Lake resort in the works

State board to rule on Hartwell proposal

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A resort development long planned on the shore of Lake Hartwell in Oconee County could soon move forward.

The South Carolina Budget and Control Board is scheduled to decide next month whether to sublease about 330 acres near the Georgia state line to a developer, Sanctuary Pointe LLC, which plans two hotels, an 18-hole golf course and rental villas on the property.

Duane Parrish, director of South Carolina's Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, said the resort would employ hundreds of people and be a "flagship tourism product for Oconee County."

The proposed site next to Lake Hartwell State Park has been designated for resort development since 1980, and Sanctuary Pointe first submitted its plan in 2007, Parrish said.

If the plan goes forward, Parrish said, the developer would make lease payments to PRT, which would use the money to improve Lake Hartwell State Park and Sadlers Creek State Park, which is located in Anderson County along Lake Hartwell.

He said the developer would have to complete environmental and endangered species studies and have each element of the development approved individually by PRT and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which owns the land and leases it to South Carolina at no cost.

Elmon "El" Henry, manager of Sanctuary Pointe, said he and the four other members of the development team won't be able to nail down financing until they can secure control of the site.