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# THE PALMETTO PADDLER

May 2001

<http://www.midnet.sc.edu/paddler>

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## OFFICERS for 2001:

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**Charlene Thompson:** Safety and Instruction

The Palmetto Paddlers meet on the last Tuesday of each month in the Gamecock Room of the Luther Lee Building, corner of Lincoln and Lady Streets in the Vista, Columbia, SC at 7:00 P.M. (Map: <http://www.midnet.sc.edu/paddler/meeting.html> ) See us on the Web at <http://www.midnet.sc.edu/paddler>. Download a membership application at <http://www.midnet.sc.edu/paddler/webapp.pdf> .

The upcoming meetings are: **May 29, 2001**- Brenda Davis of the South Carolina Chapter of the Nature Conservancy will speak. Note: The meetings for June, July, and August will be on the Saluda or Congaree. **June 26, 2001:** Meet at the Zoo at 6:30 to run from the Zoo to Gervais Street. For those who do not want to run the river, meet at Willy's in the Vista for a social hour. **July 31, 2001:** Meet at the Zoo for the summer picnic. Bring a covered dish. **August 28, 2001:** Probable Congaree trip from Gervais Street to the Cayce landing. Meet at 6:30 pm at Gervais Street. For those who do not want to run the river, meet at Willy's in the Vista for a social hour. This is a non-whitewater stretch of river and is a good opportunity to run it if you never have.

The Palmetto Paddlers, Inc. is a non-profit corporation. Its purposes are to (1) encourage exploration of recreational waterways, (2) encourage preservation of waterways, i.e., conservation of forests, parks, wildlife, (3) promote enjoyment and appreciation of wilderness cruising and whitewater sports, (4) promote safety/proficiency in rescue/self-rescue, and (5) publish and demonstrate developments in all aspects of paddling.

**Please pay your dues (\$15 for individuals, \$20 for families) if you have not. Mail to The Palmetto Paddlers, Inc., P.O. Box 984, Columbia, SC 29202-0984 You need a membership card to take advantage of the great discounts listed below.**

### \$\$\$\$ MEMBERSHIP PAYS \$\$\$\$

Show your membership card and receive 10% discounts on non-sale merchandise at **Adventure Carolina** ( <http://www.adventurecarolina.com>), **The Backpacker**, **The Nantahala Outdoor Center** ( <http://www.noc.com>), and **The River Runner**. **Bike to Nature** also gives a 10% discount on merchandise other than bikes.

## Upcoming rips

**June 1 to June 3:** Nolichucky: Ed Walshe will lead an overnight trip on the Nolichucky. This is not through the gorge and will be a relaxed trip and is suitable for experienced children. However, if you plan to bring kids, please be sure to contact Ed first. The group will meet Friday at Uncle Johnny's Nolichucky Hostel (<http://trailjournals.com/journals2.cfm?trailname=107&autonumber=2989>) (423-735-0548 ). Plan to either camp or stay in a hostel cabin Friday night. We will start the trip Saturday morning and camp on an island in the river and take out on Sunday. The water is warm like the Congaree. It is a clean, rocky, class 2 float with a lot of easy cruise stretches. The small mouth bass fishing is some of the best in the East. Erwin, Tennessee (<http://www.pe.net/~rksnow/tncountyerwin.htm>) is a neat little town with good places to eat out. If it does not rain, this trip may have to be cancelled, so please be sure to contact Ed.

Ed Walshe plans to float an oar-rigged raft, fishing along the way. He may be able to carry some gear for others. Call Ed or at 749-2845 or email to <mailto:edwal@msn.com>.

**June 15 to June 17:** Nantahala: Rembert Milligan will lead a trip down the Nantahala River. If you have some experience and have never run this river, this will be a great time to do it. We will camp at Lost Mine Campground (within walking distance of the NOC and a nice place to camp. Contact Rembert (<mailto:rembert.milligan@worldnet.att.net>) if you are interested.

See <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/1101/>. Space is limited so please let Rembert know as soon as possible. You may also rent duckies and equipment (including wetsuits) from the NOC at <http://www.noc.com>.

