

**CITY OF SKY VALLEY  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2025  
AT 10:00 AM  
3608 HWY 246 (CITY HALL) & VIA TELECONFERENCE (ZOOM)  
SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**  
May 20, 2025 – Regular Council Meeting
- 4. Adoption of Agenda**
- 5. Mayoral/Council Remarks**
- 6. City Manager Report**
- 7. Departmental Reports**
- 8. Committee Reports**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- 9. Consider approval of Amendment to Tree Ordinance (1<sup>st</sup> Reading and Introduction)**
- 10. Consider Resolution to declare City Property as Surplus**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- 11. Presentation by Tonya Bonitatibus, the Upper Savannah Basin Riverkeeper**
- 12. Public Forum and General Comments**
  - ❖ ANY PERSON WITH BUSINESS BEFORE THE COUNCIL, NOT SCHEDULED ON THE AGENDA AS A PUBLIC HEARING MAY SPEAK TO THE COUNCIL FOR A MAXIMUM OF FIVE MINUTES
  - ❖ THE SPEAKER MUST IDENTIFY BY NAME/ADDRESS BEFORE SPEAKING
  - ❖ NO FORMAL ACTION CAN BE TAKEN
- 13. Executive Session**
- 14. Adjournment**

**You may join the meeting at:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84081423308>**

*Individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or the facilities are required to call 706-746-2204 promptly to allow the City to make reasonable accommodations for those persons.*

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF SKY VALLEY REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025 AT 10:00 AM AT 3608 HWY 246 (CITY HALL) & VIA TELECONFERENCE (ZOOM) SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Steil, Councilors Allred, Turner, Curtis, Oliver, and McAfee

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager Streetman, City Clerk Fleming, Communication Specialist Van Camp, City Attorney Kidd, Public Works Superintendent Shope, Water Coordinator English, and Building Inspector Pyburn

**1. Call to Order**

Hollie called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance**

Councilor Turner led the invocation/pledge of allegiance.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**April 15, 2025 – Regular Council Meeting**

Councilor Curtis made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Councilor McAfee, unanimously approved.

**4. Adoption of Agenda**

Councilor Oliver made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Councilor Curtis, unanimously approved.

**5. Mayoral/Council Remarks**

Mayor Steil ask Public Works Superintendent Shope and his crew to come forward so he could introduce everyone. Mayor Steil thanked the department for all that they do for the City.

**6. City Manager Report**

City Manager Streetman stated that the City is getting geared up for the summer activities. The 2025 fireworks display will be on July 5<sup>th</sup> and included on that day will be the parade, duck race, pancake breakfast, and Sid Weber BBQ fund raiser. Volunteers are needed to help on this day. He has started gathering information to aid in the 2026 Budget preparation. The 2025 audit will be starting soon. Resurfacing of City roads has been completed and more to add as funding is available. The TSPLOST funds have almost come to an end as the County is nearing the 17 million that was passed as the cap or five-year term. He also addressed STR renewals, PTV renewals, and cutting off services after 60-day delinquencies. The pickleball courts will be repaired June 2-5, weather permitting. He concluded with promoting the Public Works Recognition Event that will be held at the City pavilion, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Hotdogs, chips, and cookies will be available.

**7. Departmental Reports**

City Manager Streetman gave a report for Police Chief Baumes – The police department has hired a new part-time officer, Officer Andrew Williams.

Building Inspector Pyburn stated that he has issued three warnings (lawn maintenance, trash, and a missing 911 address sign). Four violations which one has been taken care of. Four new home constructions and five pending. Anticipating a busy season with permitting. One potential annexation will be presented soon.

Public Works Superintendent Shope thanked all that helps to keep their department running smoothly, including the Council as much needed equipment has been obtained. The department is currently working on road shoulders, potholes, culvert work, Ed Morley bridge drainage, and walking path maintenance. Preparation is also underway for the Independence Day festivities. One position is currently open in his department.

Water Coordinator English stated that he had met with Dee Van Camp, Sky Valley Representative on the board of the Rabun County Sewer Authority. Mr. Van Camp answered some questions for him;

1. Can you give a list of recommended contractors? Mr. Van Camp supplied a list of contractors.
2. In the event of an Emergency, could their organization help Sky Valley, if needed? Mr. Van Camp answered, absolutely and the only charge would be for the cost of labor.
3. Can you share how you find employees? Mr. Van Camp stated that they primarily go by personal recommendations and word of mouth.
4. Do you have a Succession Plan in place for training? Mr. Van Camp answered yes. The Sky Valley Public Work's Department is implementing a plan within their department as well.

City Manager Streetman stated that Water Coordinator English is going for his Class 1 Water License this summer.

Mayor Steil inquired about the status of the City's PRV replacement endeavor. Mr. English stated that eight out of seventeen have been replaced so far. The first eight were top of the list of needing to be replaced and the following nine will be prioritized. Mayor Steil asked if the telemetry had been placed on the two tanks lacking and he answered that it is on order.

## **8. Committee Reports**

Dan McAfee, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, stated that the next P&Z meeting will be held on May 27<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. The meeting will consist of a variance request and continued work concerning the updating of the current Tree Ordinance.

