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Lake's friends promote low-impact development

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SENECA — The runoff of rain water might not excite many, but the Friends of Lake Keowee Society is hoping to change that.

On Saturday, FOLKS will dedicate its low impact development demonstration project, which the organization started building in 2005.

Low impact development stresses the use of rain gardens -- vegetated depressions to capture and absorb rain water -- rain barrels, buffer plants, green roofs and pervious concrete with the goal of minimizing direct runoff into bodies of water to minimize erosion and pollution.

The FOLKS project, intended as the showpiece of an educational outreach program aimed at promoting clean water and good environmental practices, includes a 200-square foot green roof on an equipment shed and a pervious concrete parking lot, according to past FOLKS president Bill Graham.

The parking lot has an underground storm water collection system with a 2,000-gallon storage capacity, the water being used for drip irrigation of plants on the surrounding property.

The Clemson University Extension Service and the Clemson Horticulture Department partnered with FOLKS on the project, according to Graham, and second-year carpentry students with the Fred P. Hamilton Career Center in Seneca built the equipment shed.

The dedication will be from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Saturday at 4065 Keowee School Road, with the official dedication at 10:15 a.m. FOLKS members will give demonstrations of the project and literature on low impact development and other issues will be available.

There will also be demonstrations of rain barrel construction and rain barrels will be available for purchase.

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