

Title: **'PRAYING FOR THE ENTIRE TOWNVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FAMILY'**

Author:

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**'PRAYING FOR THE ENTIRE
TOWNVILLE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL FAMILY'**

"As we work together with law enforcement to make sure they have the support they need to investigate what happened in Townville, Michael and I ask that everyone across South Carolina join us in praying for the entire Townville Elementary School family and those touched by today's tragedy."

— S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley,
R-Lexington

Title: **Contactors get look at beach project**
 Author: By GEORGE SALSBERY gsalsberry@lowcountry.com
 Size: 51.30 column inches
 Walterboro, SC Circulation: 5673



Contactors get look at beach project

By GEORGE SALSBERY
 gsalsberry@lowcountry.com

Edisto Beach's plans for a based Coastal Science and new and improved shoreline Engineering conducted two took another in a long series pre-bid conferences at Edisto of steps to accomplishing that Beach Town Hall for the work, goal Wednesday morning. which is estimated to have a

Town officials and representatives of Columbia-

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BEACH

Continued from 1A

\$12 million price tag.

One pre-bid conference involved the companies that might submit a bid to handle the project to extend the groins at Edisto Beach.

The second conference had the town officials and engineers meeting with the representatives of companies interested in the beach nourishment project.

Town Administrator Iris Hill explains that the groin extension work and the renourishment project will basically be undertaken at the same time.

Hill said that there has been "quite a bit of interest" from companies considering a bid on the projects.

The town will be able to get a better handle on the level of interest by seeing how many companies attend the mandatory pre-bid conferences.

Hill said that it was "possible but not likely that companies would be bidding on both projects."

The bids for the two projects have to be submitted to the town by the end of business on Oct. 11.

The town and Coastal Science will review the bids and hopefully be able to award the contracts later in October. Work could begin as early as Nov. 1. The bid specification calls for the work to be completed by the end of April 2017.

Hill said the plan to extend the length of 26 groins will serve two purposes. Having the groins extend further into

the ocean, she explained, will enable Edisto Beach to have a wider beach "to provide a wider recreational area."

The longer groins, she added, should "also prevent us from having to nourish the beach as often."

The projects have to be undertaken together because the sand pulled from the ocean and deposited on the beach can be used as a work platform for the contractor handling the groin extensions. That work, she added, might also be done from a barge.

As part of the beach renourishment portion of the work, a offshore borrow area (the location where the sand will be pulled from the ocean and placed on shore) has been designated about a mile off the southern edge of the project area. The contractor can pull up to 1.6 million cubic yards of sand from the 145-acre borrow area.

In order to have the groin work undertaken, Edisto Beach had to obtain a work permit from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's Ocean and Coastal Resource Management Department and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. Hill said that Edisto Beach State Park was the town's partner in seeking the DHEC permit.

Hill said that the town has \$7 million of the projects' projected costs in hand. Over a number of years, the town council has been setting aside money for the pe-

riodic renourishment of the beach — the last renourishment was done in 2006.

The \$3 million amassed by the town will be supplemented by \$4 million allocated to beach renourishment from Colleton County's Capital Projects Sale Tax.

When the county placed the Capital Projects Sales Tax question on the ballot, the state required that the ballot language specify which projects the funds generated by the one-cent sales tax would fund.

The county had to form a citizens committee to obtain requests for the funding and list them in order of importance.

The citizen's committee, following a lengthy process, placed the beach renourishment project at the top of the list.

In addition to being the top project identified by the citizen's committee, the beach renourishment project was the Capital Projects Sales Tax's third highest allocation, only eclipsed by the \$6.6 million set aside for Walterboro's I-95 Business Loop project and the \$5.1 million construction of a law enforcement center.

Hill said the remaining \$5 million needed to fully fund the current plan will hopefully come from the state.

When the current state budget was being formulated, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley successfully sought to have



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\$30 million set aside for beach renourishment projects state-wide.

Edisto Beach filed a grant application with the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism seeking \$5 million from the state.

Hill said she is not sure when the

state department will be deciding the distribution of the grant.