Bill Oliver, Chairman of the Mayoral Advisory Committee, stated that the Committee had recently met to consolidate an Emergency Plan for Sky Valley. The Police, Public Works, and Fire Department all have plans but need to consolidate into one in case of a natural disaster. A survey will be going out to gain information from the residents such as, the use of medical equipment requiring electricity, along with contact information,

City Manager Streetman stated that City Hall, Police Department, and the Tractor Shed will be installing generators so we can still operate during power outages. Well eight and three are on generators and can be used when power is out.

Bruce Turner, Chairman of Special Projects Committee, stated that the Committee has everything lined up for the Independence Day celebrations being held on July 5<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are needed to help. A cleanup day is scheduled for May 22, from the entrance to the Junction. He asked for Council volunteers to participate in the dunking tank.

Mayor Steil spoke of behalf of Cheryl Beckert, Chairwoman of the Landscaping Committee – The Committee is busy organizing the planting of flowers and bushes at City Hall, Mailboxes, and the Main Entrance. The Garden Club has been helping also in this endeavor. The corners are also being planted, City Pavilion, and entrance of Evergreen.

City Manager Streetman stated that the City would like to install a large rock at the intersection of Evergreen and Crusher Run Road, to mount a decorative entrance sign.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **9. Consider approval of Proclamation to celebrate National Public Works Week, May 18 -24, 2025**

City Manager Streetman read the Proclamation which reads as follows: " National Public Works Week Proclamation May 18-24, 2025. Whereas, public works professionals focus on infrastructure, facilities, and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and to public health, high quality of life, and well-being of the people Sky Valley, Georgia. Whereas, these infrastructure, facilities, and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, who are engineers, managers, and employees at all levels of government and the

private sector, who are responsible for rebuilding, improving, and protecting our nation's transportation, water supply, water treatment and solid waste systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities essential for our citizens; and whereas, it is in the public interest for the citizens, civic leaders, and children in the City of Sky Valley to gain knowledge of and maintain an ongoing interest and understanding of the importance of public works and public works programs in their respective communities; and whereas, the year 2025 marks the 65<sup>th</sup> annual National Public Works Association/Canadian Public Works Association be it now, resolved, I Mayor Hollie Steil, do hereby designate the week of May 18-24, 2025 as National Public Works Week. I urge all citizens to join with representatives of the American Public Works Association and government agencies in activities, events, and ceremonies designed to pay tribute to our public works professionals, engineers, managers, and employees and to recognize the substantial contributions they make to protecting our national health, safety, and advancing quality of life for all."

Councilor McAfee made a motion to approve the Proclamation, seconded by Councilor Oliver, unanimously approved.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10. Public Forum and General Comments**

Don Quarello, owner of lots 41 and 42; wanting to build on lot 42. He wanted to confirm that there was a sewer facility plant being built on the property that the City just purchased, off of Tahoe Lane. Mayor Steil stated that the City is contemplating building on that site, but nothing has been firmed up. She went on to say when the site and facility have been decided on at least two public hearings will be held to discuss. Mr. Quarello asked about the timeline of the grant received. Mayor Steil stated that the project must be started by the end of this year as part of the criteria of the grant to be eligible. Mr. Quarello stated that he will be posting information concerning the potential sewer on social media. He feels that the sewer facility plant is not a good proposal for Sky Valley as he expressed his concerns.

### **11. Executive Session**

Mayor Steil stated that an Executive Session is needed to discuss three topics; Real Estate, Personnel Issues, and Possible Litigation. Councilor Oliver made a motion to close the meeting, seconded by Councilor Turner, unanimously approved. The meeting was closed at 11:10 a.m.

Councilor Oliver made a motion to reopen the meeting, seconded by Councilor McAfee, unanimously approved. The meeting was reopened at 12:07 p.m.

Mayor Steil stated no action was taken.

### **12. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, Councilor Allred made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Oliver, unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Hollie Steil, Mayor

Attest:

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Karen Fleming, City Clerk

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL SKY VALLEY ORDINANCES 12-01 AND 14-06 AND TO ESTABLISH AN ORDINANCE FOR THE PROTECTION AND REPLACEMENT OF TREES WITHIN THE CITY OF SKY VALLEY**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Sky Valley recognizes that development in the city has resulted, and will continue to result, in the loss of trees and tree canopy and has contributed to a concept known by the U.S. Forest Service and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) as the wildland urban interface (WUI); and,

**WHEREAS**, the City of Sky Valley recognizes that trees contribute to the quality of life by producing oxygen, removing carbon from the atmosphere, filtering pollutants from the air, cooling the environment, reducing stormwater runoff, buffer noise and reduce glare, providing privacy screening and providing habitat for wildlife. Trees also increase property values and provide a vital component to the environmental and aesthetic well being of the city; and,

**WHEREAS**, it is in the best interest of the City of Sky Valley that regulations be adopted to address the preservation, protection and maintenance of trees in the city while simultaneously acknowledging the potential for loss due to wildfires.

The Council of the City of Sky Valley hereby ordains:

**Section 1. Definitions.**

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in the section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

*Arborist* means a person who is professionally trained in the science of trees. The typical professional certification is by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).

*Buffer* means an area required to remain undisturbed or replanted where existing vegetation is sparse, as determined by the City manager or city building inspector.

*Canopy* means the branch spread of a tree or a tree stand.

*Canopy tree* is a species of tree that normally reaches a height at maturity of 40 feet or more and in which the layers of leaves and branches of the tree are so arranged or formed to provide shade.

