The Watershed Ecology Center’s mission is to collect, analyze, and disseminate sound scientific information on the ecology of the region. Special emphasis is placed on watershed conservation, education, water quality and the study of organisms living in the area encompassed by a watershed. The center serves as a repository for regional ecological information, providing education and research assistance to individuals, communities, local schools and governmental organizations. The WEC is also dedicated to providing research opportunities for the facility and students at the University of South Carolina Upstate and other regional institutions. The Watershed Ecology Center is located in the Horace C. Smith Science Building on the campus of the University of South Carolina Upstate.
The Director's Corner

Hi! Well, according to the weather, my favorite season has finally arrived! After a wet, muggy summer I sure am ready for these cool, crisp days. Fall here at the Center has meant finally getting cleaned up from Summer Camps, learning new curriculum and marking storm drains. Last year I got permission from Chesnee City Council to mark all the storm drains in the city limits, but between summer camp and all the rain, it didn’t happen until a few weeks ago. We spent a few days in Chesnee marking all the storm drains we could find.

As fall goes on, we plan to get more storm drains marked to let citizens know that the water flows directly to a nearby body of water with no filtration of any kind. As I am making the storm drains, I have found that I have many opportunities to share this information with passersby, who in most cases are surprised to find how storm drains work, or have never really given them any thought. Maybe I’ll see you in your neighborhood soon. Have a great Fall!

-Dr. Jack Turner

Charlie at Paddle Fest

That Charlie sure does get around. In the last newsletter he attended the Discover Your Watershed event at Lyman Lake Lodge. You probably remember the picture of him enjoying his delicious barbeque. Well here he is again! Charlie attended the Second Annual 2013 Paddle Fest held Saturday, July 20 at Lake Blalock Park. Charlie really appreciates Spartanburg Water for hosting the event which included educational paddle tours, canoe, paddleboard, and kayak classes, demonstrations, and races. Charlie was happy to be there and he was busy passing the word around about the importance of protecting our watersheds. The water today provided great recreational fun for Charlie and everybody there.
The Watershed Ecology Center is currently booking educational programs for the 2013-2014 school year. We are already off to a busy start presenting programs every day to students in kindergarten through high school. Since the beginning of the year, we have served a total of 3,266 students in public, private, and home school groups in Spartanburg County and Blue Ridge community schools. Each educational lesson is correlated to the South Carolina science standards and most of them are offered free of charge. Many programs include live animals and artifacts that are housed at the Watershed Ecology Center. If you are interested in booking a program, please contact Lanita Wilson at lwilson@uscupstate.edu or call 864-503-5728.

The Watershed Ecology Center has classroom kits, a lesson in a box, which includes all the supplies and materials needed for the program. They are available for the teachers to check out when needed. Upon the teacher's request, we will deliver the kit to the school and pick it up when finished. The teacher's enjoy having the lesson with all the needed supplies available and ready to use.

We have been busy expanding our curriculum this year to include programs in other areas of science. We are beginning to offer math programs for students in grades 2-6. We are also offering chemistry programs to kindergarten, second, third, fifth and seventh grades. All these programs also meet South Carolina standards.

We are videoing many of our educational programs, so teachers will be able to preview lessons on line. This will help the teachers correlate the programs with their curriculum.

Not only do we have programs for students, WEC also has many adult programs for community groups. We have a wide range of programs to choose from, so it's easy to pick the program that best suits your group's interest. Contact Beth Button at bbutton@uscupstate.edu or call 864-503-5728 for more information.

Think Green

It's that time of year again when students are busy preparing and getting ready for school. When looking for supplies shop wisely and think about eco-friendly products. It's really surprising the wide range of green products available, just about all the supplies needed in schools. You will have a smaller impact on the earth when buying eco-conscious products and know you are doing your part to help the environment.
The Watershed Ecology Center would like to thank our donors, the City and County of Spartanburg, and the following water districts: Spartanburg Water, Blue Ridge Rural Water, SJWD, Woodruff-Roebuck, and also Dr. Larry Roël, and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Cobb. WEC has over forty programs, and currently adding more, that we are presenting to kindergarten through eight grade students in all Spartanburg County School Districts, public and private, plus the Blue Ridge community schools. Your donations and support made it possible for us to educate schoolchildren and other organizations about how important it is to protect our watersheds and maintain good-quality water, not only for drinking, but for recreation, to protect the fish and all the wildlife.