If the state decides against Edisto Beach's grant application or does not fully fund the request, Hill said the members of town council will be faced

with the prospect of down-sizing the project.

Hill said with the project getting closer to beginning, town officials are "looking forward to it. We are excited that it is happening."

Title: **Authorities: School shooter killed father before rampage**
 Author: BY JOHNNY CLARK Associated Press
 Size: 65.1 column inches
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



SOUTH CAROLINA

Authorities: School shooter killed father before rampage

BY JOHNNY CLARK
 Associated Press

TOWNVILLE, S.C.

A teenager killed his father at their home Wednesday before going to a nearby elementary school and opening fire with a handgun, wounding two students and a teacher, authorities said.

The teen was apprehended within minutes of the school shooting in this rural town about 110 miles northeast of Atlanta. One of the students was shot in the leg and the other in the foot, Capt. Garland Major with the Anderson County sheriff's office said. Both students were male. The female teacher was hit in the shoulder.

Before the shooting at Townville Elementary about 1:45 p.m., the teen gunned down his 47-year-old father, Jeffrey Osborne, at their home about 2 miles from the school, authorities said.

"We are heartbroken about this senseless act of violence," said Joanne Avery, superintendent of Anderson County School District 4. She canceled classes for the rest of the week. Authorities did not release a motive for the shooting. They said they weren't sure if the students and teacher were targeted.

Asked about the teen's relationship to the students, Major said "I know they all go to school together." He later said the teen was being home-schooled and didn't clarify his earlier remark.

Authorities said they believe there was only one shooter and that all other students at Townville Elementary were safe. The students were bused to a nearby church and reunited with their parents.

They hugged and kissed.

The school has about 300 students in its pre-kindergarten to sixth-grade classrooms. It is in a very rural part of the state and surrounded by working farms.

"This is the country," Brandi Pierce, the mother of a sixth-grader, told The Associated Press as she began to cry. "You don't have this in the country. It just don't exist out here."

Jamie Meredith, a student's mother, said some of the children went into a bathroom during the shooting. "I don't know how they knew to go in the bathroom, but I know her teacher was shaken up. I know all the kids were scared. There was a bunch of kids crying. She didn't talk for about five minutes when I got her," she told WYFF.

Television images showed officers swarming the school after the report of an active shooter. Some were on top of the roof, while others were walking around the building. Students were driven away on buses accompanied by police officers.

Gov. Nikki Haley released a statement shortly after the shooting.

"As we work together with law enforcement to make sure they have the support they need to investigate what happened in Townville, Michael and I ask that everyone across South Carolina join us in praying for the entire Townville Elementary School family and those touched by today's tragedy."

The rural town is along Interstate 85 near the Georgia-South Carolina state line.

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RAINIER EHRHARDT AP

Lilly Chapman, 8, cries after being reunited with her father, John Chapman, at Oakdale Baptist Church on Wednesday in Townville, S.C. Students were evacuated to the church following a shooting at Townville Elementary School.

Title: **TEEN FIRES GUN IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**
 Author: By JOHNNY CLARK Associated Press
 Size: 89.43 column inches
 Greenwood, SC Circulation: 16494



TEEN FIRES GUN IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

3 injured, school shooter killed father before attacking

By **JOHNNY CLARK**

Associated Press

TOWNVILLE — A teenager killed his father at their home Wednesday before going to a nearby elementary school and opening fire with a handgun, wounding two students and a teacher, authorities said. See **SHOOTER**, page 3A

The teen was apprehended within minutes of the school shooting in this rural town about 110 miles north-east of Atlanta. One of the students was shot in the leg and the other in the foot, Capt. Garland Major with the Anderson County Sheriff's Office said. Both students were male. The female teacher was hit in the shoulder. Before the shooting at Townville Elementary about 1:45 p.m., the teen gunned down his 47-year-old father, Jeffrey Osborne, at their home about 2 miles from the school, authorities said.

SHOOTER

Continued from 1A

"We are heartbroken about this senseless act of violence," said Joanne Avery, superintendent of Anderson County School District 4. She canceled classes for the rest of the week.