*Critical root zone (CRZ)* means the minimum area beneath a tree which must be left undisturbed in order to preserve a sufficient root mass to give a tree a reasonable chance of survival. The critical root zone will typically be represented by a concentric circle centering on the tree's trunk with a radius equal in feet to one and three-tenths (1.3) times the number of inches of the trunk diameter. EXAMPLE: The CRZ radius of a twenty (20) inch diameter tree is twenty-six feet

*Diameter at breast height (DBH)* means the standard measurement of tree size. The tree trunk is measured at a height of four and one-half (4.5) feet above the ground. If a tree splits into multiple trunks below four and one-half feet, then each trunk is measured as a separate tree.

*Drain field and septic tank* means that septic system and drain field to be used which must be identified and approved by the county health department prior to permitting.

*Firewise USA* is a program managed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) that teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together and take action now to prevent losses.

*Footprint* includes the area covered by any approved building or structure plus 15 feet from the edges of the approved building or structure. (The additional 15 feet applies only to approved buildings or structures). The term "footprint", for the purposes of this article, also includes the specific area approved for the installation of a driveway, parking area, septic tank and drain field. All trees within an approved footprint may be removed upon the filing and approval of a tree-cutting permit.

*Permit* means a permit issued by the City pursuant to the terms of this article

*Specimen tree* means any tree defined as historical or endangered or group of trees which has been determined by the City Manager and City building inspector to be of high value because of its species, spread, size, age or other professional criteria.

*Top/topping* means reducing the height of any tree.

*Tree* means a tree exceeding eight inches in diameter (25 inches or more in circumference) at breast height as measured from the highest slope adjacent to the tree.

*Trim/trimming* means removing any limbs that are more than 12 feet above the ground.

*Under brushing* means removal of shrubs, bushes, small trees or native shrubbery.

## **Section 2. General Applicability**

A. Each property owner shall be responsible for the normal care of trees located on its premises.

B. Willful injury or disfigurement of any tree growing within the City shall be a violation of this Ordinance.

C. No person shall:

1. Cut, top, trim or remove any tree as herein defined, regardless of location or condition and including those trees located within the footprint, without first obtaining a tree cutting permit.

2. Attach any sign, notice or other object to any tree or fasten wires, cables, nails, or screws to any tree in a manner that could prove harmful to the tree.

3. Pour any material on any tree or on nearby ground which could be harmful to the tree.

4. Pile building material or equipment around any tree so as to cause injury thereto.

5. Kill or damage a tree due to neglectful operation of a vehicle or any construction equipment.

D. The trimming of a tree up to 12 feet from the ground level does not require a permit.

E. The cutting or removal of any tree or group of trees which has been designated by the City Manager and City Building Inspector as a specimen tree shall be avoided whenever possible.

F. This article applies to all property lying within the City.

### **Section 3. Minimum Tree Density and Canopy Cover Requirements.**

The intent and goal of these regulations is to ensure that a minimum density of trees is maintained on all properties and that a significant amount of tree canopy coverage and pervious soil area is maintained throughout the City.

The City recognizes that property owners may wish to follow the guidelines outlined in the National Firewise program and that doing so may impact their ability to follow the density requirements outlined in this section. The City will cooperate with property owners to come as close as possible to achieving both of these goals.

A. All properties within the City shall maintain or achieve a minimum tree density of 130 DBH inches per acre (Option 1) or a minimum canopy cover of 45 percent (Option 2) in perpetuity. All land development permits, and/or tree cutting permits, must apply one of the metrics to the density or canopy cover calculations; no combination of the two metrics is permitted.

B. Minimum tree density may be achieved by and must be compliant with these guidelines:

1. Preserving approved trees 8 inches or greater DBH.

2. Planting approved trees in accordance with the minimum standards of this Section, where tree removal or land development results in a deficit of minimum tree density or canopy cover.

3. No property permitted for new development activity may remove all existing trees.

4. No trees located within the City public right-of-way may be removed or destroyed by owners of abutting private property.

C. Calculations.

1. Option 1 – Minimum 130 DBH Inches Per Acre.

a. The calculations shall be for the net site area excluding the acreage required for buffers and infrastructure improvements (road, sidewalks, utility lines, retentions ponds, etc.). In no event shall a parking lot be considered an infrastructure improvement.



b. According to all requirements of this section, add the DBH inches of all trees preserved or planted on the property and multiply the total DBH inches by the acreage of the site: the total must equal this calculated rate or greater: For example, a 0.50-acre lot must have at least  $(0.50\text{-acre} \times 130'') = 65'$  of total DBH inches.

c. A portion of DBH inches from approved trees located within the City public right-of-way adjacent to the property may be counted towards the minimum density requirement.

## 2. Option 2 – Minimum 45 Percent Canopy Cover.

a. The calculations shall be for the net site area excluding the acreage required for buffers and infrastructure improvements (road, sidewalks, utility lines, retentions ponds, etc.). In no event shall a parking lot be considered an infrastructure improvement.

b. According to all requirements of this section, the total existing canopy cover over the property preserved and planted must calculate to be 45% or greater.

c. For replacement trees, half mature canopy cover is credited. For example, an overstory/large replacement tree will count for  $(0.5 \times 1,600 \text{ sq.} = 800 \text{ sq. ft.})$ .

d. The surveyed percent of canopy cover over private property from Approved Trees located within the City right-of-way adjacent to the property may be counted towards the minimum canopy cover requirement.