**June 30 to July 1:** Broad River: Steve Soltys will lead a trip on the Broad River. The reach will be from the Sandy River access to Highway 34 through the Sumter National Forest. See <http://www.topozone.com/map.asp?z=17&n=3817173&e=461203&s=200&size=m> for a map of the route. To get to the Sandy River access, from Whitmire take Highway 72/121 toward Chester. Approximately 1 mile after you cross the bridge over the Broad River on the right side of the highway is Forest Road 406. There is a sign indicating the boat ramp. Take road 406A and follow it until you come to the boat ramp. This will be an overnight canoe camping trip. Contact Steve, <mailto:paddler@sc.rr.com>, 732-5662 if you are interested. See <http://svinet2.fs.fed.us/r8/fms/rec/canoetri.htm> for the Forest Service description of the river.

**July 20 to July 22:** Chatooga/N.Tyger/Nantahala: This is a water dependent trip given the time of year. Contact Dave Mullis (<mailto:djm@sc.rr.com>) if you are interested. A last minute decision will be made as to the destination.

**August 4:** Lake Murray - (full moon paddle) This trip, due to distance, is limited to sea kayaks. Contact Ed Walshe (<mailto:Edwal@msn.com>) if you are interested.

**August 10 to August 12:** Nantahala: See June 15 trip. The details are the same.

**August 25:** Augusta Canal: Dave Mullis will lead a day trip on the Augusta Canal. Constructed in 1845, enlarged in 1875, and designated a National Heritage area in 1996, the Augusta Canal along the Savannah River in Augusta, Georgia, survives as one of the most intact canal systems in the United States. Its original multipurpose mission of transportation, hydropower, and water supply makes it one of the best national examples of an efficient and fully integrated industrial canal system. Today, the canal remains part of the City of Augusta's water supply system, continues to supply hydropower to two textile mills, and provides outstanding educational and recreational opportunities. We will canoe a 3.5-mile stretch and see headgates, locks, fish ladders, and other historic structures along the towpath. Herons, alligators, and bobcats will share the Canal with us. See <http://www.augustacanal.com> for more information. You can see where the Augusta Canal parallels the Savannah River on this quad:

<http://www.topozone.com/map.asp?lat=33.5567&lon=-82.0437&size=l&s=25>. Contact Dave at <mailto:djm@sc.rr.com> if you are interested. For pictures of last year's trip, see <http://boonedocks.net/travel/georgia/augusta.html>.

**September 30:** Middle Saluda: Steve Soltys will lead a trip on the Middle Saluda. The reach will be from SC 121 to SC 395. . Contact Steve, <mailto:paddler@sc.rr.com>, 732-5662 if you are interested.

### **The President's Trips and Words About Karma**

I finished finals today, and later joined the officers at the library for our monthly meet. Momentarily (by the time you read this, I'll be back at school) free from the cycle of reading and assignments, I was elated. Parkin quickly reminded me that I was long overdue for some trip reports to fill out the newsletter. My memory being the mid-life entity that it is, I pulled out my calendar to remind me of where I've been...

I did get some whitewater in before classes started in January. Chris Sparks joined me on the **French Broad** on the 13<sup>th</sup>. His wife Amy and her sister rounded out the group, but neither of them paddled with us. Saturday dawned frigid, as winter asserted its grip on Western North Carolina. I had spent the night toasty in my cabin at the campground, and questioned my sanity for volunteering to lead this outing. The thermometer in the van was reading in the upper 30s as we rode to Barnard. I packed my drybag with my nifty new heating packs, and some extra fleece. Surprisingly, I ran into a friend at the put in. Peter Van Gieson was on the river with two other CCC members. While we never really paddled together that day, it was reassuring to have some other folks out there on the river with us. Thankfully, the sun was high in the gorge, and we never got cold. There were spots on the river that were frozen over. Eddies sported ice, and feeder creeks cut through them in black ribbons. We paddled past a rock that had about six inches of snow on it.... guess our timing was good, because it was in the sun as we passed! We took out at Stackhouse, as the level was pitifully low. It would have been nice to paddle up to our campground at the takeout, but the windy flats at low water are just not fun, especially with the winter sun glaring into your eyes. That night, we feasted on camp cuisine, drank plenty of beer, and made the obligatory visit to the Hot Springs Spa. Aaaaahhhhh. Nothing like those hot tubs on a cold night. The following day we hiked the Big Laurel, mostly covered in ice. Sadly, we missed the Iceman Challenge here on the Saluda. Andy Grizzell just managed to beat Brad Whitmill to the title. I returned home to find his photo on the front page of the Metro section of the State, diving from his kayak into the river with his toes perfectly pointed. I'm issuing a challenge here and now to all of you hardy souls for next year's event. I think we need a geezer category!

