



Congaree Creek (Photo by Sara McGregor)

Congaree Riverkeeper is committed to protect and improve water quality, wildlife habitat, and recreation on the Congaree, Little Saluda, and Lower Broad Rivers through advocacy, education and enforcement of environmental laws.

River Watch

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Carolina Water Service Updates

Tomorrow, February 1st, the Town of Lexington is scheduled to officially take over Carolina Water Service's I-20 wastewater treatment system. The Town expects to divert the flow of wastewater from the regional sewer system and permanently end the discharge to the Lower Saluda River by February 14th. You can read more about The Town of Lexington's condemnation and purchase of the system to eliminate the CWS I-20 discharge in [this article from The State Newspaper](#).

In [another recent article about wastewater discharges on the Lower Saluda River](#), The State reported that CWS is now

Thank you to local businesses [Access Analytical](#), [Haircuts With Karen](#), and Guignard Associates LLC and for their recent donations supporting our work.

On Thursday, Feb. 1st SCDNR is hosting a public meeting to discuss designating a portion of the Lower Saluda River as a catch-and-release-only zone for trout. [Meeting details here.](#)

Earlier this month, we released our 2017 Sewer Spill Report. The good news is that the total spill volume was the lowest it has been in the 5 years we've been compiling this report. The bad news; there was still a lot of sewage spilled into our waterways. [Read the full report on our website here.](#)

Last week, we conducted our regular water monitoring at ten river and stream sites across the Midlands. [See the full results for January's monitoring here.](#)

On Sunday, Feb. 11th, we are hosting a volunteer cleanup along Congaree Creek. [You can find more details and sign up on the event page here.](#) Space is limited so sign up soon.

Want to learn about volunteer water quality monitoring? Our partners at the Richland Countywide Stormwater Consortium are

actively working with both the City of Columbia and Richland County to also eliminate the discharge from their Friarsgrove Wastewater Plant near Saluda Shoals Park.

In other Carolina Water Service news, the company announced earlier this month that former DHEC director Catherine H. H. will take over as president of CWS in early February, just months after leaving the State's environmental agency. This quick transition from top regulator to the private sector has raised some ethics questions, laid out in [this article from Post and Courier](#).

River Rocks Festival 2018

You're invited to the eighth annual River Rocks Music Festival. Join Congaree Riverkeeper on **Saturday, April 14th** for a day of community fellowship, fun, and LIVE music on the banks of the Congaree River. Proceeds will benefit Congaree Riverkeeper and will enable us to continue advocating for our region's precious natural resource: our rivers! Learn more at [riverrocksfestival.com](#).

This year's music lineup includes:

Dumpstaphunk **Stop Light Observations** **The Broadcast** **The Mobros** **Dead Swells**

State House Action Alerts

There is a lot going on at the State House right now, and we need your voice to help protect our environment and our rights.

The Automatic Stay: There are a pair of bad environmental bills on the house floor right now that will take away our rights and make it harder for citizens to protect our environment and their communities. Please contact your Representative now and ask them to Save The Automatic Stay and OPPOSE S.105 and H.3565. [Click Here To Take Action On The Automatic Stay.](#)

Dam Safety Reform: In a span of two years, more than 100 dams failed across South Carolina, but our legislature has not passed common-sense dam safety reform. Last year the House passed a dam safety bill, H.3218, but that bill stalled in the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Please contact your Senator and ask them

hosting a pair of Adopt-a-Stream training workshops at Congaree National Park on March 3rd and 10th. [Learn more and see all upcoming Adopt-a-Stream event here.](#)



support H. 3218 and pass dam safety reform. **[Click To Take Action On Dam Safety.](#)** [You can also read about dam safety in this recent article from The Newspaper.](#)

Plastic Bag Bans and Home Rule: The plastic bag industry is trying to prevent local communities from addressing a serious issue of plastic pollution by banning local plastic bags (yes, you read that correctly, banning bags). Not just an environmental problem, but it is also an attack on South Carolina's long held policy of "home rule." **[Click Here To Take Action on Plastic Bags.](#)**

You can keep track of the legislative issues we and our conservation partners are working on by visiting the [Conservation Coalition Action Center.](#)

Visit our website at <http://www.congareeriverkeeper.org>.
Donate to our cause at <http://congareeriverkeeper.org/become-member>.