## D. Tree Replacement.

1. The Arborist Standards Document will provide a complete set of guidelines and resources to meet tree replacement requirements. Replacement trees must be on the approved tree list and must be installed according to the City tree planting guidelines.

2. The minimum for tree replacements shall be no shorter than ten feet high measured from the top of the ball to the tip, no less than two inches in diameter at a point one foot above the top of the ball and nursery grown in no less that a 15-gallon container or ball.

## E. For all replacement trees associated with a land development permit.

1. Species selected for planting shall be ecologically compatible with the intended growing site.

2. All replacement tree selections are subject to review and changes by the city building inspector or City manager. In the event of a disagreement between the property owner and the City regarding a permit application which provides for tree replacement for approval of a permit, an Arborist Standards Document will be submitted by an arborist at the property owner's expense which provides a complete set of guidelines and resources to meet tree replacement requirements.

3. At least 85 percent of trees selected for planting must be large or medium sized canopy trees.

## Section 4. Procedure for issuance of a tree cutting permit.

A. Any landowner in the city wanting to cut, trim, top, or remove a tree, or trees, must first complete an application for a tree cutting permit on forms designated by the city and file said application with the office of the city clerk. The application should:

1. Identify by location on a plat or sketch each tree to be cut, topped, trimmed, or removed. In order to identify trees by location the applicant must, prior to submitting the application,, either mark each tree by placing a colored ribbon around the circumference of the tree at approximately three to four feet off the ground or arrange to meet with the city building inspector and the contractor identified as required in paragraph (3) below (unless waived by the city building inspector) to go over the proposed application. The applicant must designate on the plat or sketch whether each tree is to be cut, trimmed or topped and show where each tree is in correlation to the property line.

2. Be accompanied with the application fee.

3. Identify the person/business entity who will cut, top, and remove the tree including their insurance information. Tree cutters hired to perform work within the city must be insured with liability insurance coverage in an amount of not less than \$1,000,000 and workers' compensation insurance if required by law unless the homeowner signs an affidavit of responsibility for any damages.

4. Describe the purpose for cutting, topping, trimming or removing a tree.

5. Define the time for cutting, topping, trimming, and for removal of trees or debris.

6. Be signed by the applicant, property owner and the contractor.

B. In evaluating applications for a tree cutting permit, the city building inspector, city manager, and city council may consider, but not be limited to the following criteria:

1. The number of trees to be cut, topped, or trimmed.

2. The value of the trees to be cut, topped or trimmed.

3. The condition of the trees to be cut, topped, or trimmed, with consideration given to dead, diseased, hazardous or damaged trees.

4. The environmental impact of cutting, topping, or trimming on the applicant's land and on adjacent lands. The impact on streams, soil, erosion, and surrounding vegetation is a part of the environmental impact.

C. Applications for cutting, topping, trimming or removing trees on another person's property will require that said property owner also sign the application.

D. The applicant and the contractor, identified as per paragraph A (3) of this section, must certify familiarity with and understanding of the terms of this article and that the person performing the work is familiar with the terms of this article.

E. The city building inspector shall, within ten business days of the filing of the application, visit the property, confirm that the application is complete and make a written recommendation to the city manager that a permit be issued or denied.

F. The city manager shall, within five business days of receipt of the recommendation of the city building inspector, approve, partially approve, or disapprove the application. If the city manager disapproves the application, either in whole or in part, a written explanation outlining the reasons must be sent to the applicant by certified mail, return receipt requested.

## **Section 5. Appeal**

A. Any applicant dissatisfied with the recommendation of the city building inspector or the decision of the city manager may appeal such recommendation or decision to the city council, provided such appeal shall be in writing and filed with the city clerk within ten business days of receipt by the applicant(s) of the decision off the city manager.

B. If an appeal as provided in this section is filed with the city clerk seven days or more prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the city council, such appeal shall be placed on the agenda for consideration of the appeal at that meeting. If the appeal is filed six days or less prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the city council the appeal will be placed on the agenda of the following regularly scheduled meeting.

C. The city council, in considering an appeal, will hear from the applicant, the city building inspector, the city manager and other persons who may wish to provide information to the city council. In making a decision the city council will be governed at all times by the criteria outlined in the article.

## **Section 6. Clear Cutting and Undergrowth Removal.**

A. It shall be the policy of the City that native shrubbery and undergrowth such as mountain laurel, rhododendron, rare wildflowers, ferns, etc., shall be preserved insofar as practical and reasonable to retard surface runoff and soil erosion, and to protect their native species.

B. Clear cutting and the removal of native vegetation shall be prohibited, except as follows:

1. As necessary to conform with the guidelines of Firewise USA if so desired.
2. As necessary for placing public roads, utilities, structures and parking areas.

C. A permit shall be required for any such cutting or clearing. An application for clear cutting consistent with the policy enumerated in this section for clear cutting shall be established by the city manager and all applicable penalties and rights of appeal set forth in section \_\_\_\_\_ shall be applicable to this section.

## **Section 7. Permit Fees**

All trees that are cut, topped or trimmed as defined herein shall require a permit issued by the City. Fees charged by the City for cutting, topping, trimming and removing dead, diseased or hazardous trees shall be established from time to time by duly enacted ordinances of the City or by an appropriated resolution of the City.

## **Section 8. Penalties for Violation**

A. Any violation of this article shall subject the applicant and contractor jointly and severally to liability for a monetary fine not to exceed \$1,000 per violation and \$1,000 for each additional violation, as well as fines provided in section 8, paragraphs C, D and E. A violation will occur for each tree cut, topped, or trimmed in violation of this article.

