

# Hartwell users to enjoy improvements

PCB settlement money goes to work

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CLEMSON — Big changes are coming soon to a small boat launch area on Lake Hartwell near here as money from a \$9 million PCB settlement begins to flow.

Today, there's a boat ramp and a little parking on the 4-acre site. No fishing dock, no lights, not even a portable outhouse. Zilch.

So envision this: Parking for 50 vehicles with boat trailers, 10 single-vehicle spaces, new asphalt, improved access ramps, lighting, a courtesy dock, a fishing pier or boardwalk and real restrooms. And poten-

tially a walking trail and picnic area, all minutes from Clemson and Seneca.

"That is a heavily used little area. It's an area that would really benefit," said Dan Rankin, a regional fisheries biologist at the state Department of Natural Resources office at Clemson.

Seneca Creek will be one of the first South Carolina projects to benefit from court settlement money stemming from PCB contamination to Lake Hartwell and the Twelve Mile River, said Ross Self, chief of Freshwater Fisheries for the state Department of Natural Resources and set-

PCB money will improve boating and fishing access on Lake Hartwell



SUZIE RIDDLE/STAFF

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## LAKE

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tlement trustee chairman.

For decades, health advisories have warned against eating certain fish caught in the river and the lake. Part of the settlement money is intended to compensate for damage to recreational fishing in Lake Hartwell, one of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' most visited lakes nationwide.

The same settlement included the removal of two dams from the Twelve Mile River earlier this year, and some funds are reserved toward possible removal of a third dam.

Under the 2006 settlement, Schlumberger Technology Corp., an international firm that now owns a former capacitor manufacturing site in Pickens that released the PCBs, paid \$11.96 million to a fund to benefit fishing, habitat and natural resources. The money includes \$9 million for projects in South Carolina with the rest going to Georgia projects.

Money could be released by the end of the year for some of the projects in South Carolina, and some of the planned construction could be in place

next summer, Self said.

U.S. District Judge G. Ross Anderson Jr., who ordered the settlement, wants to see the public enjoy the benefits.

"The sooner we can get that done" Anderson said, the happier he will be. "We need it."

Lake Hartwell State Recreation Area and a planned event center at the Green Pond access area on Lake Hartwell near Anderson also are expected to be among the first projects to

receive their allocations, Self said.

The 680-acre Lake Hartwell State Recreation Area near the intersection of Interstate 85 and state Route 178 has camping, hiking and picnic areas, restrooms and other amenities but no fishing pier.

The fund would pay for construction of a pier to provide angler access to deep water.

Visit this story on GreenvilleOnline.com to view the full spending plan.

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