

IN RE: OKATIE CONSTRUCTION, L.L.C.)
GLOVER PLANTATION MINE)

TRANSCRIPT
OF
PUBLIC HEARING

REPORTED BY
SUESAN L. RICHARDSON

APPEARANCES

DHEC OFFICIAL PRESENT:

Hearing Officer,
Ms. Catherine Sawyer

Mr. Jeremy Eddy

SPEAKERS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Mr. Gerald Burgoyne
Ms. Helen Blanton
Ms. Nanci Polk-Weckhorst
Mr. Gary Breland

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PROCEEDINGS

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HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Good evening, the time is now 7:02 p.m. on Thursday, September 10th, 2026, and this public hearing will now begin. This hearing is being held by the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services to receive comments on the application submitted by Okatie Construction, L.L.C. to modify their permit to mine topsoil, sand, and clay at a site located on Rabbit Cleland Road in Jasper County, approximately 6.2 miles southeast of Ridgeland. As a formal proceeding, the purpose of this hearing is to record oral comments for the official record. SCDES staff will not respond to questions or comments during the hearing.

My name is Catherine Sawyer, and I will serve as your hearing officer. Thank you for being here for this very important step in the SCDES permitting process.

Before we begin, a few reminders: Please silence your cell phones and all electronic devices. And if you have not done so already, please sign in at the table out front so that we'll have a record of everyone who attended and we can notify you of future updates.

SCDES's permitting process requires applicants to demonstrate that their proposed operations can meet all

1 state and federal environmental regulations. Our role
2 is to review applications and, if appropriate, issue
3 and enforced permits that protect human health and the
4 environment. Your role is to provide comments for
5 consideration. While decisions are not based on a vote
6 or the number of similar comments, your input may
7 influence whether or not a permit is issued, or if
8 issued, the terms and conditions written into it.

9 We'll now outline tonight's process. First,
10 Jeremy Eddy will make a statement for the record about
11 the proposed time modification. After that, I will
12 call on those who indicated on the sign-in sheet that
13 they wish to speak. If you choose not to comment when
14 called, you may decline. After all listed speakers
15 have commented, if anyone else wishes to speak, they
16 will be allowed. Once all comments are received, I
17 will give closing remarks and adjourn the hearing.

18 To ensure fairness and efficiency, please follow
19 these guidelines.

20 Your comments should not go over three minutes per
21 individual or five for an elected official or those
22 speaking on behalf of an organized group.

23 Please be respectful towards anyone speaking here
24 tonight.

25 And third, please do not interrupt or ask other

1 participants to respond to your comments. Should any
2 comments or actions begin to move away from the intent
3 of the hearing, I may ask the speaker to limit their
4 statements and be seated.

5 As a reminder, staff will not answer questions.

6 I will now call Jeremy Eddy to raise a brief
7 statement.

8 MR. EDDY: On December 19th, 2025, Okatie
9 Construction, L.L.C. submitted an application to modify
10 the existing mine operating permit in Jasper County.
11 The application requests to add 102.5 acres to the
12 permitted area and remove 34.7 acres from the permitted
13 area as reclaimed mined land. The reclamation plan
14 will remain unchanged. The site will be reclaimed to
15 ponds with grassed banks. However, the application
16 does include an updated reclamation schedule to include
17 the new area.

18 HEASRING OFFICER SAWYER: Thank you, Jeremy. We
19 will now hear from those of you who indicated on the
20 sign-in sheet that you would like to speak tonight. If
21 you're unable to complete your comments within the
22 three-minute allotted time, you may submit them in
23 writing through the end of the public comment period on
24 September 25th, 2026. When I call on you, please
25 clearly state and spell your name for the Court

1 Reporter. Diane Sesler? Not here. Barry and Donna
2 Semken? Gerald Burgoyne?

3 MR. BURGOYNE: I'm right here.

4 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Okay. Come down and you
5 may need the microphone.

6 MR. BURGOYNE: Hey, how are you all doing? My name
7 is Gerald Burgoyne. I've lived in this area probably
8 20 years. Actually, I live right in the area that --
9 closest to the mine as anybody is going to -- anybody
10 lives. We got dams just down through there that have
11 washed out like two 36-inch culverts on my property.
12 If it rains like it's rained in the past, there's no
13 ponds that are going to hold that amount of water.
14 It's going to wash everything down through Hazard
15 Creek. Several years ago, we had a problem with an
16 asphalt plant that was going to build next to my
17 property. Luckily, we got that voted out, but it's
18 just been one thing -- [inaudible] -- after the other,
19 like cement plants, dumps, everything right in this one
20 little area that -- where I live. Once the water goes
21 through there, there's a little culvert that comes to a
22 point, and then the water jumps the road. So, there's
23 1,000s upon 1,000s of gallons of water that cross over
24 the road at times. I just don't -- and like this whole
25 area is surrounded by wetlands. You dig a hole in the

1 middle of the wetlands, what's going to happen? It's
2 going to fill up full of water. I just don't believe
3 it's a good idea, and I think they're just going to
4 waste their money. Thank you very much.

