

Public to hear EPA's plans for river

Twelve Mile meeting set for Dec. 1

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PICKENS — The Environmental Protection Agency will hold a public meeting to tell local residents about plans for testing and study on the Twelve Mile River to check for any risk from PCBs to people in

the water or on the banks now that two dams have been removed.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Dec. 1 in the auditorium at the Pickens County Administration Building, said Craig Zeller, EPA project manager.

The meeting is to tell people about the approach

and the scope of the work, Zeller said. Sampling to test PCB concentrations won't likely begin until later in December or possibly January, he said.

The Environmental Protection Agency recently ordered extensive testing and study on the Twelve Mile River to be sure that it will be safe for recreation.

The agency wants to know if the river meets fed-

eral standards for health and safety for people swimming and kayaking in the water, children splashing and wading along the shore and families picnicking on the banks or sandbars, Zeller said.

Concerns were voiced by local residents that long-buried contamination had re-entered the river that flows to Lake Hartwell after the dams were removed

earlier this year.

Separate rounds of independent testing by Pickens County and Upstate Forever found high concentrations of PCBs, elevating public concern.

The dams were removed as part of a court settlement for PCB contamination that entered the river and Lake Hartwell from a former capacitor manufacturing site in Pick-

ens.

The contamination resulted in health advisories that have been posted for decades warning against eating fish from the waters.

A Superfund cleanup calls for clean sediment flowing downstream to cover contamination in the lake, and the dams were removed to augment the healing process.