

Pickens landscaper helping restore Furman Lake

By Michael Campbell
Staff Writer

mcampbell@pickenscountycourier.com

PICKENS — Pickens landscape architect Rich Huffman is proud to be involved in returning the lake at Furman University to its original natural beauty.

He will tell members of the Upstate Chapter of the S.C. Native Plant Society about the process at its meeting April 15 at 7 p.m. at Greenville Tech at McAlister Square, 225 S. Pleasantburg Dr. in Greenville. The meeting is open to the public.

In his presentation entitled "Why Aren't They Cutting the Grass? The Furman Lake Restoration Project" Huffman will describe the work his company EarthDesign will do to reha-

bilitate Furman Lake, which has gradually become a warm, shallow, stagnant mass of algae.

"The theme behind our work at the lake is to enhance the water quality by establishing shoreline buffers and repairing erosion and bare ground areas," Huffman said. "Over the years, with an over-abundance of water fowl and shallow depths, Lake Furman has become stagnant and a source for algae blooms.

"We are honored to be a part of the vision and commitment of the university to become a leader in environmental stewardship for college campuses," he said.

The school contacted with Huffman's company, located in Pickens, to help the campus meet the ambitious goals of Dr. Wade Worthen, a Furman biol-

ogy professor who heads up the project.

"When we create vegetation and change the habitat we will create a more diverse ecosystem," he said. "There will be different kinds of plant and animal life and a natural system will draw different kinds of birds. Butterflies will return to the area.

"We envision the lake becoming an even more valuable resource for Furman and the surrounding area," he said.

Huffman's presentation will focus on the design process he used to create a comprehensive restoration plan for the lake and its surrounding watershed.

The lake is to be dredged to a depth of eight to 10 feet and its shoreline stabilized.

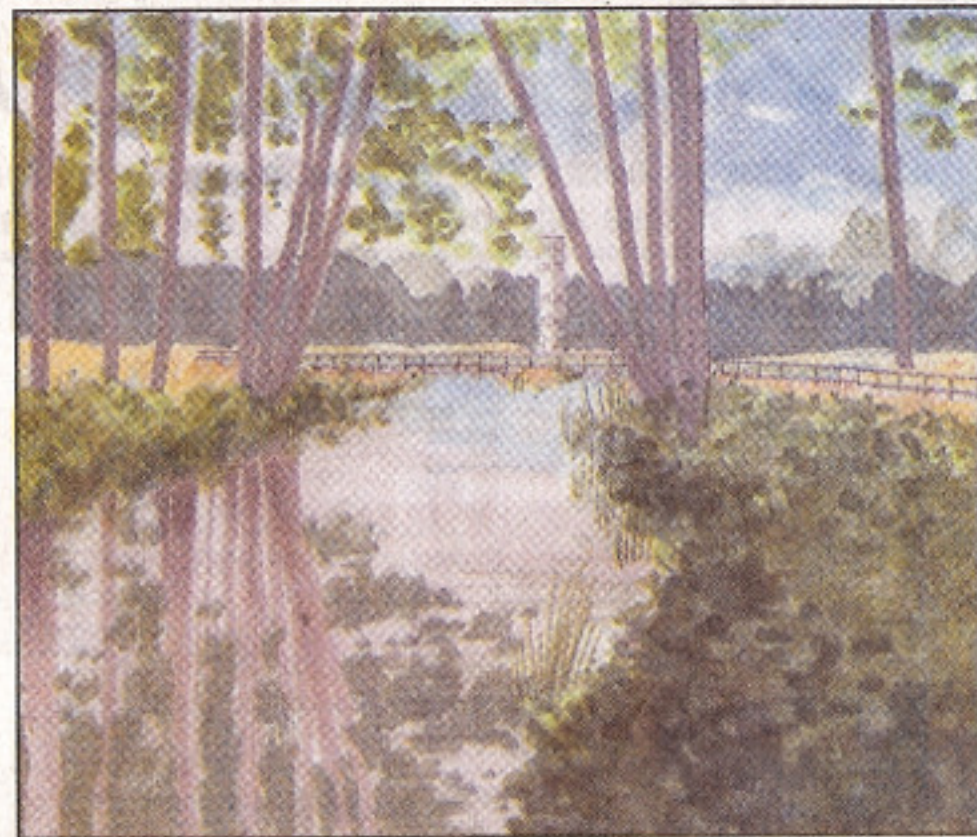
Wetland, or marsh islands,

will slow the two streams that flow into the lake, absorbing pollutants and excess nutrients. Many plants will be added, including aquatic plants, marginal aquatic species and wet and upland meadow plants, and rain gardens will be created in appropriate areas.

Huffman is probably best known in this area for his work on the natural habitat garden and water feature at the Pickens County Museum of Art and History.

"That's a fine example of how to practice stewardship by education and awareness of the wonderful geology and associated plant communities of our county," he said.

Huffman holds a BA in landscape architecture from the University of Georgia. He is owner of EarthDesign, a landscape architecture and environmental design firm located in Pickens and has more than 26 years experience in designing and executing natural habitats.



He was instrumental in founding the S.C. Native Plant Society in 1996. The society is a non-profit organization committed to preserving and protecting native plant communities in the

state. Meetings of the Upstate chapter alternate between Greenville and Central.

For more information visit the Web site at www.scnps.org.