B. Replanting. In addition to the above, any person, firm, corporation or other entity or agents thereof violating this article will be required to replace each tree cut or removed in violation of this article with two hardwood trees. Each hardwood tree must be:

1. No shorter than ten feet high measured from the top of the ball to the tip;
2. No less than two inches in diameter at a point one foot above the top of the ball;
3. Nursery grown in no less than a 15-gallon container or ball; and
4. The replacement trees must be approved by the city manager or city building inspector prior to planting.

C. Failure to remove any trees cut or debris from trees topped or trimmed within 14 days of completion of the work will be considered a violation with a fine of \$100 per day. The fine shall continue for each day the cut trees or debris remain on the property.

D. All citations issued, and fines imposed herein shall be imposed individually or jointly upon the applicant, property owner and the contractor.

E. If the city building inspector determines that a required permit was not obtained or more trees were cut, topped, trimmed or removed than were included on the approved permit, the city manager and property owner shall be notified. If both the city building inspector and city manager agree that if proper procedures would have been followed, the application would have been approved for the number of trees actually cut, topped, trimmed or removed, that property owner shall pay a penalty to the City equal to double the normal permit fee (as provided in the current fee schedule) for the total number of trees that were improperly topped, trimmed or cut. The property owner shall have ten days from the date of the notice to pay the penalty and avoid a citation.

F. No consideration will be given to a property owner's claim of dead, diseased or hazardous trees if those trees are cut and removed without a proper permit and without verification by the City. In the case of an after-hours emergency which would involve the cutting of a tree, the city police department should be contacted to verify the hazard and make a report for the city building inspector. In an emergency, that has been verified by the police, no penalty shall be assessed.

## **Section 9. Protection of Existing Trees.**

A. Damage prohibited. No person shall:

1. Cut, carve or otherwise damage or remove any tree except in accordance with the provisions of this article;
2. Attach any wire, nails, advertising posters, or other contrivance harmful to any tree;

3. Allow any gaseous, liquid, or solid substance which is harmful to trees (such as concrete washout, fuel, lubricants, herbicides or paint) to come in contact with them; or

4. Set fire or permit any fire to burn when such fire or the heat thereof will injure any portion of any tree.

B. Fence required. During excavation, filling, construction or demolition operations, each tree or stand of trees to remain on the property shall be protected against damage to bark, roots, and low-hanging branches with a fence enclosing the critical root zone. Fencing shall be either plastic construction area fencing, silt fencing, 12-gauge two-inch by four-inch wire mesh, double one-inch by four-inch rails on two-inch by four-inch posts or high-visibility surveyors' tape on one-inch by two-inch posts. Height of the latter three fence types shall be four feet.

C. Compaction prohibited. All building materials, vehicles, construction equipment, dirt, debris or other objects likely to cause soil compaction or above-ground damage shall be kept outside the Critical root zone. Where a limited amount of encroachment is unavoidable and is approved by the City, the Critical root zone shall first be mulched with a four-inch layer of processed pine bark or wood chips or a six-inch layer of pine straw.

D. Grade change prohibited. There shall be no raising or lowering of the ground level within the critical root zone. Stripping of topsoil in the critical root zone shall not be permitted. Where necessary, the use of moderated fill is permitted only with prior installation of an aeration system approved by the City. Deposition of sediment in the Critical root zone shall be prevented by placement of sediment barriers, which shall be backed by two-inch wire mesh in areas of steep slope.

E. Ditches prohibited. No person shall excavate any ditch or trench within the critical root zone. Where such encroachment is unavoidable and is approved by the City, ditches or trenches shall be so located as to minimize root damage. If roots must be cut, root pruning procedures approved by the City must be employed.

F. Paving prohibited. No person shall pave with concrete, asphalt, or other impervious material within the critical root zone.

APPROVED:

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HOLLIE STEIL, MAYOR

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JIM CURTIS, COUNCILOR

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BILL OLIVER, COUNCILOR

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TONY ALLRED, COUNCILOR

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DAN McAFEE, COUNCILOR

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BRUCE TURNER, COUNCILOR

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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KAREN FLEMING  
CITY CLERK

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DOUGLAS KIDD  
CITY ATTORNEY

First reading and introduction June \_\_\_\_\_, 2025

Second reading and adoption July \_\_\_\_\_, 2025

**STATE OF GEORGIA  
COUNTY OF RABUN**

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE CITY OWNED PROPERTY SURPLUS**

**WHEREAS**, the below described city owned property is no longer necessary, useful, or suitable for the City of Sky Valley, GA;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA** that the following city owned property be declared surplus and to be disposed of in accordance with State statutes.

- 2010 Toyota Tundra (Public Works)
- 2020 Dodge Durango (Police)

**SO RESOLVED**, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

**APPROVED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**HOLLIE STEIL, MAYOR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**JIM CURTIS, COUNCILOR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**BILL OLIVER, COUNCILOR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**TONY ALLRED, COUNCILOR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DAN MCAFEE COUNCILOR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**BRUCE TURNER, COUNCILOR**

**ATTEST:**

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**KAREN FLEMING  
CITY CLERK**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DOUGLAS KIDD  
CITY ATTORNEY**



SAVANNAH  
RIVERKEEPER®  
*It's Your River. Protect It!*

## Resilient Watersheds, Resilient Futures: A Model Ordinance for the Savannah River Basin

Flooding in the United States results in **\$10 billion in damages each year**, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations. Implementing proactive ordinances and regulatory systems can significantly mitigate floodway risks and lower costs for communities.

