Keowee land feud nears end

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WALHALLA — A hearing is scheduled Monday that may finally put to rest a long-running land dispute over more than 30 acres of Lake Keowee shoreline property that's been litigated for seven years.

The case, pitting the estate of R. Wallace McMahan and Crescent Resources, LLC, the former real estate arm of Duke Energy South Carolina, is listed as having been "fully settled" during an alternate dispute resolution (ADR) hearing held May 16. Monday's hearing at 2 p.m. before circuit judge J. Cordell Maddox Jr. is intended to finalize the ADR settlement.

Since the lawsuit was filed July 31, 2007, Wallace McMahan passed away on Dec. 21, 2010. His attorney, Richard McClel-

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lion of Anderson, passed away June 19, 2012.

The plaintiff's lawsuit has been fought since by his son, David McMahan. McClellion's son, W. Richard McClellion III, also an attorney, agreed to take over the case at McMahan's request.

According to the original lawsuit, the late Wallace McMahan, through his attorney, claimed he sold 77.5 acres for $22,000, or $283.87 per acre, to Crescent's predecessor, South Carolina Land and Timber, under the threat that if he did not sell his property would be confiscated. McMahan's property was among the hundreds of acres purchased during the early 1960s so that it could be flooded to create Lake Keowee, and Duke Energy could operate its power generation plant.

The plaintiff claimed promises made to McMahan were allegedly not honored, including the right to water stock. Of the 77 acres McMahan sold, about 34 acres were not inundated, and he asked to buy that land back. Crescent allegedly refused. At the height of the real estate rush, Crescent lots sold in excess of $300,000 per acre, the lawsuit claims.

David McMahan said the settlement reached at the ADR hearing calls for a land swap between the parties. He said while an agreement has been reached in principle, it has not been finalized.

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