The shooter never entered the school building and was apprehended by firefighter Jamie Brock, a 30-year veteran of the Townville Volunteer Fire Department, according to Anderson County sheriff's Lt. Sheila Cole.

Authorities did not reveal the teen's age at a news conference Wednesday afternoon, and Cole says she doesn't have his age. The Anderson Independent-Mail quotes Anderson County Sheriff Chief Deputy Keith Smith as saying the teen is

14 and could be charged as a minor.

Authorities did not release a motive for the shooting and said they weren't sure if the students and teacher were targeted.

One of the students and the teacher were released from the hospital Wednesday evening, AnMed Health spokeswoman Juana Slade. Greenville News earlier reported that a 6-year-old was airlifted to Greenville Memorial in critical condition. Greenville Memorial spokeswoman Sandy Dees confirmed that a child was taken to the hospital but would not release any further information.

Asked about the teen's relationship to the students, Major said "I know they all go to school together." He later said the teen was being home-

schooled and didn't clarify his earlier remark.

Authorities said they believe there was only one shooter and that all other students at Townville Elementary were safe. The students were bused to a nearby church and reunited with their parents. They hugged and kissed.

The school has about 300 students in its pre-kindergarten to sixth-grade classrooms. It is in a very rural part of the state and surrounded by working farms.

"This is the country," Brandi Pierce, the mother of a sixth-grader, told The Associated Press as she began to cry. "You don't have this in the country. It just don't exist out here."

Jamie Meredith, a student's mother, said some of the children went into a bathroom

during the shooting.

"I don't know how they knew to go in the bathroom, but I know her teacher was shaken up. I know all the kids were scared. There was a bunch of kids crying. She didn't talk for about 5 minutes when I got her," she told WYFF.

Television images showed officers swarming the school after the report of an active shooter. Some were on top of the roof while others were walking around the building. Students were driven away on buses accompanied by police officers.

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PHOTOS BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOP: Lilly Chapman, 8, cries after being reunited with her father, John Chapman at Oakdale Baptist Church.



ABOVE: Members of law enforcement investigate an area at Townville Elementary School on Wednesday in Townville, S.C.

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 Author: BY JOHNNY CLARK Associated Press
 Size: 65.1 column inches
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



SOUTH CAROLINA

Authorities: School shooter killed father before rampage

BY JOHNNY CLARK

Associated Press
TOWNVILLE, S.C.

A teenager killed his father at their home Wednesday before going to a nearby elementary school and opening fire with a handgun, wounding two students and a teacher, authorities said.

The teen was apprehended within minutes of the school shooting in this rural town about 110 miles northeast of Atlanta. One of the students was shot in the leg and the other in the foot, Capt. Garland Major with the Anderson County sheriff's office said. Both students were male. The female teacher was hit in the shoulder.

Before the shooting at Townville Elementary about 1:45 p.m., the teen gunned down his 47-year-old father, Jeffrey Osborne, at their home about 2 miles from the school, authorities said.

"We are heartbroken about this senseless act of violence," said Joanne Avery, superintendent of Anderson County School District 4. She canceled classes for the rest of the week. Authorities did not release a motive for the shooting. They said they weren't sure if the students and teacher were targeted.

Asked about the teen's relationship to the students, Major said "I know they all go to school together." He later said the teen was being home-schooled and didn't clarify his earlier remark.

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Title: **School shooting rocks rural S.C. town**
 Author: BY JOHNNY CLARK Associated Press
 Size: 64.01 column inches
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



School shooting rocks rural S.C. town

Authorities: Teenager first killed father at their Upstate home

BY JOHNNY CLARK

Associated Press

TOWNVILLE — A teenager killed his father at their home Wednesday before going to a nearby elementary school and opening fire with a handgun, wounding two students and a teacher, authorities said.

The teen was apprehended within minutes of the school shooting in this

rural town about 110 miles northeast of Atlanta. One of the students was shot in the leg and the other in the foot, Capt. Garland Major with the Anderson County Sheriff's Office said. Both students were male. The female teacher was hit in the shoulder.

