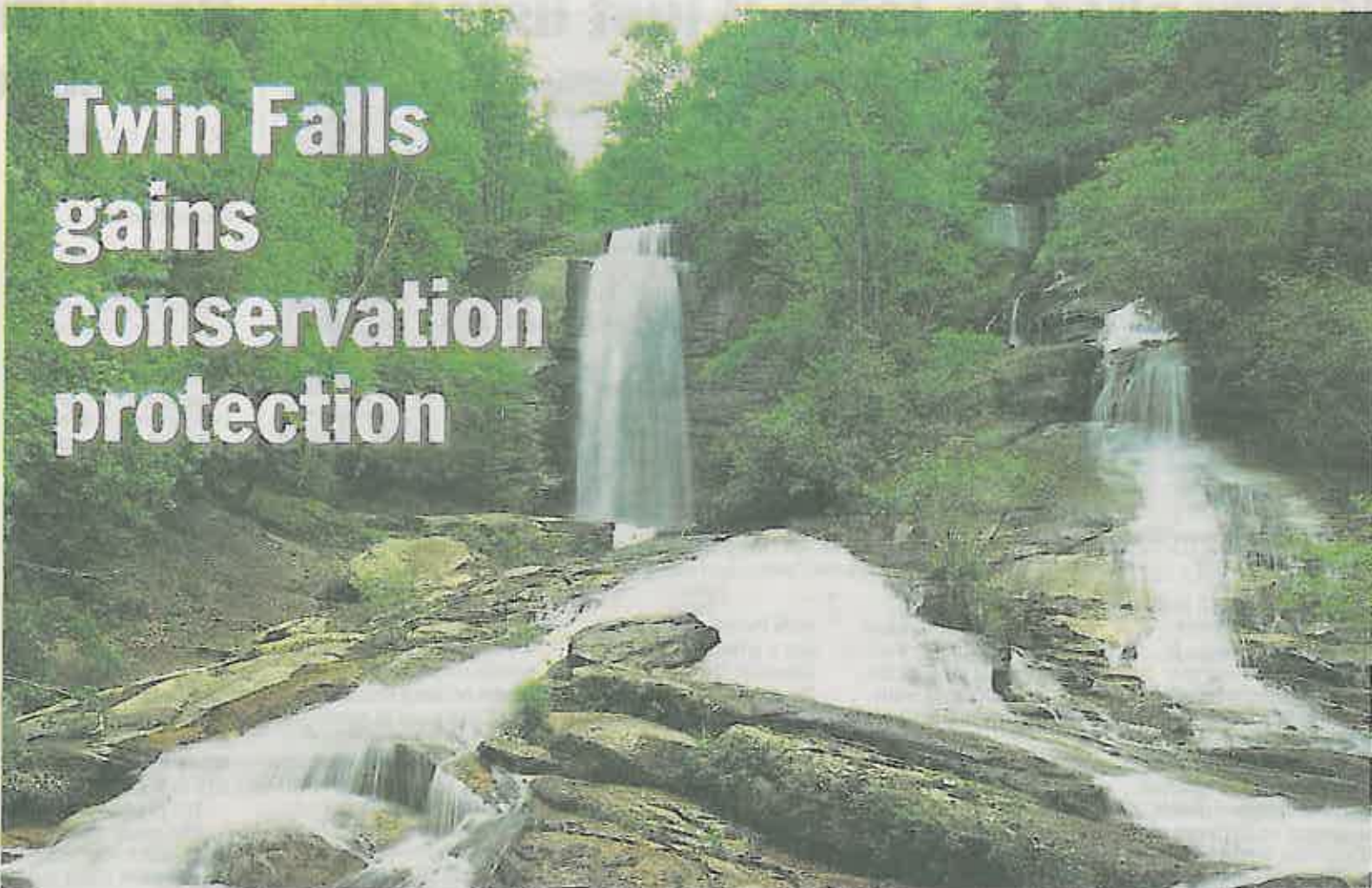


BREAKING OUT

Twin Falls gains conservation protection



Twin Falls is one of Pickens County's more popular waterfalls for visitors. TOMMY WYCHE/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Picturesque site is a perfect place to enjoy fall color

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Sometimes, it's the little things that make all the difference. Take Twin Falls, a popular Pickens County waterfall that's visited often by locals and visitors alike. The unique falls consists of a pair of waterfalls fed by Reedy Cove Creek. Visiting is easy. It's maybe a quarter-mile stroll along a flat path from a small parking area, once you drive into the

Eastatoe Valley area of the Jocassee Gorges. To veteran waterfall and park visitors, the area is strange in that it's not on state, local or federal park land or properties. Visitors are cautioned that the land is privately owned, but a nice wooden viewing platform built for photographers and for those who don't want to get soaked by spray makes the amenities seem to equal or surpass those at any other waterfall on public land. Truth is, the land is owned by the Florida-based Felburn Foundation.

And now it's permanently protected by a conservation agreement donated by the Foundation to The Nature Conservancy. The agreement is a little thing, unnoticeable by visitors, but large in the grand scheme of resource protection. "Nothing has changed," said Kristin Austin, project director for the S.C. Southern Blue Ridge Project of The Nature Conservancy. "Except we can all sleep at night now knowing it's conserved." The property isn't large, Austin said, about 25 acres, but the falls are

TWIN FALLS
Get directions to Twin Falls and see a trail map at: www.sctrails.net/trails/alltrails/waterfalls/Twinfalls.html For more about The Nature Conservancy's efforts, visit: www.nature.org/southcarolina

unique. And there is no real consensus on the name of the falls. The site is known variously by Twin Falls, Reedy Cove Falls, Rock Falls and Eastatoe Falls, according to Austin and the book "Waterfalls of South Carolina," written by Ben Brooks and Tim Cook.

Whatever you call the falls, **they** are special. But **these twin falls are more fraternal than identical.**

One plume from Reedy Cove Creek drops straight down 70 feet, while the other rushes down a set of rock ledges and tumbles across granite faces in its journey to

the bottom. The two rejoin in several large pools.

From the observation deck, maybe 100 feet from the base of the falls, a perpetual wet breeze blows off from the impact of the falls on the granite slabs below, greeting those who make the **easy, 10-minute hike with a soggy embrace.**

"Eastatoc Falls was one of the early acquisitions of the Felburn Foundation and, because of its scenic beauty and charm, was a particular favorite of the Foundation's founder, Phil Felburn," said Larry White, foundation president, in a press release provided by **The Nature Conservancy.**

"We are pleased to be able to join forces with **The Nature Conservancy to honor the intent of Mr. Felburn that this special place be permanently preserved and protected.**"

The property **will remain open to the public from sunrise to sunset to enjoy the short nature trail that traverses Reedy Cove Creek and leads to the viewing platform. The Felburn Foundation asks the public to enjoy viewing at the site, but not to climb the waterfalls.**

Now is a perfect time to see the falls, as the location in the midst of the Eastatoc Valley is one of the better locations in the Upstate to enjoy fall color. The surrounding forests of oaks and hickories fairly shimmer with yellows and reds, and the natural hues are a distinct contrast to the waterfalls themselves.