Cammick pitches idea for curbing 'Rock' drownings

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BY STEVEN BRADLEY
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — An Oconee County Council member hopes to do something about the drowning deaths that have been an all-too-frequent occurrence at one popular Lake Keowee swimming spot.

District 1 member Edda Cammick referenced at Tuesday's council meeting the most recent drowning at "The Rock" on Lake Keowee, where a teenager from Greer lost his life last week.



Cammick

"We have one virtually every year; we've had one ever since I've moved here in that same spot," she said. "Young people don't realize there's a huge distance between the shore side on Fall Creek Landing and that rock, and they try to swim from one side to the next and they don't make it."

Cammick, whose district includes the Fall Creek Landing area, proposed that, given the funds in the budget, the county put a floating platform halfway between "The Rock" and the shore to provide a place for swimmers to stop and rest if needed.



McCall

Chairman Wayne McCall said he thought Cammick's idea was a sound one.

"There's a land bridge between the shore and out there — at full pond it gets about chest deep or neck deep and comes back up again — but the trouble is it's only about 3 feet wide at the top," McCall said. "So you step off one way or the other and they're gone, and unfortunately they drowned. Not everybody that comes this way can swim."

Administrator Scott Moulder said the county could take the idea to Duke Energy's Lake Management Office and see what it would take to make Cammick's idea for a platform a reality.

Late Friday afternoon, 17-year-old Treven J. Tolliver of Greer jumped into the water from the shore of Fall Creek Landing and began swimming toward the island called "The Rock," located roughly 200 feet offshore.

Tolliver tired and never made it to land. Oconee rescue personnel located his body approximately 26 feet below the surface. Although he was resuscitated at Oconee Memorial Hospital, he died later that night after he was transferred to Greenville Memorial Hospital.

Oconee emergency management director Scott Krein told The Journal this week that in 2012 alone seven people drowned in the lake. He's also aware of the loss of life around the area of "The Rock."

Drownings were reported there in 2010 and twice in 2013 in addition to last week's incident.

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Oconee County Council member Edda Cammick proposed officials build a platform near "The Rock" on Lake Keowee in an effort to prevent incidents such as last week's drowning death of a Greer teen.

DROWNINGS: 'Not everybody that comes this way can swim'

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