From our experience, the issue often lies not in the lack of willpower but in insufficient resources, which leads to inadequate permitting and compliance practices. **We are collaborating with local government entities to develop free tools and model floodway ordinances** that simplify their processes and establish a “no adverse impact” development standard.

There are feasible solutions available that could **reduce flood insurance rates** for local communities and provide access to **lower-interest funding for infrastructure** improvements. We are eager to assist local municipalities in delivering these essential services to their residents.

We invite **Rabun County governments** to partner with us in updating local ordinances to align with “no adverse impact” standards, ensuring **stronger protections against flooding** and other water-related challenges. We also encourage the Municipalities to consider moving forward with the already-prepared joint 319 proposal to help secure funding for this important work. Finally, we hope **Rabun County** will join us in establishing a network of communities across the river basin that are equipped with advanced tools and strong protective regulations, working together toward a more resilient and sustainable future.

Tonya Bonitatibus

Savannah Riverkeeper, Executive Director





# SAVANNAH RIVERKEEPER®

*It's Your River, Protect It!*

## PROTECTING OUR RIVER SINCE 2001



### OUR MISSION

Our mission is to be the leading guardian of the Savannah River, restoring and protecting the entire basin through education, advocacy, and collaboration.

Over the past year, we have expanded our team to include professional and retired city planners, scientists, and GIS experts, enabling us to assist local municipalities in developing policies and permits that **uphold best practices and prioritize water protection.**

### OUR WATERSHED IS AT RISK

Once a vital transportation corridor, our river now plays a crucial role in supporting municipal, industrial, and energy needs. It supplies 43.2 million gallons of cooling water daily to Plant Vogtle's nuclear reactors and serves as a key resource for the Savannah River Site's nuclear material processing.

However, this heavy usage, combined with industrial activity, has taken a toll. **Our river ranks third in Georgia for toxic releases from industrial outfalls** and is impaired by heavy metals, sediment, and low dissolved oxygen levels. Rapid industrial expansion, urban development, and increasing freshwater demand further threaten water quality.

With over 50 government and private entities overseeing different aspects of the river, fragmented oversight and poor coordination hinder effective management. Misguided water resource assumptions only exacerbate these challenges, putting the entire watershed—and the communities that depend on it—at risk.

### WHAT WE'RE DOING

- Building a robust team of experienced professionals, including former city planners, GIS experts, and scientists, to expand our role beyond policy commentary. Our goal is to actively assist municipalities in shaping policies that provide the highest level of protection for our river basin.
- Hosting community cleanups throughout the Savannah River Basin.
- Spearheading the installation of 8 litter booms in Savannah, preventing a minimum of 4,500 lbs. of trash from entering our river each year.
- Partnering with Chatham County and Perpetual to implement a city-wide Reusable Foodware System in Savannah.
- Performing water quality testing and monitoring through the Georgia Adopt-a-Stream Program and our award-winning Veterans for Clean Water program.
- Utilizing and expanding the Know Your River website in an effort to democratize water quality data, starting with the Ogeechee and Savannah Rivers



**FIGHT FOR A SWIMMABLE, FISHABLE, &  
DRINKABLE SAVANNAH RIVER.**

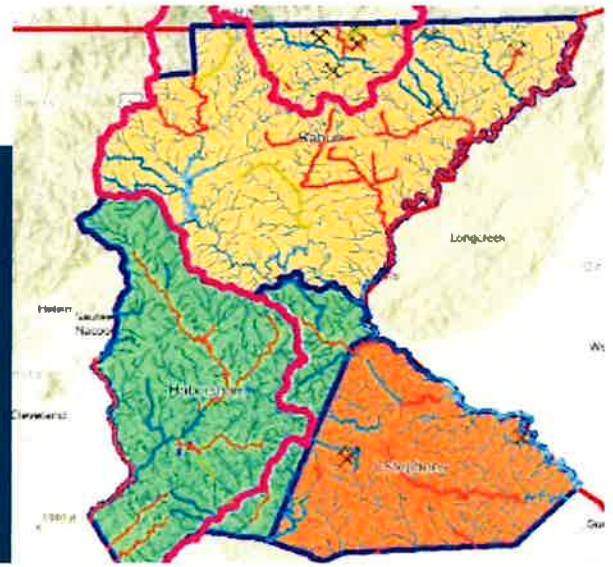
**BECOME A MEMBER TODAY**



SAVANNAH  
RIVERKEEPER®  
*It's Your River, Protect It!*

## ENHANCING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND DATA ACCESS IN THE UPPER SAVANNAH RIVER BASIN: A JOINT PROJECT WITH THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION

[savannahriverkeeper.org](http://savannahriverkeeper.org)



### GOAL 1: CREATE AN APP FOR EASY ACCESS TO REGULATIONS

We will begin development of a user-friendly, map-based app that provides site-specific environmental data, regulatory guidelines, and a tiered rubric for development recommendations. This tool will make it easier for local officials, developers, and residents to understand environmental regulations, buffer requirements, floodplain restrictions, and best practices for sustainable development.

Why it matters: By making regulatory information more accessible, municipalities can reduce compliance confusion, **streamline permitting**, and **improve enforcement**, leading to better water quality and land use decisions.