Before the shooting at Townville Elementary at about 1:45 p.m., the teen gunned down his 47-year-old father,

Jeffrey Osborne, at their home about 2 miles from the school, authorities said.

"We are heartbroken about this senseless act of violence," said Joanne Avery, superintendent of Anderson County School District 4. She canceled classes for the rest of the week.

The teen, crying and upset, called his grandmother's cellphone at 1:44 p.m., Anderson County Coroner Greg Shore said. The grandparents couldn't

understand what was going on, so they went to his home just 100 yards away. When they got there, they found Osborne had been shot and their grandson was not there.

Sheriff John Skipper said the shooter pulled into the school parking lot and immediately started firing as he got out of the vehicle and moved toward the school.

The shooter never entered the school building, though, and was apprehended by firefighter Jamie Brock, a 30-year veteran of the Townville Volunteer Fire Department, according to Anderson County sheriff's Lt. Sheila Cole.

Authorities did not reveal the teen's age at a news conference Wednesday afternoon, and Cole said she doesn't

Please see **SHOOTING**, Page 14A

SHOOTING

CONTINUED from 1A

have his age. The Anderson *Independent-Mail* quoted Anderson County Sheriff Chief Deputy Keith Smith as saying the teen is 14 and could be charged as a minor. Authorities did not release a motive for the shooting and said they weren't sure if the students and teacher were targeted. The sheriff said the teen had been homeschooled.

"There are no racial undertones there. There's no terrorism involved," Major said. "We're confident we have the sole shooter and no one else is involved."

Skipper said the teen's mother was at work at the time of the shooting.

One of the students and the teacher were

released from the hospital Wednesday evening, AnMed Health spokeswoman Juana Slade said. Greenville Health System spokeswoman Sandy Dees said the other student, Jacob Hall, remained in critical condition Wednesday evening.

The students were bused to a nearby church and reunited with their parents. They hugged and kissed.

The school has about 300 students in its pre-kindergarten to sixth-grade classrooms. It is in a very rural part of the state and surrounded by working farms.

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Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



AP PHOTO/RAINIER EHRHARDT

Lilly Chapman, 8, cries after being reunited with her father John Chapman at Oakdale Baptist Church in Townville on Wednesday. Students were evacuated to the church after a teenager opened fire at Townville Elementary School.

Title: **Corps slows flow from lakes as drought problem worsens**
 Author: RON BARNETT RBARNETT@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 119.50 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Corps slows flow from lakes as drought problem worsens

RON BARNETT

RBARNETT@GREENVILLENEWS.COM

The level of Lake Hartwell is likely to continue to drop, although not as fast as it might have, after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reduced the outflow from Lake Thurmond, which is kept in balance with Lake Hartwell, a Corps spokesman said Tuesday.

Pickens County Council sent a letter to the Corps last month complaining that its "seemingly arbitrary" decisions on lowering the level of Hartwell during the current mild drought is hurting tourism.

Corps spokesman Billy Birdwell said adjustments of the flow out of the lakes are based on pre-determined trigger points that have been agreed to by local

and state agencies in both South Carolina and Georgia.

"These things were not done in a vacuum. And they were not done arbitrarily," Birdwell told *The Greenville News*.

"They are based on science and based on input from experts, not all of whom are in the Corps of Engineers."

The three reservoirs – Lake Hartwell, Lake Russell and Lake Thurmond – entered what the Corps calls Drought Level

2 on 6 a.m. Monday when Lake Thurmond dipped to 323.97 feet above sea level, according to the Corps. Any level below 324 feet at Lake Thurmond puts all three connected lakes into Drought Level 2.

That means the discharge out of the Lake Thurmond Dam will be reduced from 4,200 cubic feet per second to 4,000 cubic feet per second by Saturday, Birdwell said.

Lake Hartwell, the upper lake of the chain, is managed to stay in balance with Lake Thurmond, the lowest lake, meaning for every foot Thurmond goes down, Hartwell will go down by a foot.

The decrease in the flow out of Lake Thurmond isn't expected to bring its level higher because it is offset by a decrease in the flow of the Broad River, which flows into it but not into the other two lakes, Birdwell said.

