



# a natural state

**Artist: Peter Werner**

## **Video 4: Rivers**

Werner: This area is on the Saluda River, by the Riverbanks Zoo here in Columbia. It's a place that I come to often because I teach whitewater canoeing through the University, in continuing education, and I'm also probably going to begin doing it through Adventure Carolina.

But we have a fault line here in Columbia, and it's a wonderful place because we have rapids. It's right down in center city, and yet we have all the qualities of the mountain rivers. There are several rapids on here that could be considered Class 2 and Class 3, and my students enjoy learning whitewater canoeing skills here on this river.

But we also, as we're paddling along, take a look at all the sticks that are available. And every time we find a nice one, I put it in my canoe and that becomes my next broom handle.

Well, we're making some progress here in Columbia. There's an SOS—Save Our Saluda—group that has made great strides in trying to save the river. There are different other experiences where they try to clean up the riverbanks on a fairly consistent basis. But then you always get people out here sunning themselves from time to time—drinking or smoking and leaving all of their picnic food, etc., their trash, and wrapping paper around. So that, that disturbs me a great deal.

But, environmentally speaking, I think we're making some pretty good strides. Here in Columbia, we're getting a, a walkway...a greenway...along the riverbanks. And, and people are taking a lot more time to be by the river—walking, rollerblading, bicycling, jogging. And I like to see that in Columbia.