrennicks@upstateforever.or
www.upstateforever.org
<http://www.saludareedy.org>.

#####