



Press Release FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2017 Waccamaw Conference “Innovation on the River: Past, Present, and Future”

Saturday, February 11th 2017
1:00 pm – 4:00pm
Horry County Museum
805 Main Street Conway, South Carolina 29526

Winyah Rivers Foundation and its Waccamaw RIVERKEEPER® program along with its partners, North Inlet - Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium, and Horry County Museum, invite you to our **FREE, FAMILY FRIENDLY**, community education event to learn about and experience the ways this community interacts with, understands, and is inspired by our rivers.

This year’s theme, “Innovation on the River: Past, Present, and Future”, was inspired by the transformative affect our rivers have had on this community over the years. The rivers define not only our landscape but also our economy, our health and well-being, and our quality of life. The term innovation spans all disciplines and we intend address many of them; art, history, natural history, technology, biology, chemistry, ecology. Science is the basis for our organization’s practices but the core of our mission is based on a more general passion and appreciation for our rivers. As with all of our educational activities we strive to increase this community’s literacy of the way our rivers serve this community. A community that understands the benefits that its natural resources provide is far more likely to protect them.

The Horry County Museum, the host venue for this event, is loaded with history of our watershed and participants will be able to freely tour the museum throughout the event. The Museum’s Director, Robert W. Hill IV, will speak about the region’s history in relation to our river. Our partners from NI-WB NERR, USGS, SC DNR and our very own water quality volunteers will be talking about current and cutting edge research tools and efforts deployed on our rivers. CoCoRaHs will be demonstrating their successful meteorological citizen science project. Sierra Club’s Winyah group will walk you through a safe kayak excursion of the river. Local authors of children’s book authors will be doing readings from their books about Flash and Fancy, otters living on the Waccamaw. Artwork from Winyah Rivers Foundation’s photo contest

will be displayed. The Friends of South Carolina will be bringing real live local animals for you to meet. The Waccamaw Tribe will be sharing artifacts from the native inhabitants of this area and last but not least, students (K - 12th grade and post-secondary) will be participating in a poster contest highlighting their individual, group, club, or school project / research relating to science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) and our local water resources (January 18th is the registration deadline).

Join us and experience the innovations on the river that brought our ancestors to this region and will keep this community on a path of progress and prosperity for years to come.

Winyah Rivers Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization with the mission to protect, preserve, monitor and revitalize the health of the lands and waters of the greater Winyah Bay watershed. www.winyahrivers.org.

North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, located in Georgetown, SC was established in 1992. The mission of the Reserve is to promote healthy estuaries, and thriving ecosystems through research and education. It is 1 of 28 reserves around the coastal United States that form the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. <http://www.northinlet.sc.edu/>

Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium was established in 2004 to assist local governments to meet federal requirements for stormwater education and public involvement. This includes programs for diverse audiences within the Waccamaw River Basin and coastal watersheds along South Carolina's northern coast. www.cwsec-sc.org

The Horry County Museum was established in 1979 and opened its doors to the public in 1981. The Museum focuses on the history, pre-history, and natural history of Horry County, S.C., and educates the public about these subjects through exhibits, outreach programs, and events www.horrycountymuseum.org.