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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**\$1.5 MILLION COMMITTED TO
SALUDA-REEDY WATERSHED PROJECT**

The Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium is pleased to announce the award of two grants totaling \$1.5 million that will launch a comprehensive project focused on the Saluda-Reedy watershed. The V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation has pledged \$1 million over two years, and Fuji Photo Film, Inc. has made a commitment of \$500,000 over five years. The grants were announced today as part of a ceremony at Fuji's manufacturing facility in Greenwood where the company also unveiled plans to undertake a \$100 million expansion and to begin using a totally integrated process for manufacturing a significant new line of medical imaging products. The Saluda River and Reedy River flow through one of the most rapidly growing and developing regions in the country. Within the 1,165 square mile watershed above Lake Greenwood, the population is increasing at the rate of approximately 32 people per day, while open land is being converted to development at the rate of about 23 acres per day. The Saluda-Reedy Watershed Consortium was formed 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 principal members of the Consortium are:

- Upstate Forever, which serves as the Project Coordinator
- Pinnacle Consulting Group
- Clemson University: Jim Self Center on the Future
- South Carolina Water Resources Center
- Clemson Institute of Environmental Toxicology
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

Other members include:

- The Conestee Foundation
- Friends of the Reedy River
- SpectroTech, Inc.
- Furman University: Departments of Economics and Business and Earth and Environmental Sciences
- Lander University: Department of Biological Science
- Upper Savannah Land Trust

Brad Wyche, Executive Director of Upstate Forever, said, "There is no doubt that the Saluda-Reedy watershed will continue to experience dramatic growth and change. Nor is there any doubt about the urgent need to plan for this growth to ensure that our water resources are protected to meet all of the demands of this increasing population—for drinking water, tourism, recreation, economic development and waste treatment." Wyche cited, as an example, that wastewater discharges into the Reedy River are projected to increase from the present amount of 34 million gallons per day to 51 million gallons per day by 2015; discharges into the Saluda River are projected to increase from 13 to 31 million gallons per day. For both rivers, that is almost a two-fold increase in less than 15 years. Moreover, stormwater runoff and sedimentation associated with rapid development in the watershed are having a serious adverse impact on water quality.

The Consortium has designed an integrated and comprehensive program of actions, demonstrations and studies with the ultimate goal of improving water quality throughout the Saluda- Reedy Watershed. The project is divided into the following eight major tasks:

- 1. Land Cover:** To determine the current uses of land in the watershed.
- 2. Growth Model:** To predict the extent of future development in the watershed if current development patterns continue unchanged.
- 3. Economic Evaluation:** To evaluate the economic impact of water use and wastewater discharges.
- 4. Water Quality:** To collect and analyze data needed to truly understand the causes and effects of water quality problems in the watershed.
- 5. Riparian Lands:** To identify, protect, and restore important lands along the Saluda and Reedy Rivers and their principal tributaries.
- 6. Education:** To improve public understanding and appreciation of watershed issues and problems.
- 7. Performance:** To monitor compliance with regulatory standards in the watershed and to assess the effectiveness of those standards.
- 8. Integrated Watershed Management:** To develop a plan for comprehensively managing the resources of the watershed based on long term, sustainable objectives and to advocate for appropriate policies to protect and improve water quality.

Over the next few weeks, the specific scope of work under the two grants will be defined. The grants will not enable the Consortium to complete all of the tasks, but additional funding will be sought for the remainder of the project.

The V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation, named for the founder of VELUX, has made a number of significant grants in South Carolina over the last 12 years, many of which have been for environmental initiatives and projects. Since Fuji Photo Film opened its North American manufacturing and research and development headquarters in Greenwood in 1988, the company has accompanied each major expansion announcement with a donation to the community. Past contributions have included the Greenwood Community Children's Center, the John and Holly Self Drummond Environmental Education Center at Lake Greenwood State Park, and the Fujifilm Women's Imaging Center at Self Regional.

Wyche said, "This project should be viewed as supplementing current programs and as a way of assisting communities, local leaders and agencies in addressing watershed issues. The work to be done will be based on facts and science, which will enable the consortium to better understand the nature and causes of the problems in the watershed and to identify solutions and remedies to those problems. The Consortium is absolutely committed to working with the public and all stakeholders to achieve the goal that everyone shares—clean, healthy and abundant waters for the Saluda-Reedy Watershed."

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