

## Twelve Mile Creek

## PCB trustees don't support removal of third dam

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If lake and conservation groups get their wish, a federal judge will recommend the third remaining dam on Twelve Mile Creek be torn down as part of a PCB removal plan for the waterway and Hartwell Lake.

But the organization that oversees how a PCB-removal plan will be carried out said Tuesday in federal court that's not its recommendation. Instead, the group wants the public to help it consider how to spend about \$9 million from a list of proposals that have been presented to it.

The court hearing Tuesday was part update on efforts to remove or reduce PCBs in the creek and in Hartwell Lake and part public hearing on suggestions for the third dam's fate.

From 1955 to 1977, PCBs were released from a capacitor plant off Twelve Mile Creek, causing pollution of the creek and numerous health advisories on eating fish from those waters. A 2006 consent agreement requires removal of two dams along the creek to allow sediment to cover PCB-tainted soil in the river.

Initial work on removing the two dams was to start Tuesday, according to a



The dam on Twelve Mile Creek at the Catechee Mill site is one of two that will be destroyed to counter PCB contamination in the creek and Hartwell Lake.

Schlumberger Technology Corp. spokesman.

Schlumberger Technology Corp. acquired the Sangamo-Weston plant, which made the capacitors, and assumed liability for the cleanup. Schlumberger agreed to a May 2006 consent decree in which it agreed to pay for removal of the two dams, called Woodside I and Woodside II, as a way to allow sediment flow to cover PCB-tainted soil.

The agreement also included about \$9 million to restore fish habitat. That money could be used toward the third dam.

The hearing was before U.S. District Judge G. Ross Anderson Jr. Paul League, who represents the Lake Hartwell Natural Resource Trustees, said during the hearing that "a limited nexus may exist between removal of the third dam and money recovered for

restoration or replacement of resources lost ... The council concluded removal of the third dam would not justify the cost."

The trustees plan to hold a public hearing on proposals submitted to the council, including one from an Anderson County group, to guide them in how to award the \$9 million in settlement funds, League said.

But several representatives of the Lake Hartwell

Association, Upstate Forever and individuals said the third dam should be the top priority of the trustees.

Frank Holleman of the Wyche Law Firm for Upstate Forever said a free flow of sediment is needed along the entire river.

"It's our belief that removal of the third dam is essential," Holleman said. "That sediment will cover up sediment and will be the pollution cure."

The Pickens County Council has passed a resolution asking for removal of the third dam.

Larry Dyck, a retired Clemson professor and river restoration expert who has led the effort to remove the third dam, said in a presentation to Anderson that removing the dam would allow free flow of about 100 miles of river, open up high-quality fish habitat and offer more sediment to cover PCB-tainted soil.

The two dams now being torn down cover only a two-mile stretch of the river and don't open up enough habitat and flow, Dyck said.

If done right, "we see this as a national model for PCB restoration," he said.

He projected a cost of about \$5 million to remove the dam and provide a reservoir pond and pumping equipment for the

Easley-Central Water District. The district uses the third dam as a reservoir for its water supply and has said that if the dam was removed, then it would need a new reservoir and related pumps.

That still would leave money for other projects envisioned by the trustees, said Wyche of Upstate Forever.

Anderson said during the hearing that he believes the trustees have the final authority on what to do about the third dam, although Wyche and others said they hope the judge will include in his order a recommendation for its removal.

Carl Edwards, speaking for a group backing the Water Education and Environmental Center, asked for consideration of the center, a proposed 32,000-square foot facility to be built on 21 acres adjoining Lake Hartwell. The trustees originally turned down the proposal, but Edwards said during the hearing that they have a face-to-face meeting with the group to pitch the plan.

"We feel the original proposal to the trustees was not completely understood," Edwards said.

Anderson did not say when the order would be issued.