The Broad River now is flowing at about 16 percent of its average flow, according to the Corps. If it drops below 10 percent, the Corps will reduce the outflow

See DROUGHT, Page 6A

Drought

Continued from Page 1A

from Lake Thurmond further, according to the Corps.

Lake Hartwell was measuring at 654.68 feet in elevation Tuesday afternoon, which is slightly above the threshold of 654 feet that would put Hartwell in Drought Level 2, Birdwell said.

But when Lake Thurmond hits that drought level, Hartwell's outflow has to be adjusted accordingly, he said.

Because of the difference in topography and size between the two

lakes, it's not possible to say how the outflow at Hartwell Dam may need to be changed to keep Hartwell in balance with Thurmond, he said.

But he said both lakes levels are likely to go down farther before they rise.

The lakes last entered Drought Level 2 in August 2011 and have been above Level 2 since March 2013, according to the Corps.

Pickens County Administrator Gerald Wilson said in his letter to

the Corps, copied to Gov. Nikki Haley and U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan, that the county's experience during the last drought cycle prompted County Council to call for action.

"Our scenic vistas and tourism attractants are marred by seemingly arbitrary decisions of the Corps, as lake levels are dropped precipitously and recreational and tourism opportunities are limited," the letter says.

"We want to encourage the Corps to continue to develop flexible strate-

gies that would monitor and adjust flows out of Lake Hartwell based on real-time data and specific local conditions, and not rely on arbitrary procedures that are not cognizant of the specific needs of our water basin," the letter says.

"We also ask that economic, recreational and environmental impacts in our area be treated with equal concern as afforded the lower reaches of the basin."

Birdwell said the decisions are based on a



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drought plan that was created with input from the Department of Natural Resources in both states, as well as municipalities that use the lake as a source of drinking water, and the general public.

During the worst drought on record, which ended in December 2012, the lakes reached

Drought Level 3 and came close to the most serious level, Level, 4, with Hartwell measuring at just under 645 feet.

During the summer, 660 feet is considered full pool.

But within five months of reaching the

lowest point, the lakes were in flood stage, Birdwell said.

"So things can change very rapidly," he said.

The last couple of years, the Corps has been able to maintain good lake levels, "But it is not unusual at all for the reservoirs to go down at this time of year," he said.

The Corps urges boaters to use extreme caution on the lakes because rocks and tree stumps that are normally deep underwater will be closer to the surface, some just out of sight.

"These obstructions form a particular hazard

in coves and along the shoreline. Boaters should use the main channel whenever possible," Birdwell said. "All reservoir visitors should wear a life jacket whenever in, on or near the water."

The reduction in flow from Thurmond Dam will be done gradually over nearly a week to give the Southeastern Power Administration time to make arrangements for alternative sources for electrical generation, he said.

Weather forecasts don't show much of a chance of the drought conditions ending soon. Pop-up storms in the

afternoon don't do much to recharge the Upstate streams and aquifers that empty into the lakes.

None of the recent tropical weather systems that have soaked the eastern half of the state have done the Savannah River Basin any good, and time is running out for something along those lines to visit the Upstate.

"As each day passes, the chances of having a tropical feature that brings a day or two of rain diminishes," said Wes Tyler of the state climatology office.

Mike Eads of the Anderson Independent-Mail contributed.

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PAUL BROWN

**Shorelines are showing more
and more as the levels of
Lake Hartwell have receded
in recent weeks.**

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Lake Hartwell's low level is evident in this photo taken Tuesday.

PAUL BROWN

Title: **Greenville Health System fights bond transfer issue**
 Author: LIV OSBY LOSBY@GANNETT.COM
 Size: 40.92 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Greenville Health System fights bond transfer issue

LIV OSBY

LOSBY@GANNETT.COM

As Greenville Health System trustees meet today to go over the 2017 budget, officials say the hospital could see \$167 million in interest added to its bottom line if it can't move its bond debt to its new Strategic Coordinating Organization.

And that could mean higher hospital rates or service and staff cuts, Mike Riordan, CEO of the SCO for GHS, told *The Greenville News*.

