

STORMWATER

CONTINUES TO DAMAGE AND THREATEN HITCHCOCK WOODS

The Hitchcock Woods Foundation Board of Trustees has unanimously pinpointed stormwater runoff from the City of Aiken to be the greatest threat to Hitchcock Woods.

WHO: The City of Aiken has been directing and discharging most, if not all, of its stormwater runoff into the Woods (private property) for decades, via underground pipes. A city task force (that includes Foundation staff and trustees) was recently formed and a consultant hired to propose solutions to stop the damage to the health and integrity of Hitchcock Woods¹ caused by City stormwater runoff.

WHAT: Stormwater runoff, a leading source of water pollution nationwide,² is generated from rain that flows over hard surfaces such as streets and parking lots, rather than soaking into the ground. The City of Aiken's stormwater runoff is directed and discharged into the Woods at a high volume and velocity after every rain, and is causing damage to the Woods at an accelerated and alarming rate. One rain discharged 35 million gallons of stormwater runoff into the Woods through a 10' diameter pipe in a nine hour period, and at its peak, at a rate of 100,000 gallons per minute!³

Damage to the Woods caused by city stormwater runoff includes:

Massive Erosion: Woods real estate is lost after every rain. An area once passable by foot has been eroded into a 70' high and 25' wide canyon. Other areas in the Woods are in danger of becoming canyons of this scale.

Sedimentation: Silt and sediment from large scale erosion has smothered and killed many bottomland hardwood trees and has filled in and destroyed wetlands in the Woods.

Pollutants: City stormwater runoff picks up and flushes trash, chemicals, sediment and bacteria into the Woods that is harmful to the Woods health, ecology and pristine beauty.

Impeding management: Woods areas eroded from stormwater runoff are so fragile that invasive species cannot be mitigated in these areas until the damage ceases and healing can begin.

WHERE: Stormwater runoff from over 3,800 acres of property within the City of Aiken municipal limits is directed and discharged into the Woods.⁴ (Refer to the map on the back of this page for the sub-watersheds that drain into Hitchcock Woods)

WHY: In the absence of any significant City stormwater runoff management alternatives combined with the City of Aiken's growth since 1950, the sheer volume and velocity of stormwater runoff being directed and discharged into the Woods has grown to a devastating level.

WHEN: City stormwater runoff is directed and discharged into the Woods via underground pipes at a high volume and velocity after every rain event.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Contact your City Council representative and elected officials and tell them that redesigning the City of Aiken's antiquated stormwater runoff management system and protecting Hitchcock Woods must be a top priority. Visit <https://www.cityofaikensc.gov/government/city-council/> and <https://www.aikencountysc.gov/SGovernment> You can also get involved by attending council meetings and writing to local papers. Solutions that absorb and direct City stormwater runoff away from the Woods rather than into the Woods, must be incorporated.