My next outing was to have been **March 3<sup>rd</sup> on the Black River**. Formidable forecasts made Robin Roecker, our trip master, postpone the outing till the following Saturday. This trip was in tandem with the Sandlapper Seayakers. Palmetto Paddlers were well represented by Rembert Milligan, Ernie Stogner, Brian O'Cain, Robin Roecker, Ian Kustafik and me. I learned a couple of lessons that day. One was more like a reminder: pack the night before. In my haste to leave the house early Saturday morning, I left Ian's PFD behind. I realized this as we approached the designated meeting spot at the takeout. Some trip leader/safety boater I am. These Sandlappers were going to think I was nuts. Reading the map upside-down, I made a wrong turn. I turned around a few minutes afterward, realizing that I was now headed out of town. As we crossed back over the river, I slowed to admire what fate had so graciously deposited on the road: a brand new red and black life vest. It must have fallen off someone's boat. Ian and I both claimed the good karma. He wore the vest gratefully that day, and we both sent prayers of thanks aloft.

The other lesson that I learned was to trust that inner voice of mine when it comes to river judgment. My inner voice had previously told me that a canoe on flatwater amongst a crowd of sea kayaks would be at a disadvantage. The counterpoint to that voice, however, was in the convincing form of my teenage son. In the past year, his height and power have surpassed my own. I watched proudly this past summer as he learned to lift a canoe single-handedly, and to guide it downriver carefully. He insisted that he was up for this challenge. Gullible soul that I am, I allowed him to solo paddle that barge down the Black. Well, really, after lunch, I paddled it, as he was plumb worn out. In spite of our slow progress, it was a beautiful day on the river. The company was outstanding; the Seayakers are a wonderful group of folks. A number of folks camped at the takeout and continued downriver the next day.

My most recent trip was a visit to hallowed ground: the **Chattooga**. Even though a third year of drought looms, we managed to find enough water to run Thrifts to Woodall. Dave and Dianne paddled tandem with Rembert, Ernie and myself in kayaks. Clayton Burton from Foothills Paddlers and two of his friends joined us.

## More Sedate Trip Reports

### **Cedar Creek:** Submitted by Steve Soltys.

On March 31 eight boats full of Palmetto Paddlers got together for the seven-mile run on Cedar Creek from Bannister's Bridge to Cedar Creek Landing. The group had originally thought about doing Turkey-Stevens Creek but decided to switch venues because Turkey-Stevens was still at a dangerous water level. The water in the Swamp was at an ideal level, with a reading between 6 and 7 feet on the DNR Cedar Creek gauge.

The first two miles of the trip are slow going as the creek is narrow. With downed trees often only one area is passable and that is often only one canoe wide. It is critical to have precise boat control to stay out of the brush along the creek since the moccasins which we saw probably would not take kindly to a paddler barging into them. There was only one portage. On the positive side, this stretch is scheduled to be cleaned out this spring and summer. Overall, this section is pretty well marked with signs marking the trail. After this initial section, the creek widens and is very easy paddling. The entire section is beautiful paddling. In addition to the snakes, bird life abounded. However, the best part was the scenery consisting of huge loblolly pines, cypress, tupelo, and swamp oak along the creek.

On this trip you will pass two foot bridges. Both bridges serve as junctions for several trails and you can easily mix a paddle and hike. Also about 100 yards past the first bridge on the right you will see Wise Lake through about fifty yards of trees. You can paddle into Wise Lake, explore its open waters, and then return to Cedar Creek. When you get to the third footbridge you have gotten to your take out.

Two final points: I often put in at Cedar Creek landing and paddle up stream to Wise lake and then back. It is a rewarding trip and avoids the need to set up shuttles. Also, make a point of visiting the new park visitor center. It is really nice and doing the three mile boardwalk loop is also a must if you have never done it. The Congaree Swamp National Monument is a world-class natural attraction and one you should become more familiar with. For photos of this trip, see <http://boonedocks.net/travel/scarolina/cedarcreek2001.html> and check out the link to the Photo Album, courtesy of Mike Boone.

### **Edisto River:** Submitted by Steve Soltys.

On February 10 and 11 Parkin led a group of two sea kayaks and three canoes on a delightful overnight trip on the Edisto from the Highway 21 Bridge at Whetstone Crossroads to the Green Pond Church river access. It was a distance of 13.5 miles. The river in this section had a steady current which made paddling easy and no white water. However, the banks have plenty of strainers. While these are easy to avoid if you know how to control a canoe and read where water is going, this is not a section for beginners to learn on. There are frequent sand bars to pull off on at the low to moderate river level we had that day. But the best part of this stretch is that there are few houses on the river and much of it is river bottom forest. Toward the end you do come upon some 30-40 foot high bluffs along the river.