"If we are now saddled with this increase," he said, "we can either raise rates, which impacts businesses and patients, or reduce costs ... closing programs and cutting staff."

GHS is changing its governance structure so that it can remain a public nonprofit as part of a larger private, nonprofit multi-regional health system.

Under that plan, GHS leases

its assets to an Upstate Affiliate Organization, which would operate existing GHS hospitals and facilities, and the SCO makes decisions about the direction of the system and has the financial responsibility.

Because of that restructuring, officials want to shift \$600 million in bond debt from GHS to the SCO. The move would reclassify the bonds from from governmental to nonprofit, Riordan said, and would not add any new debt.

But failure to shift the bond debt will result in the extra \$167 million in federal interest because it would force GHS into the for-profit market, Riordan said.

The measure must be approved by Gov. Nikki Haley. But some members of the Greenville County legislative delegation have objected to it, he said.

"If it's not allowed, we would have to refinance it in the taxable market," Riordan said. "That objection in essence would increase the federal tax burden on bond holders and raise the cost for GHS."

Rep. Mike Burns said the transfer of the bonds to the new group would be in question if the new governance is in question. And he, along with several other legislators, filed suit in circuit court earlier this month to challenge GHS's authority to restructure.

Therefore, he said, the suit brings into question GHS's ability to form that group.

"I have advised the Governor's office that although it would cost GHS a taxable liability, it's far less than the \$6 billion in assets he's taking from the

See BONDS, Page 9A

Bonds

Continued from Page 3A

residents," Burns said.

Riordan said the suit shouldn't affect the bond transition.

And without the restructuring, GHS wouldn't be able to do a number of things to save \$1.5 billion over 30 years from the estimated increased earnings on its cash reserves and efficiencies

from being partnering with other facilities, Riordan said, adding that the restructuring is effective Oct. 1.

Burns added that taxpayers have been losing millions already because GHS has purchased many medical practices which used to be private tax-paying businesses that are now tax-exempt under GHS's governmental, nonprofit status. The legislators have asked the Department of Revenue to investigate that.

"Greenville County is having to pick up slack where they're not paying taxes on buildings where they used to be paying taxes just because GHS owns the property but they're doing the same thing in there," he said. "That's where the rub is."

GHS got about \$82 million in county tax funds during

the 1960s and 1970s to build parts of Greenville Memorial, Hillcrest Memorial, North Greenville Hospital and Allen Bennett Memorial.

Burns and the others criticized the restructuring, saying it takes public assets out of public oversight since GHS trustees, who are approved by the delegation, would no longer be responsible for strategic decisions.

Title: **Plan surfaces for nuclear disposal area**
 Author: SAMMY FRETWELL AND JEFF WILKINSON THE STATE
 Size: 54.56 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Plan surfaces for nuclear disposal area

SAMMY FRETWELL
 AND JEFF WILKINSON
 THE STATE

COLUMBIA, SC - A plan has surfaced to establish another nuclear waste disposal ground in South Carolina, a state with a history of taking atomic refuse from across the country.

An organization called the Spent Fuel Reprocessing Group wants federal approval to open a disposal area near Barnwell and the Savannah River Site nuclear weapons complex. Spent fuel, a type of highly radioactive waste, would be moved from the state's four nuclear power plant sites and stored indefinitely at the new facility, records show.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in July received notice of the plan. The proposal

is a long way from becoming reality, but if eventually approved by the federal government, it would create a place for nuclear waste disposal that is likely to draw opposition.

Several environmental groups said this week they are preparing to fight any effort to create what they called an atomic waste dumping ground. Politicians, including Gov. Nikki Haley, also expressed reservations Monday.

The subject of nuclear waste disposal is a touchy one in South Carolina because many people say the state has shouldered more than its share of the nuclear waste burden.

South Carolina already stores highly radioactive material from around the country and world at the Savannah River Site. It also has a low-level waste dump in Barnwell County that was used for decades to bury nuclear garbage from power plants across the country. That site has leaked radioactive tritium into groundwater. Now, the government is being asked to allow a disposal site for high-level nuclear waste from power plants in South Carolina. The site would be near the Barnwell low-level waste dump, environmentalists said Monday.