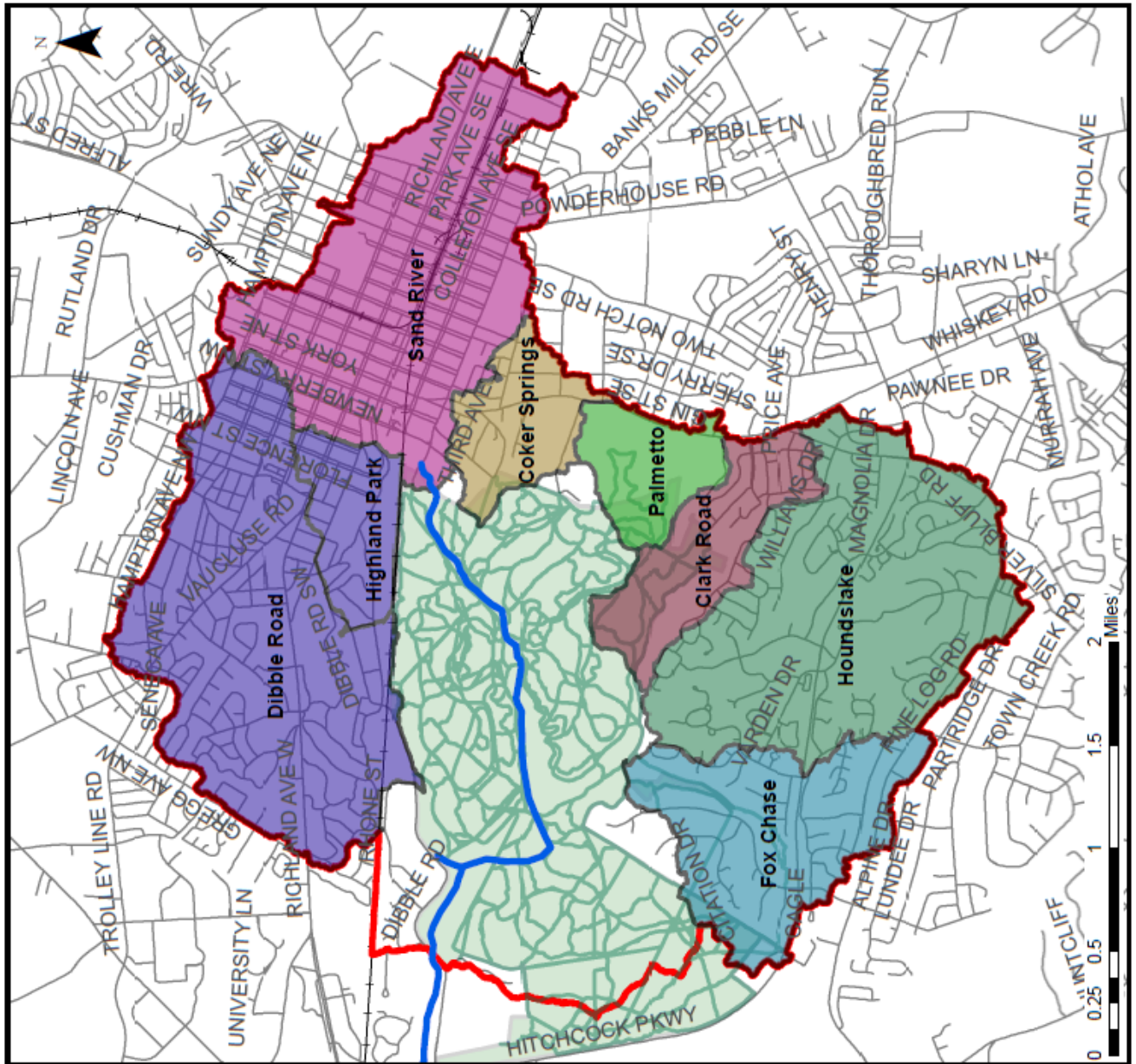
¹ Hitchcock Woods is privately owned and managed by the Hitchcock Woods Foundation, a 501(c) (3) non-profit funded by donor support. The Foundation receives no operating support from municipal, county, state or federal taxes.

² Source: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/stormwater-runoff/>

³ Source: Clemson University Sand River Hydrology Project.

⁴ Source: McCormick Taylor, City stormwater consultant.

Hitchcock Woods Total Watershed



Legend

- Sand River
- Hitchcock Woods Total Watershed
- Hitchcock Woods Property
- Hitchcock Woods Trails

Hitchcock Woods Sub-Watersheds

| Name | Area (acres) |
|----------------|--------------|
| Sand River | 1,109 |
| Dibble Road | 1,488 |
| Coker Springs | 253 |
| Clark Road | 342 |
| Palmetto | 219 |
| Houndslake | 1,204 |
| Highland Park* | 227 |
| Fox Chase | 597 |

Hitchcock Woods Sub-Watershed Total Area: 5,212 acres

Developed by:
 Clemson University Sand River Hydrology Project
 Dr. Christopher Post, Principal Investigator
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 7/7/2017