



**For more information, contact:**  
Ray T. Orvin, 299-4000

**For Immediate Release**  
July 5, 2005

### **Furman Research Group Tours Western Carolina Regional Sewer Authority's Georges Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant**

Western Carolina Regional Sewer Authority recently hosted a group of 27 undergraduate students participating in Furman University's River Basins Research Initiative, a research program that teaches students about the impact of urbanization on the streams and rivers of the Upstate region. Western Carolina helps the students understand how treated effluent from wastewater treatment plants affects the chemical and biological composition of rivers. This year, the students are studying the Saluda Reedy River Consortium for a river basin research program.

"Western Carolina Sewer Authority has been invaluable to our research, as they have granted us access to wastewater treatment plants to collect effluent samples, have shared data regarding flow and influent/effluent chemistry, and have provided the annual tour to our group," said Brannon Andersen, an Associate Professor at Furman's Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences.

This year's group, composed mainly of Furman students, also included students from Minnesota, Texas, and Wisconsin, as well as six students from a university in Puerto Rico. Their goals for the tour are to understand the chemistry of the water system, especially the ways in which nitrates and phosphates are delivered to our rivers and how these chemicals dissipate. The students are funded by a National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates grant, an Environmental Protection Agency subcontract, and a subgrant through the Saluda Reedy Watershed Consortium, which is funded by a grant from the Rasmussen Foundation. Western Carolina is pleased to contribute to such a highly regarded international program.

Western Carolina Regional Sewer Authority celebrates 75 years of environmental stewardship. The organization provides wastewater treatment services to over 400,000 industrial, commercial and residential customers in Greenville County

and parts of Anderson, Spartanburg and Laurens Counties. WCRSA operates and maintains 300 miles of major sewer trunk lines and 11 major wastewater treatment facilities.

###