### GOAL 2: DEVELOP A MODEL FLOOD AND STORMWATER ORDINANCE, UNLOCKING ACCESS TO LOWER FLOOD INSURANCE RATES

The project will create a standardized floodplain and stormwater ordinance for the Savannah River Basin. This ordinance will set higher but practical regulatory standards, helping municipalities reduce flood risks and prevent nonpoint source pollution. By adopting these stronger regulations, municipalities can qualify for FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS), which **lowers flood insurance rates for residents** and provides access to grants and low-interest loans for infrastructure improvements.

Why it matters: Many small municipalities lack the resources to develop these regulations independently. This grant gives them a **ready-made ordinance**, helping them **improve resilience**, **protect water resources**, and **access funding** for critical projects.

### GOAL 3: EXPAND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN WATER QUALITY EFFORTS

The grant will support training sessions, cleanups, and citizen science programs to grow **community involvement in water resource management**. Volunteers will learn how to identify environmental issues, participate in water quality monitoring, and report violations, strengthening local oversight.

Why it matters: Smaller communities often lack the personnel for robust environmental monitoring. By engaging residents, municipalities gain extra eyes on the ground, **fostering stronger environmental stewardship** while also filling critical data gaps for decision-making.



SAVANNAH  
RIVERKEEPER®

*It's Your River, Protect It!*

Augusta, GA | Allendale, SC | Savannah, GA

# Promoting Resilience in the Upper Savannah River Basin





# SAVANNAH RIVERKEEPER

**Founded in 2001, Savannah Riverkeeper serves as the foremost advocate for the Savannah River with the mission is to sustain a healthy river that supports vibrant communities and thriving ecosystems across its 10,577-square-mile watershed. We achieve this through a three-pronged approach.**

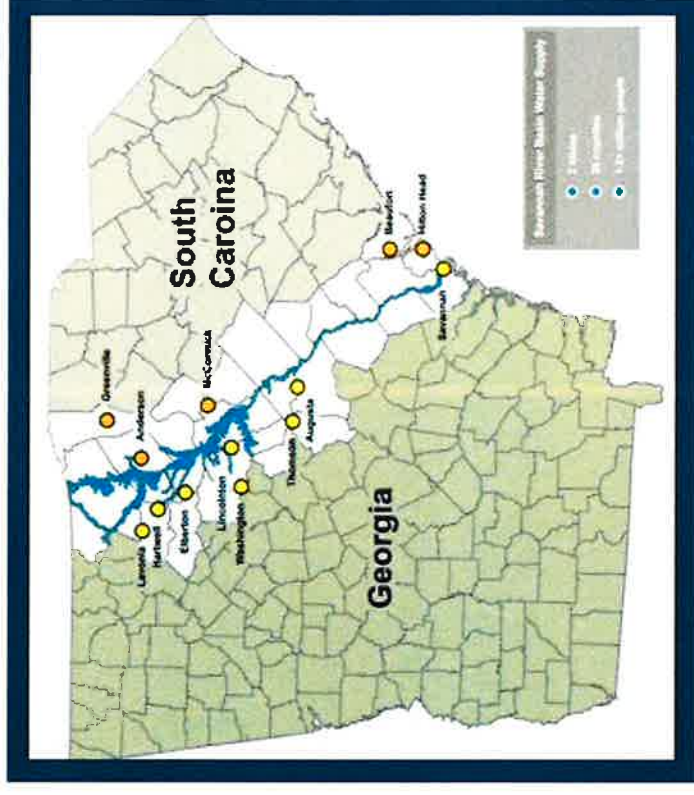




# Our River



- **Originates near Ellicott Rock in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.**
- **Forms the border between Georgia and South Carolina.**
- **Drains a watershed of 10,577 square miles.**
- **Includes manmade lakes: Hartwell, Russell, and Thurmond.**
- **Flows through four regions: Blue Ridge Mountains, Piedmont, Upper Coastal Plain, Lower Coastal Plain.**
- **Ends in a marine estuary near Tybee Island,**





# Building Resilient Watersheds & Resilient Futures



Flooding in the United States results in **\$10 billion in damages each year**, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations. Implementing proactive ordinances and regulatory systems can significantly mitigate floodway risks and lower costs for communities.

From our experience, the issue often lies not in the lack of willpower but in insufficient resources, which leads to inadequate permitting and compliance practices. **We are collaborating with local government entities to develop free tools and model floodway ordinances** that simplify their processes and establish a “no adverse impact” development standard.

There are feasible solutions available that could **reduce flood insurance rates** for local communities and provide access to **lower-interest funding for infrastructure** improvements. We are eager to assist local municipalities in delivering these essential services to their residents.