See **DISPOSAL**, Page 5A

Disposal

Continued from Page 3A

"I'd like to learn more, but I'm sure there will be considerable concern," state Rep. James Smith, D-Richland, said.

Contacted Monday, Haley's office said: "South Carolina will not become a permanent dumping ground for nuclear waste regardless of where it would be housed or who would house it."

Supporters of the disposal site plan could not be reached Monday. But records show enthusiastic support from the Spent Fuel Reprocessing Group. A letter the group sent to the NRC said the disposal ground is needed to help power companies get rid of nuclear waste, which is created in the generation of electricity.

Duke Energy, which operates three of the four commercial nuclear plant sites in South Carolina, was not aware of the plan and declined comment. Attempts to reach SCE&G, which is building two new nuclear reactors at its Fairfield County power plant, were unsuccessful. Mike Stake, a former president of the Aiken County Tea Party, submitted the proposal listing himself as president of the Spent Fuel Reprocessing Group. He was not available Monday for comment.

In his proposal, dated July 26, Stake said the group would formally apply to the commission "at a later date" to "acquire or build a storage facility" near the Savannah River site and Barnwell. The letter states "the need to consolidate (spent nuclear fuel) for economy and security and to lessen the burden on operating nuclear power plants in South Carolina."

According to the plan, the material could eventually be recycled for use in nuclear reactors.

Efforts to recycle, or reprocess spent fuel, have never taken off in the United States because the idea is so controversial. Reprocessing can create a waste stream that adds to the nation's burden of atomic garbage, but boosters say reprocessing used nuclear fuel can be done safely and effectively.

"Though the spent fuel storage proposal is in its formative stages, we believe that it is totally unnecessary and potentially poses a host of environmental and health issues," said Chris Hall, chair of executive committee of the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club.

A spokeswoman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission said the agency has never had any interaction with Stake or the group prior to receiving the July letter. Once an application is received, the commission could take three years or more to come to a decision, spokeswoman Maureen Conley said.

In addition to the commission review, the application could be required to undergo a public hearing process conducted by the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board.

Critics say developing an interim storage site is risky and could eventually mean South Carolina could be saddled with the material forever. Environmentalists say there is no need to move spent nuclear fuel off of atomic power plant sites. They contend it can be stored safely. Transporting it to a disposal area near Barnwell would increase risks to the public, they said. If a permanent disposal site were eventually developed nationally, the material would have to be transported



Title: **Plan surfaces for nuclear disposal area**
Author: SAMMY FRETWELL AND JEFF WILKINSON THE STATE
Size: 54.56 column inches
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again from the interim South Carolina site, according to Savannah River Site Watch, the S.C. League of Women Voters and the state Sierra Club. packaging it to transport to a federal facility would unnecessarily pose a high economic cost and a logistical nightmare, both of which can be avoided if the spent fuel is left where it is now stored until such time as a geologic facility is available," according to the groups.

Title: **Corps of Engineers slows lake flow as drought problem worsens**
 Author: RON BARNETT RBARNETT@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 77.03 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Corps of Engineers slows lake flow as drought problem worsens

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The level of Lake Hartwell is likely to continue to drop, although not as fast as it might have, after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reduced the outflow from Lake Thurmond, which is kept in balance with Lake Hartwell, a Corps spokesman said Tuesday.

Pickens County Council sent a letter to the Corps last month complaining that its "seemingly arbitrary" decisions on lowering the level of Hartwell during the current mild drought is hurting tourism.

Corps spokesman Billy Birdwell said adjustments of the flow out of the lakes are based on pre-determined trigger points agreed to by local and state agencies in both South Carolina and Georgia.

"These things were not done in a vacuum. And they were not done arbitrarily," Birdwell told *The Greenville News*. "They are based on science and based on input from experts, not all of whom are in the Corps of Engineers."

