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Cliffs developer, environmental groups to work solve river issue  
*Both sides agree to 45-day delay in permits for new community on North Saluda*

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A Greenville-based environmental group and developer Jim Anthony have agreed to work together over the next 45 days to resolve concerns about Anthony's golf-course development in northern Greenville County.

Brad Wyche, executive director of Upstate Forever, said Thursday the two sides are discussing Anthony's plan for The Cliffs at Mountain Park and the development's impact on the North Saluda River, particularly the golf course and a proposal to discharge 175,000 gallons of wastewater a day into the river.

"Basically, the agreement is that the Cliffs will request that the permitting (regulatory) agencies not take any action on the permit applications during this 45-day period," Wyche said. "That will allow us to focus on, hopefully, resolving the issues, rather than having to deal with filing appeals and just all of the things that are triggered when permit decisions are made."

Anthony, founder and president of The Cliffs Communities Inc., which is based in Travelers Rest, couldn't be reached for comment.

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But in a voice-mail message left with The Greenville News, Anthony said he agreed to the 45-day period to work with the conservation group to determine "if we can improve our plan and come together."

"We're real optimistic that we can do that," Anthony said.

Anthony's proposed Mountain Park project will span 5,000 acres and include residential development. The proposed golf course is within the floodplain and is bisected by the North Saluda, federal officials said.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials have said they are concerned about the project's impact on the river, portions of which they believe Anthony will realign to accommodate the golf-course design.

Agency officials said they believe the impact could constitute "significant degradation" under provisions of the Clean Water Act.

They also recommended the proposed project be suspended until all of the environmental impacts on the river and the surrounding environment can be determined.

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