SAVANNAH



Lake Burton  
Civic Association

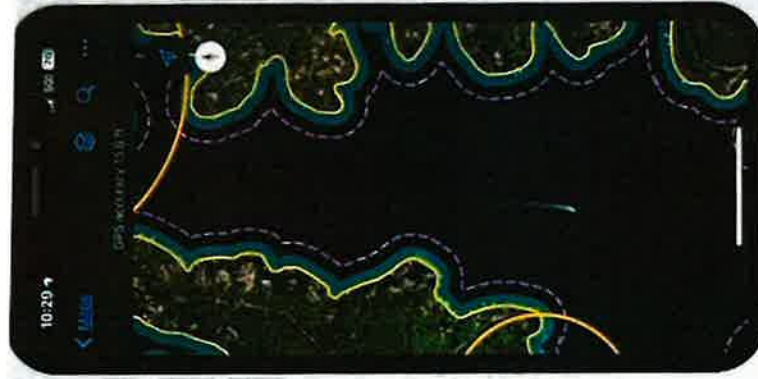
Lake Burton Shoreline

Caution Zones



No-Wake Zone

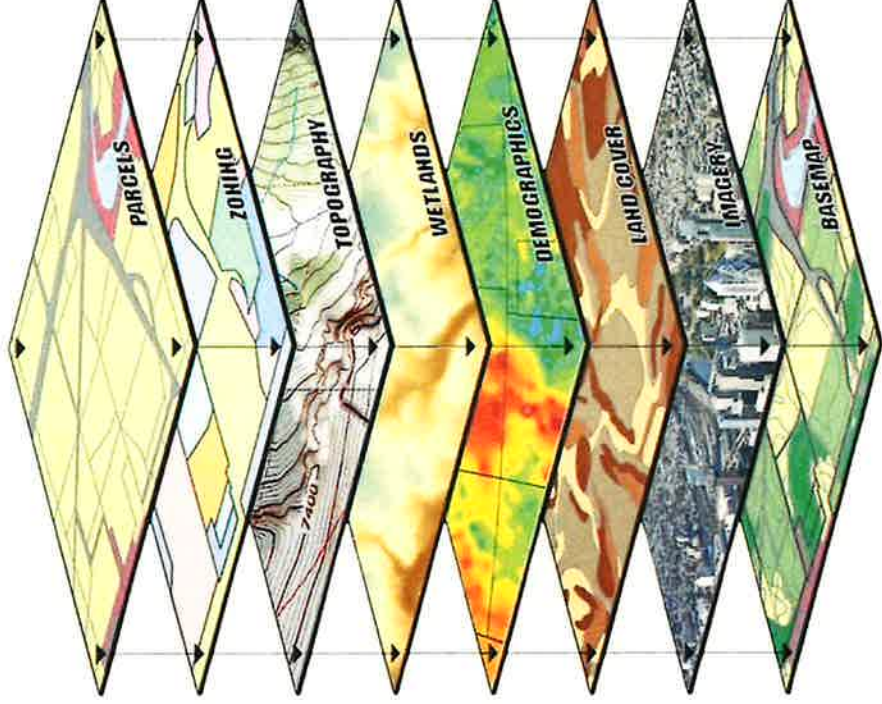
Idle\_Zone



ArcGIS® Field Maps



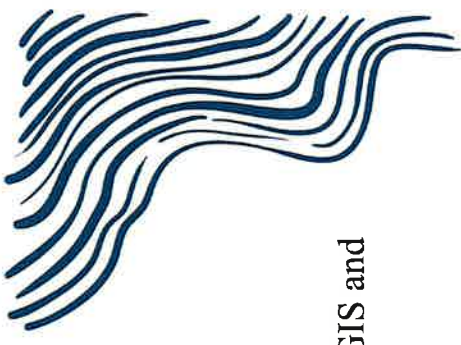
# GIS DATA LAYERS



Many different types of data can be integrated into a GIS and represented as a map layer.

Examples can include: streets, parcels, zoning, flood zones, client locations, competition, shopping centers, office parks, demographics, etc.

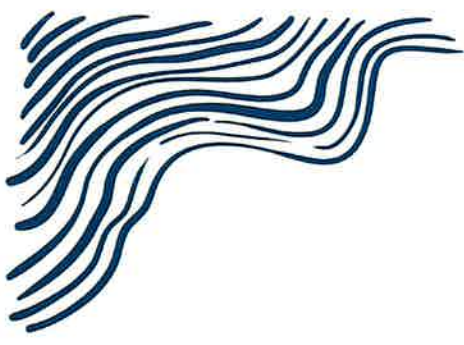
When these layers are drawn on top of one another, undetected spatial trends and relationships often emerge. This allows us to gain insight about relevant characteristics of a location.







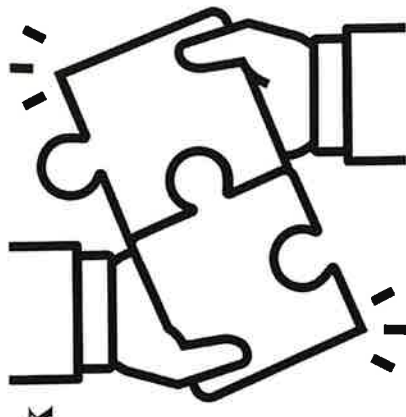
## Desired Next Steps



**Please join our stakeholder committee. Designate a staff/official liason for further discussions.**

**Tell us what your issues are. We want to know what you see as the issues in the area, and ways you think we could help.**

**Work with us on the app to make it something that will work for your community**



**Consider working with us to become a WaterSmart and Community Rating System Community**





# Your Upper Basin Specialists



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**WE NEED  
YOU**

JOIN US FOR

# green drinks

UPPER SAVANNAH BASIN

19  
JUNE

GREEN DRINKS IS A PLACE TO MEET LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE, ENJOY A DRINK, AND LEARN ABOUT PROJECTS IN OUR OUR BEAUTIFUL SAVANNAH RIVER BASIN!

6:00PM- 7:00PM

BRIDGE CREEK INN, 60 S MAIN ST, CLAYTON, GA 30525