

For Immediate Release

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**WTF is the Message - Water the Future is the Mission
Charleston WATERKEEPER® Issues a Call to Action Empowering the Charleston
Community to Protect Their Right to Clean Water**

Charleston, SC - Sept. 15, 2009: Anniversaries are generally a time of reflection, recognition and celebration of growth, however, Charleston Waterkeeper is choosing to observe their one-year anniversary a bit differently. Beginning Wednesday, September 16, 2009, Charleston Waterkeeper will be launching the *Water the Future* (WTF) campaign: an invitation to every citizen of the tri-county area to celebrate the importance of our waterways while standing together to see that they are protected.

“The past 12 months have been a soft introduction to the organization and while we have made a great deal of progress, there is still so much that needs to be done, so many people we need to reach,” explains Cyrus Buffum, Executive Director of Charleston Waterkeeper, “When you find out that 100% of our waterways are considered impaired by various forms of pollution, it makes you think ‘WTF Charleston?’”

The goal of the WTF campaign is to inspire activism, promote community involvement and empower the individual to make a change while raising awareness about the true state of Charleston's waterways. Using sustainable and creative marketing practices, the WTF message will be spread throughout the city. Using light projectors, pressure washing techniques, viral videos and social networking sites, Charleston Waterkeeper hopes to reach the thousands of individuals in our great community who otherwise might not be aware of the issues degrading the quality of our waterways. In addition, Charleston Waterkeeper will have a strong physical presence throughout the next couple of months by participating in local events. The WTF campaign will conclude with the official Charleston Waterkeeper launch party on Friday, October 23, 2009.

The public is encouraged to *Water the Future* in three different ways. First, people can submit their photographs of our waterways, the good, the bad and the ugly. In order to stand to protect our waterways, it is first essential for the community to see the two faces of our waterways: the beautiful and the impaired. Second, people, businesses and organizations are encouraged to join Charleston Waterkeeper by becoming a member. The stronger the community working to improve the quality of our waterways, the greater the impact will be. Finally, everyone is encouraged to spread the word. This movement must be controlled not by one organization, but by an entire community. Water is the common thread that links every individual together throughout our diverse communities. It is essential that we preserve and protect the quality of our waterways for this generation and for future generations to enjoy.

Charleston Waterkeeper is a citizen-based, environmental organization committed to defending our waterways against pollution, while protecting the public's right to clean water. Part investigator, scientist, lawyer, educator and community organizer, Charleston Waterkeeper strives to improve the quality of Charleston's waterways. Our waterways have been given to us in trust that we, the public, will watch over and protect these natural resources. By involving the community and empowering individual citizens, we will return our waterways back to the public and assure that our rights to clean water are honored. As a member of the Waterkeeper Alliance, Charleston Waterkeeper is one of nearly 200 Waterkeeper programs around the world dedicated to building strong communities and protecting clean water. For more information, please visit www.charlestonwaterkeeper.org.

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