

Annual Report to the People

October 2011
Union County



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Mission Statement

The mission of the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service is to provide sound, scientifically based information to South Carolinians and help them use that information to improve the quality of their lives.

Union County Clemson Extension and the Enoree River...A Continuing Partnership

Five years ago, Union County Extension, and specifically Union County 4-H, embarked on a mission to promote better stewardship of the Enoree River. A three-year DHEC 319-C TMDL grant was the catalyst for the endeavor, but the effects have far surpassed the life of the grant. The initial grant promoted best management practices for livestock, repair of failed septic systems, and educational programs for youth and adults in the watershed. Two of the major educational programs initiated during the grant were the Annual Enoree River Sweep and the 4-H20 Enoree River Adventure Daycamp for youth. An Enoree River Education Board was formed at that time, as well, to serve in an advisory capacity.

At the completion of the grant in 2009, a solid volunteer base had formed in the watershed, and the one-time advisory board began to transform into the Enoree River Watershed Association. Their mission, "to form a partnership among diverse community interests to raise awareness of the economic, agricultural, ecological, and recreational importance of the river; and to restore the Enoree River system to the highest practical level of environmental quality," reflects their continued desire to be stewards of the river.

In order to continue the level of educational programs, grants were actively sought, with positive results.



Observing Macro-Invertebrates collected for the stream assessment

In 2011, the Enoree River Watershed Association received a grant from Champions of the Environment to teach water monitoring techniques to citizen volunteers, and a Community Grant from South Carolina Palmetto Pride to cover costs associated with printing a brochure about the Enoree Watershed Association.
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Union County 4-H Focuses on Natural Resource Programs

Union County 4-H underwent a radical change in 2011, due to retirements and reduced working hours, but our 4-H program is still alive and well. Competent and willing volunteers stepped in to keep clubs running, and help with day camps and other special events. Retired county agent Anne Brock, was brought back in February of 2011, funded by Union County's Title III grant, and partnering with Clemson University. In keeping with the Title III mission, most of our 4-H programs have focused on forestry and natural resources this year.

Our annual 4-H Expo, held on February 12, 2011, showcased all the 4-H programs and clubs available to Union County youth. Volunteers were on hand to visit with youth and their parents, and tell them about the many 4-H opportunities available. A great interest was shown in shooting sports, and hunting related activities. As a result of this, volunteer leaders worked toward starting a 4-H Shooting Sports club. Three volunteer leaders received their certification in rifle and began a BB gun club in the late spring. Since then, the club membership has grown, and volunteers have been busy fund raising to purchase more guns, team jackets, and caps for future competitions.

The Food and Cover Establishment for Wildlife, or F.A.C.E., project had a record number of participants this year, as well. Fourteen youth received the five pound bag of mixed seed to plant their one quarter acre food plot. Participants planted their food plots, and monitored them

throughout the summer for wildlife visits. They each completed, and turned in a record book or record sheet, to show the progress of their food plot project. The food plots were judged by our forestry agent, and awards made to the best food plot, and for completed record books and record sheets.

In keeping with our natural resources and forestry theme, our summer day camps and overnight camps focused on wildlife habitats, and attracting wildlife to your backyard. Youth enjoyed learning how to grow container gardens, and entomology from a volunteer who leads a year around 4-H Bug Club. 4-H Discovery Camp, a week-long program, concentrated on a different topic each day, from backyard birds, to bats and other mammals, to snakes, lizards and alligators. The week was filled with hands-on activities such as building bird houses and painting gourds for purple martin houses. One of the highlights of the week came when Mr. Rick Willey, a wildlife specialist from Clemson University, brought his snake collection, alligator, and an array of wildlife skulls and furs for the children to enjoy. Most of the day campers found the courage to touch, or even hold one of the non-poisonous snakes.

For those youth who truly wanted to experience the great outdoors, a two-night primitive camping event was held at Chester State Park in June. Youth from Chester, York, Lancaster and Union pitched tents and slept under the stars by night, while they fished, swam, learned GPS skills and shooting sports during the day. Campfires, hotdogs and s'mores rounded out this traditional 4-H camping experience.

2011 was indeed a year dedicated to teaching youth to appreciate the natural environment, and to learn more about the animals, insects and reptiles that share our world.



4-H'er Logan Vinson holds a snake at 4-H Discovery Camp



4-H'ers examine Macro-Invertebrates at the Enoree River Adventure Camp.



