

Duke told to keep lake access simple Study reveals demand for modest improvements

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SALEM — The people who use the public access points on Lakes Keowee and Jocassee are pretty satisfied with the amenities already in place.

Details of a yearlong Recreational Use and Needs (RUN) study conducted by Duke Energy were unveiled at a Friends of Lake Keowee Society (FOLKS)-sponsored forum Thursday night. Several local officials, representatives of

Duke and representatives of the Boston-based firm that conducted the study laid out the results for a crowd of about 50 people.

What they found was that most people using the public access points on the lakes are satisfied with what is there and that the majority only wish to see passive development of those sites, researchers said.

That came as good news to FOLKS President Bill Graham.

"I thought there would be more demand," Graham said. "The reality, however, is that is

handicapped.
Duke officials indicated that, based on the study results, they will draft a Recreation Management Plan that must be submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). That report is due next January, but Duke officials indicated they hope to have it complete by November.

The actually results of the RUN Survey may not be field with FERC, something that surprised Turetzky, who had hoped there would be a 30-day public

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not the point. There really is a high level of satisfaction."

FOLKS Executive Director Ben Turetzky said people approached at the sites said they would courtesy docks, picnic facilities, better and more ample parking and facilities for the

public access points. Warpath Landing in Pickens County has been cleared for a 65-acre commercial development that will include a hotel, restaurants and large-scale boat dockage.

It is believe Duke plans to enhance the Falls Creek landing located inside the "Cliff's at Keowee Falls. Which access point may be third on the list is

unknown.
Oconee County Council Chairman George Blanchard attended Thursday meeting, indicating that the county may have interest in working with Duke to develop some of the access points.

Turetzky said he believed Duke will begin making passive improvements to some of

the landings based on the RUN study, but he added Duke is still likely to entertain anyone who comes forward with an improvement plan for the sites.

He also added that FOLKS may turn its attention to trying to convince FERC not to hold enhancement over the heads of Duke as it moves towards relicensing.

comment period.
"It appears now that the (RUN) study is only going to be the basis for putting together the Recreation Management Plan that will be filed. That plan, if approved by FERC, would remain in effect for the lakes until Duke seeks relicensing in 2016."

While the fact that the majority of those surveyed preferred to see limited development of the public access points, Turetzky said the study does not have any bearing on Duke's issuance of dock permits for private homes

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or developments.

There were many questions Thursday about the boat-carrying capacity of the lake, but Duke emphasized that the study was about the access points, not private property or potential large scale developments.

Turetzky said Duke's current license agreement with FERC calls for the enhancement of three