

LOCAL CONSERVATION GROUP HOSTS ITS ANNUAL MEETING

(November 12, 2024 – Greenville, SC) This year’s Friends of the Reedy River (FoRR) Annual Meeting was held in the Water Discovery Lab Conference Room at Renewable Water Resources (ReWa) from 5:30 to 7:30 pm on Tuesday, November 12th, and was open to all FoRR members.

FoRR recognized Colonial Pipeline as a 2024 Best Friend of the Reedy River for generously supporting them through the Colonial Pipeline charitable contributions program in both 2023 and 2024. Senior Right-of-Way Inspector, Brandon Grooms, accepted their award. Several employees including Colonial Pipeline’s local Operations, Right-of-Way, and Environmental groups joined FoRR in a litter sweep in Spring 2024, kicking off a meaningful partnership. FoRR recognized Joe and Diane Maniscalco as the 2024 Best Friends of the Reedy River for consistently donating their time volunteering at multiple events annually and for their engagement in our local conservation network.

Keynote speaker Holley Owings, Principal Landscape Architect and co-owner of Earth Design, presented the concept plan for FoRR’s upcoming riparian restoration project. Earth Design is a full-service landscape architecture and environmental design company based in Greenville. They specialize in innovative green infrastructure and stormwater design, provide in-depth ecological assessments, and excel at native habitat restorations such as streambanks, wetlands, and meadow establishment.

Four new board members were elected for a three-year term in 2024: Trenton Whitfield, Elizabeth Milhous, Sarah Baucom, and Greg Placone. The 2025 Executive Committee positions are as follows: Scott Butler (President), Pam Moore (Vice President), and Elisabeth Schatke (Treasurer). The Secretary position is currently open.

2024 has been a banner year for FoRR. They continued growing the water quality monitoring program through SC Adopt-A-Stream. They promoted the passage of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) which includes strengthened buffer protections, enhanced open space requirements, expanded tree protections, and measures to reduce urban sprawl in the county. They also issued a “New Development Checklist” offering options to developers for non-regulatory Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect the watershed. FoRR mobilized 200+ volunteers at their Spring River Cleanup and 240 volunteers at their Fall River Cleanup, removing approximately 14,000 lbs of trash and 200 tires from the Reedy and its banks. They participated in several educational and outreach events such as iMAGINE Upstate Steam Festival, “Imagine a Day Without Water” hosted by the Greenville Water Collective, and TD Saturday Market.

Founded in 1993, Friends of the Reedy River is a 501(c) (3) non-profit, volunteer-based, conservation organization dedicated to promoting, protecting, and restoring the Reedy River. They carry out their work through river cleanups, riverbank restoration, educational events, and water monitoring programs. Friends of the Reedy River is transforming the river through on-the-ground, grass-roots efforts. www.FriendsOfTheReedyRiver.org

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