If you do this trip, it is extremely important to make sure that you follow a special procedure at the take-out when setting up your shuttle. Otherwise you run a better than average risk of missing the take-out and facing an additional seven miles to Colleton State Park. First, the Green Pond Church Access is on a dirt road located about twenty-five yards from the junction of SC 61 and SC 217. The access is at the end of the dirt road. It is critical to have a boat with you when you set up the shuttle. Before you leave the take-out, you should take the boat off your car and paddle up the swamp branch that the access is on. You will canoe about a quarter mile and then will come to a larger ox-bow branch. Take a right and in about 100 yards you will come to the river. Memorize the features and maybe do what Parkin did. He took an empty Sprite Bottle, tied it to a branch where the oxbow meets the river so that it would be an obvious signal to us. Otherwise, you will pass several places which look identical and increase the chances of missing the takeout. I will tell you that you will pass a distinctive tree house on your left when paddling down the river from the put-in that should serve as a signal that the take-out oxbow will soon be on your right. Across from the take-out oxbow is a sandy bank on a small island.

We camped on a sandy bank with a swamp (which was dry from the drought) behind us. There are supposedly two designated primitive camping sites along this stretch of river but we never saw them. So we just made sure there were no houses in sight and that we were below the low water mark. The sand showed that there were plenty of turkey, raccoons, and deer in the area. The cool weather made for no bugs or snakes. The same might not be true during the summer. One final note: The put-in is privately owned and they charge two dollars per canoe to launch or take-out and you can park your cars there. The place is lighted at night and twenty five yards from where you park your car lives a police officer who leaves his car in the drive way. We left most of the cars at the put-in and only one at the take-out (which is a little isolated). The owners of the put-in are trying to develop it into a campground.

### SOME LEGAL STUFF

The Palmetto Paddler is a publication of The Palmetto Paddlers, Inc. Views and opinions expressed in articles and editorials are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the official views and policies of the Palmetto Paddlers, Inc. The Palmetto Paddler is not copyrighted, and all material published herein and not individually designated as copyrighted may freely be copied, reprinted, republished or otherwise disseminated to any other paddling organization. Credit is appreciated. CAUTION: Paddling is dangerous and rivers vary on every trip. You are responsible for your own trip decisions. Trip summaries are for your convenience and cannot be relied upon to be accurate on any given day or for purposes of determining safety on a river.

### Conservation Issues

A lot is going on right now that will impact paddle sports in this area and nationally. Please take some time to let your thoughts be known on these issues.

**Columbia Hydro Relicensing:** The relicensing is proceeding for the relicensing for Columbia Hydro. This is the small power plant at the base of the Columbia Canal near the Gervais Street Bridge that is powered by the Columbia Canal. Licensing agreements will restore flows to the 3.5 miles of the Broad and Congaree rivers historically dewatered by the dam. Flows will range from 550 cfs to 900 cfs, a 5-10 fold increase over the existing flows. Flows far exceed the 343 cfs determined necessary for navigation by the Department of Natural Resources. The dam is the only impediment that blocks canoe/kayak navigation from the Peak area on the Broad River to the Atlantic Ocean (assuming one uses the navigation locks at Lake Moultrie). Pressure needs to be brought to bear on DNR to insist on a portage around the low head dam at the upper end of the Columbia Canal. You can contact Dr. Sandifer (Director of DNR) as follows: Dr. Paul A. Sandifer, Director, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 167, Rembert C. Dennis Building, Columbia, SC 29202, <mailto:sandiferp@scdnr.state.sc.us>. Please send copies of any communications to Gerrit Jobsis, SC Coastal Conservation League/American Rivers, Inc., 1207 Lincoln Street, Suite 203-C, Columbia, SC 29201, <mailto:scribers@bellsouth.net>.

**Saluda River Sewage Discharges:** Carolina Water Systems has requested a modification to its current Section 208 Permit (NPDES Permit Number SC0035564) to allow permanent sewage discharge into the Saluda River. The discharge is on river right just below the I-20 bridge. On low water paddles, you may have seen the discharge bubbling up there. Without this modification, all discharges from this location were to be stopped with the discharge routed to the Cayce treatment plant by a regional distribution system that has already been constructed. The issue is now at DHEC for consideration. Please contact Mr. Doug Fabel (<mailto:FABELDJ@columb32.dhec.state.sc.us>), SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201 and let him know of your opposition to this plan allowing permanent discharge of sewage into the Saluda.