The three reservoirs – Lake Hartwell, Lake Russell and Lake Thurmond – entered what the Corps calls Drought Level 2 on 6 a.m. Monday when Lake Thurmond dipped to 323.97 feet above sea level, according to the Corps. Any level below 324 feet at Lake Thurmond puts all three connected lakes into Drought Level 2.

That means the discharge out of the Lake Thurmond Dam will be reduced from 4,200 cubic feet per second to 4,000 cubic feet per second by Saturday, Birdwell said.

Lake Hartwell, the upper lake of the chain, is managed to stay in balance with Lake Thurmond, the lowest lake, meaning

for every foot Thurmond goes down, Hartwell will go down by a foot.

The decrease in the flow out of Lake Thurmond isn't expected to bring its level higher because it is offset by a decrease in the flow of the Broad River, which flows into it but not into the other two lakes, Birdwell said.

The Broad River now is flowing at about 16 percent of its average flow, according to the Corps. If it drops below 10 percent, the Corps will reduce the outflow from Lake Thurmond further, according to the Corps.

Lake Hartwell was measuring at 654.68 feet in elevation Tuesday afternoon, which is slightly above the threshold of 654 feet that would put Hartwell in Drought Level 2, Birdwell said.

But when Lake Thurmond hits that drought level, Hartwell's outflow has to be adjusted accordingly, he said.

Because of the difference in topography and size between the two lakes, it's not possible to say how the outflow at Hartwell Dam may need to be changed to keep Hartwell in balance with Thurmond, he said.

But he said both lakes levels are likely to go down farther before they rise.

The lakes last entered Drought Level 2 in August 2011 and have been above Level 2 since March 2013, according to the Corps.

Pickens County Administrator Gerald Wilson said in his letter to the Corps, copied to Gov. Nikki Haley and U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan, that the county's experience during the last drought cycle prompted County Council to call for action.

"Our scenic vistas and tourism

attractions are marred by seemingly arbitrary decisions of the Corps, as lake levels are dropped precipitously and recreational and tourism opportunities are limited," the letter says.

"We want to encourage the Corps to continue to develop flexible strategies that would monitor and adjust flows out of

Lake Hartwell based on real-time data and specific local conditions, and not rely on arbitrary procedures that are not cognizant of the specific needs of our water basin," the letter says.

"We also ask that economic, recreational and environmental impacts in our area be treated with equal concern as afforded the lower reaches of the basin."

Birdwell said the decisions are based on a drought plan that was created with input from the Department of Natural Resources in both states, as well as municipalities that use the lake as a source of drinking water, and the general public.

During the worst drought on record, which ended in December 2012, the lakes reached Drought Level 3 and came close to the most serious level, Level 4, with Hartwell measuring at just under 645 feet.

During the summer, 660 feet is considered full pool.

But within five months of reaching the lowest point, the lakes were in flood stage, Birdwell said.

"So things can change very rapidly," he said.

The last couple of years, the Corps has been able to maintain good lake levels, "But it is not unusual at all for the reservoirs to go down at this time of year," he said.

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The Corps urges boaters to use extreme caution on the lakes because rocks and tree stumps that are normally deep underwater will be closer to the surface, some just out of sight.

"These obstructions form a particular hazard in coves and along the shoreline. Boaters should use the main channel whenever possible," Birdwell said. "All reservoir visitors should wear a life jacket whenever in, on or near the water."

The reduction in flow from

Thurmond Dam will be done gradually over nearly a week to give the Southeastern Power Administration time to make arrangements for alternative sources for electrical generation, he said.

Weather forecasts don't show much of a chance of the drought conditions ending soon. Pop-up storms in the afternoon don't do much to recharge the Upstate streams and aquifers that empty into the lakes. None of the recent tropical weather

systems that have soaked the eastern half of the state have done the Savannah River Basin any good, and time is running out for something along those lines to visit the Upstate.

"As each day passes, the chances of having a tropical feature that brings a day or two of rain diminishes," said Wes Tyler of the state climatology office.

Mike Eads of the Anderson Independent-Mail contributed.



/PAUL BROWN

Shorelines are showing more and more as the levels of Lake Hartwell have receded in recent weeks.