4-H FACE Plot

Extension Has Numerous Scholarships for Union Residents

Union County has numerous scholarship opportunities for residents that are seeking a higher education. Many of these scholarships are funded by organizations that directly work with the extension office on a daily basis.

The Union County Horse Club sponsors a \$500 scholarship. Students majoring in an agricultural related field are

eligible to apply. The Union County Livestock Association also offers a \$500 scholarship with the same criteria.

The Union County Agricultural Fair Association offers two scholarships to Union County Residents. There is a \$1000 scholarship that is offered to a person majoring in an agricultural related field. There is another \$500 scholarship offered

to a person attending an approved college or university.

These organizations recognized the importance of education and agriculture in Union County. They want to ensure that young people today have the ability increase their knowledge on agriculture and hopefully give back to the agricultural community through their education.

Enoree River (Continued)

The Champions of the Environment grant funded a water monitoring training at Musgrove Mill Historic Site. Fifteen volunteers participated in the training, taught by Morris Flexner of the EPA. After a short “classroom” lecture where volunteers learned about the various classifications of macro invertebrates, the group headed to the river armed with D-nets, kick nets, pans and tweezers. The remainder of the day was spent collecting specimens to perform a stream assessment using the Isaak Walton reporting forms. With the remainder of the grant funds, water monitoring kits were assembled and distributed to the trained volunteers, who in turn, will monitor the river at designated sites through spring of 2012.



Learning about Dissolved Oxygen

The second grant received by the Enoree Watershed Association paid for the publication of a quality flyer describing the Watershed, and its programs and goals. These flyers are being placed throughout the watershed with the hope of increasing interest in the stewardship and use of the Enoree River.

With the help of Palmetto Pride, the 5th Annual Enoree River Sweep was held on May 2, 2011. There was excellent participation by volunteers, both adult, and 4-H youth. Volunteers scoured five access points along the Enoree, from Horseshoe Falls to Keith's Bridge, and floated the river, to pick up a total 2,250 pounds of garbage.

Summer would not be complete without our annual 4-H20 Enoree River Adventure Daycamp. Youth from Union, Clinton, and Woodruff enjoyed three days of getting back to nature. Canoeing, macro-invertebrate studies, nature walks, fishing, crafts, plenty of snacks and ice cold watermelon made this camp one of the summer's best. Campers were taught the same macro-invertebrate stream assessment techniques as the adult volunteers had learned earlier in the spring.

The diligent work of this Board/Association, partnering with Extension and local governments, the Forest Service, and many volunteers is a true success story. Their goal is to protect the quality of this beautiful river so that it can continue to provide water for local residents, wildlife, and recreational opportunities for future generations.

Find Us On Facebook

The Union County Clemson Extension Service has created a Facebook page to keep local clientele updated. This page is used to announce upcoming meetings, 4-H programs, answer questions and provide seasonal information. For instance, if a client brings a garden pest in it is posted on the facebook page along with a link to information and control measures for that particular pest. This page is also used to list office closures and other important information. So find us on facebook and like us so you can stay informed with what is going on in Union County. Search for Union County Clemson Extension Service or visit us at :

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Union-County-Clemson-Extension-Service/181436118561307>

The Forestry Natural Resource Team also has a facebook page that focuses primarily on natural resource related issues across the state. That page can be found by searching for FNR/Clemson or you can visit our page at:

<http://www.facebook.com/fnrclemson>

<http://www.clemson.edu/extension/county/union/>

The Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.

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Union Extension Office Keeps Regular Hours

Despite what you may hear, the Union County Clemson Extension Office is still open and still operates on a regular schedule. Last year the office lost three key personnel due to retirements. Thankfully, two of those key people have been hired part-time while one is hired full-time.

Anne Brock is currently working 20 hours a week as the 4-H coordinator. With the help of volunteers she has been able to maintain a strong 4-H program on a part-time basis.

Pam Ray is currently working 20 hours a week as the administrative assistant. Her primary hours are 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. Monday through Friday. If you have soil samples or

office needs it is recommended that you visit or call between those hours. While we try to keep the office open 8:00 am to 4:30 pm there are times when we need to close the office to make field visits in the afternoons. This is not often but sometimes does create an inconvenience for our clients that we would like to try and prevent.

Mike Loveless is currently working full time as a livestock agent. However, he is an area agent so we share him with Laurens and Newberry County. On average Mike can be found in Union County 2-3 days a week. It is recommend that you call ahead and schedule a visit with Mike to ensure that he will be in Union.