**Burroughs and Chapin:** It is time to seriously watch and give input to the Burroughs and Chapin (Green Diamond) development. *The State* has reported that Green Diamond is seeking annexation into the City of Columbia. The interesting thing about this is that, according to a report in *The State*, the hiring of attorneys



at The McNair Law Firm, P.A. and at Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd has resulted in two members of Columbia City Council, Hamilton Osborne and Frannie Heizer, having to withdraw from all consideration of any issues pertaining to Green Diamond before the City Council. It was also reported that Mayor Coble did not feel that he had to withdraw even though an attorney from his law firm is reportedly on the board of Burroughs and Chapin. This issue requires constant vigilance and public input.

**River Gauges:** According to AWA (<http://www.americanwhitewater.org>), the Bush administration is recommending a 40% cut in funding for USGS stream gauges. Please write our elected representatives and point out the importance of a good gauging system. See the AWA site for some detailed points. Email and mailing addresses for US Congressmen and Senators by zip code are available at <http://www.congress.org>.

### **PALMETTO PADDLERS ON THE INTERNET**

To increase efficiency for communicating information to club members, Palmetto Paddlers has set up these internet resources. We need to be able to communicate meeting programs, trip plans, and schedule changes quickly and efficiently. Given the nature of what we do, plans are always changing because of the weather and the water. The Club has a web site, courtesy of Midnet, donated to non-profits by the University of South Carolina. See <http://www.midnet.sc.edu/paddler>. We will try to keep trip plans and schedules up to date on this site. For a more general means to communicate, a list-serve for The Palmetto Paddlers has been established at eGroups. If you are not familiar with a list-serve, it is basically a mailing list of people that have registered with the list-serve. Any member will be able to post a message to the list-serve, which will be e-mailed to other members. This could be a good way of communicating trip plans, meeting information, changes in plans, and other information of interest to the membership. It should be particularly good for last minute changes. To subscribe, go to [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Palmetto\\_Paddlers/join](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Palmetto_Paddlers/join). This has not been very effective so far. Please consider subscribing. We could save a lot of money by distributing newsletters and other information over the web.

### **SAFETY LINKS**

The AWA Safety Code is available at <http://www.awa.org/awa/safety/safety.html>.

Take a look at [http://www.jps.net/lon/river\\_rescue/river\\_rescue.html](http://www.jps.net/lon/river_rescue/river_rescue.html) for some good information on river safety and rescue.

**Conservation Information:** Monitor these sites for conservation matters affecting paddling: American Canoe Association's Action E-List: <http://www.acanet.org/acanet.htm>, American Whitewater Affiliation: <http://www.americanwhitewater.org>, American Rivers: <http://www.americanrivers.org>, the Hydropower Reform Coalition: <http://www.hydroreform.org>, and Trout Unlimited: <http://www.tu.org>.

### **PLEASE HELP US WITH OUR RECORDS**

**We are trying to improve the accuracy of our records. Please email any corrections to your name and address to me at <mailto:t.hunter@sbar.org>. Also, please send me your email addresses as well. Please join eGroups and check the homepage. See section captioned "PALMETTO PADDLERS ON THE INTERNET".**

**Palmetto Paddlers, Inc. – Membership Application**

Dues are \$15 per year for individuals and \$20 for families. Membership is for January 1 - December 31. Make checks payable to Palmetto Paddlers Inc., sign the Waiver and Release of Liability, and add any additional family members below. All paddlers MUST sign. Mail check and application to: Palmetto Paddlers, P.O. Box 984, Columbia, SC 29202-0984.

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND RESPONSIBILITY AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY**

I \_\_\_\_\_, in consideration for membership in the Palmetto Paddlers and to become a joint adventurer in Palmetto Paddler activities hereby declare as follows:

1. I understand that boating and other activities in which I will engage with the Palmetto Paddlers are inherently dangerous and will expose me to various hazards, both natural and manmade, which could result in significant risk of injury (including permanent disability and death) as well as sever and economic losses. The hazards and dangers to which I will be exposed involve ever changing and unpredictable water and other natural conditions, defective or improper equipment, the actions and inactions of my fellow adventurers who may be negligent, and other unknown or unforeseeable risks and dangers.
2. I know and appreciate the dangers described above. I choose to proceed with Palmetto Paddler activities and expressly assume and accept full responsibility for the consequences of my exposure to all risks, hazards and dangers which I may encounter as a joint venturer in any Palmetto Paddler activity. I also assume and accept full responsibility for determining the adequacy of my skill, equipment, and physical condition to engage in any Palmetto Paddler activity.
3. I know and understand that I may assist my fellow adventurers to the best of my own ability if they appear to need such assistance, but only for so long as I can do so, in my judgment, without unreasonably endangering myself. I further understand that I have no legal obligation to assist, and that neither my fellow adventurers nor any other member or guest of Palmetto Paddlers has any legal obligation to render assistance to me.