5 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Gary Breland? All right,
6 Gary's not here. Grant McClure? No. David Sesler?
7 Oh, goodness. Theodore DuPont? Eileen Wedel and Don
8 Knowles? Nathan Bass? William and Anne Hodge? Monty
9 Lafitte? James -- 64 Sandpiper Lane? Helen and Tony
10 Blanton?

11 MS. BLANTON: We're here, but I wasn't going to

12 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: You don't want to speak?
13 If you signed in, I still call you if you checked 'I'm
14 not sure' just to make sure I -- okay. You don't wish
15 to make a comment tonight?

16 MS. BLANTON: No, not -- I mean, there's so many --
17 we've had trouble with garbage trucks.

18 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Come --

19 MS. BLANTON: [Crosstalk. Inaudible.] -- these
20 dump trucks down in that area.

21 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: If you want to make it the
22 public record, come on down and state your name and
23 we'll get you on the record. Helen Blanton.

24 MS. BLANTON: I'm Helen Blanton and we live down
25 Tickton Hall Road. And between everything that Robert

1 Graves is doing now down Tickton Hall Road and what's
2 going on on the other side, we've lived down that way
3 almost 40 years, and it was garbage trucks, garbage
4 trucks. And if it's not a garbage truck, now they want
5 to do the land, to excavate this land and everything
6 and it -- I just don't know how much this area can
7 take. And with the water and everything. And the
8 fish, this -- I mean, we live out of the river. We
9 love fish, oysters, crab. We do this all summer long,
10 and as long as we can catch it, we do it. And I just
11 don't understand -- I just don't understand how one
12 little area has to supply so much trash from Beaufort
13 County. They don't want it in Beaufort County, but
14 they got it right out our door. All these landfills
15 and everything now, they got it right out of our door.
16 But Beaufort County don't want it. That's it. That's
17 it. Thank you so much.

18 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Thank you. Sam Woodward?

19 MS. UNKNOWN: I think they're outside. I'm going
20 to go out there.

21 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Nanci Polk-Weckhorst?

22 MS. POLK-WECKHORST: Do you think -- I wasn't
23 planning on making a comment, but since everybody else
24 left. I just have lived in this area, saw Hilton Head
25 just getting mauled for 50 years. And now I'm up in

1 the Grays area, and we're fighting the same mine up
2 there. So, I just came to see how this went. And it
3 just doesn't seem like the environment or the ecology
4 is being looked after. So, I don't know what to say
5 other than I just hope that they don't just keep eating
6 away at this whole area. I know the landfill is here.
7 So, you know, this whole area has just been devastated
8 for years, and it's toxic. So, I just hope they don't
9 allow it up in our area in the Grays. Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Would Russell Fredericks
11 like to speak? Kay Horton or Ralph Smith? No. All
12 right, that is everyone who signed in and wished to
13 comment. Would anyone else like to make a comment for
14 the public?

15 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. State and
16 spell your name for the Court Reporter, please.

17 MR. BRELAND: I'm Gary Breland. I live at Glover
18 Plantation Road and at Glover Road. And I oppose the
19 extension of Rabbit Cleland. But my biggest concern is
20 the environmental impact that's going to be on the
21 Hazard Creek. Of course, we have two other creeks, the
22 U-Haul Creek and New River. This track, 75 to 80
23 percent of the drainage of the wetlands will be back
24 into Hazard Creek. I used to manage this property for
25 Georgia Pacific Corporation, the logging and the road

1 build. So, I know these wetlands, and I don't know how
2 well that y'all know the property if y'all been on it.
3 If not, you make arrangements for me. I'll be glad to
4 meet with you and show you the wetlands and our
5 concerns. The second is endangered species. That's
6 the turtle, pitcher plants. I forgot the name of that.
7 It's what you call venus flytrap. And the red cockaded
8 woodpecker. When I managed the track, we had one
9 active and one non-active column on the track. Also,
10 I'm not sure if it's just going to be one road coming
11 out from the track. If not, if it's going to the
12 Glover Road, that has a weight limit of 10 tons. These
13 dump trucks, empty weight, are anywhere from 24,000 to
14 28,500 pounds. So that tells you they can't even haul,
15 or the dump trucks can't come in on the empty weight.
16 I'd like to have a study done on this property for the
17 environmental issues. And before we get a permit, it's
18 been processed and been done. That's all I have.
19 Thank you.

20 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. Anyone else
21 wish to comment before we wrap up the comment period?

22 Then On behalf of SCDS -- DES, I would like to
23 thank you for attending and sharing your comments with
24 us tonight. All comments will be reviewed, and if
25 necessary, additional information may be requested from

1 the applicant. A decision to approve or deny the
2 permit will then be issued. At that time, a summary
3 response to comments and the final decision will be
4 sent to everyone on the mailing list and will be posted
5 online at the website. If you would like to receive
6 this notice by certified mail, please submit that
7 request in writing by September 25th, 2026.

8 The time is now 7:16 p.m., and this public hearing
9 is adjourned.

10 (WHEREUPON, AT 7:16 P.M., THE PUBLIC HEARING OF THE
11 ABOVE-ENTITLED MATTER WAS CONCLUDED.)

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13 (*This transcript may contain quoted material.
14 Such material is reproduced as read or quoted by the
15 speaker.)

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