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ANDERSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

## Federal stimulus money funding projects at Hartwell Lake

By John Staed  
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CLEMSON — This story has been corrected from its original version.

Lake Hartwell Association members got updates Monday on toxic chemicals in the lake, how the Army Corps of Engineers is handling lake levels and what Upstate Forever sees as the biggest threat to the lake.

The group, meeting in Clemson, also heard how federal stimulus money is helping to repair and renovate a number of projects in the Hartwell area.

Association President Hugh Burnham said the group was pleased with the use of the money to add courtesy ramps at Eighteen Mile Creek and Camp Creek areas, plus build a fishing pier for children at the Twin Lakes area.

“That kind of thing (renovations) is so important to the lake,” he said.

Burnham said the Corps “has basically followed” a three-phase plan on water levels submitted to the Corps in the spring. Current flow level from the Hartwell and Lake Thurmond system was about 4,000 cubic feet per second, said Col. Edward Kertis, district commander of the Corps’ Savannah River District.

This fall, the Corps plans to reduce the outflows, but it is doing an environmental assessment now “to see if we can go to 3,100 (cfs) like we did last year,” Kertis said. The Corps began reducing the outflow to that level in November.

Kertis said there were a number of stimulus projects under way, including many at Hartwell. They included \$350,000 for shoreline stabilization, \$100,000 for a new pump station at Clemson, \$450,000 for a new electrical room at Hartwell Dam, \$2.4 million for new switch gear station at the dam, \$60,000 for a new dock at Twin Lakes, among others.

During the meeting, State Rep. Don Bowen said he hoped two bills that would create state water boards to deal with rights and other issues could be pushed through the Legislature this year.

Brad Wyche, president of Upstate Forever, an environmental group, said unchecked growth is the biggest worry facing Hartwell Lake. It could affect many facets of the lake, from water use to water basin drainage patterns to economic impacts, he said.

The group is urging controlled growth to save governments’ money and protect the quality of life in the Upstate, he said.

Larry Dyck, a director of the Lake Hartwell Association, provided an update on the case involving PCBs in the lake. He said a status meeting is scheduled Aug. 31 in federal court in Anderson. And a hearing on plans to remove a third dam affected by PCB-tainted sediment is scheduled Oct. 13.

PCBs were released into the Twelve Mile Creek, which empties into Hartwell Lake, when a company that built capacitors used the toxic chemical. A court-ordered settlement and cleanup have been slow in being completed, but recent court activity has revived the issue.

The annual meeting for the association is scheduled Oct. 29 at the civic center in Anderson.



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