NOW THEREFORE, I release and agree to hold harmless and not to bring any legal action against the Palmetto Paddlers, its directors, officers, leaders, coordinators, instructors, members or guests, either personally or as a representatives of Palmetto Paddlers, arising out of and relating to any and all claims, demands, damages, injuries to person or property, actions or causes of action for acts of active or passive negligence (except willful or wanton negligence or misconduct), arising out of or connected with my participation in any Palmetto Paddlers activity. This release is given to enable my joint adventurers and me to feel free to participate in Palmetto Paddlers activities and to donate our services to help each other without fear of liability. This release is given in consideration for similar releases granted or to be granted to my benefit by other Palmetto Paddler members and joint adventurers on Palmetto Paddler activities. This release has no expiration date and shall be deemed reaffirmed each time I participate in any Palmetto Paddlers activity.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND RESPONSIBILITY AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY. I SIGN IT VOLUNTARILY AND KNOWINGLY THEREBY GIVE UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

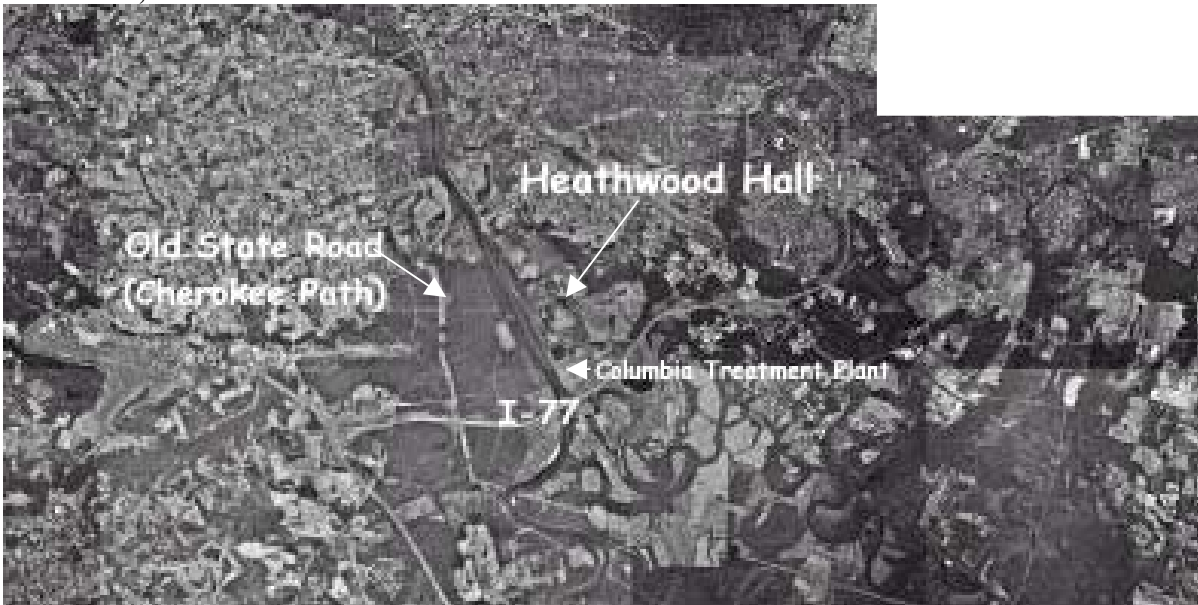
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

(If any of the above is under 18 years old, the following statement must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.)

I, \_\_\_\_\_(signature), have read and understood the above waiver and release of liability, and agree to be bound by its provisions. As parent/legal guardian of the above-named minor(s), I hereby grant permission for him/her/them to participate in Palmetto Paddlers events and activities. Minors must be accompanied by parent/legal guardian.



**The Palmetto Paddlers, Inc.**  
**P. O. Box 984**  
**Columbia, SC 29204-0984**



The proposed Green Diamond Development is located in the area of I-77, Heathwood Hall, and Bluff Road.



