



Targeted Watersheds Grant

Saluda-Reedy Rivers, SC



Lake Greenwood receives stormwater from both the Saluda and Reedy Rivers, giving rise to related problems including nutrient loading, which can cause algae blooms.

Photo by Dave Hargett



Reedy River in Falls Park has been at the heart of revitalization in downtown Greenville, SC.



Rivers run red with sediment during even small rain events in the Upstate.

Upstate Forever

The Watershed

The Saluda–Reedy watershed is comprised of the Reedy River and the Saluda River. The Reedy River originates just north of Greenville, South Carolina and flows through the heart of downtown Greenville. It then travels through rural lands in its lower portions until reaching Lake Greenwood. The less-developed Saluda River begins in the mountains along the South Carolina–North Carolina border and flows through tracts of intensively farmed land. About 75 percent of the Saluda River basin is still forested; however, water quality problems are still a major concern. Recently, this largely rural watershed has been facing increasing urbanization and development pressures.

Issues

The topography of the watershed promotes a development pattern that is particularly detrimental to water quality. The oldest and most intensive development in the region has occurred along the ridge tops where there the land is the flattest. Consequently, the headwater streams are most likely to be burdened with uncontrolled stormwater impacts. Since the upper Reedy River is heavily urbanized, it suffers from flashy hydrology, bank instability, and heavy sediment loads. Upstate Forever is focusing on three priority issues to reverse the degradation of the watershed:

- creating incentives for adoption of low impact development (LID)
- helping local governments address legacy stormwater issues
- addressing the compromised state of the urban rivers

Projects

- **LID Decision-Making Tool:** This new tool will help quantify the economic benefits of several LID techniques, which reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater runoff. Developers wishing to participate in the stormwater mitigation bank must use the LID Tool to ensure their development will be “water friendly” enough to qualify for participation in the mitigation bank.



Saluda Reedy Watershed

Project Partners:

- City of Greenville
- Greenville County
- Furman University
- Clemson University

Leveraged Resources:

EPA Grant: \$800,000
Match in non-federal funds and
in kind services: \$300,000

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- **Stormwater Mitigation Bank:** The bank will harness a market-based trading system to improve the quality of stormwater runoff. Developers that implement LID techniques in Greenville County may be eligible to buy stormwater mitigation bank credits that allow them to receive complete or partial waivers from detention of some stormwater requirements. The County of Greenville will sell credits to developers and use the funds to retrofit older stormwater outfalls, thereby capturing the dirtiest "first flush" of stormwater runoff.
- **Floodplain Restoration Bank:** Working with the City of Greenville, a development density bonus will be established in the downtown Reedy River Corridor. Developers wishing to receive a density bonus will be required to purchase restoration credits from the city. The funds from the restoration bank will be used to restore floodplain function, which will increase the quality of the river in the downtown area.



EPA's Targeted Watersheds Grant program is a competitive grant program designed to encourage collaborative, community-driven approaches to meet clean water goals.

For more information about the selected watersheds, please visit:
<http://www.epa.gov/twg>

840-F-08-001E