SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN RE: PERMIT MODIFICATION	)	TRANSCRIPT
OKATIE CONSTRUCTION, LLC, GLOVER ROAD MINE, JASPER COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA	)	OF PUBLIC HEARING

Date: September 17, 2026

Time: 7:10 p.m.

Location: Lakeside at Blue Heron, 153 James L. Taylor Drive, Ridgeland, South Carolina

Reported by
Julie Taradash

APPEARANCES

SCDES Officials Present:
Catherine Sawyer, Hearing Officer
Jeremy Eddy, Project Manager,
Mining and Reclamation Section

Speakers from the Public:
Cathy DeCourcy
Carmen Malphrus
Robert Crimian
David Sesler

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PROCEEDINGS

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: So good evening. The time is now 7:10 p.m. on Thursday, September 17th, 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, LLC, to modify their permit to mine sand at a site located at 835 Glover Road in Jasper County, approximately 2.9 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 tonight. Thank you for being here in this important step in the SCDES permitting process.

Before we begin, please silence your cell phones and electronic devices, and if you have not done so already, please sign in at the table up front so we know how to contact you for updates.

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

regulations. Our role is to review applications and, if appropriate, issue and enforce permits that protect human health and the environment. Your role is to provide comments for consideration. While decisions are not based on a vote or the number of similar comments, your input may influence whether or not a permit is issued or, if issued, the terms and conditions written into it.

Tonight's process: Jeremy Eddy will read a brief statement about the proposed mine modification. After that, I will call on those who indicated on the sign-in sheet that they wish to speak. If you choose not to comment when called, you may decline. After all listed speakers have commented, I will ask if anyone else wishes to speak. Once all comments are received, I will give closing remarks and adjourn the hearing.

To ensure fairness and efficiency, please follow these guidelines. Your comments should not go over three minutes per individual or five minutes for elected officials and those speaking on behalf of an organized group. Please be respectful towards anyone speaking here tonight, and please do not interrupt or ask other participants to respond to your comments. Should any comments or actions

begin to move away from the intent of this hearing, I may ask the speaker to limit their statements and be seated. As a reminder, DES staff will not answer questions.

Jeremy, if you would please read your statement.

MR. EDDY: On March 7th, 2024, Okatie Construction, LLC, submitted an application to modify the existing mine operating permit for Glover Road Mine in Jasper County. The application requests to add 106 acres to the permitted area. The reclamation plan will remain unchanged; the site will be reclaimed to ponds with grass banks. However, the application does include an updated reclamation schedule to include the new area.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Thank you, Jeremy. We will now hear from those of you who indicated on the sign-in sheet that you would like to make a comment. If you are unable to complete your comments within the three-minute allotted time, you may submit them in writing through the end of the public comment period on October 2nd, 2026. When I call on you, please clearly state and spell your name for the court reporter. Please come down to the microphone as well.

Henry Torres?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: He had to leave.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: He's not here.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Not here? David Sesler?

MR. SESLER: Might -- at the end.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Heyward and Linna Pinckney?

MS. PINCKNEY: Yes.

MR. PINCKNEY: We'll be sending ours in a -- in a letter.

MS. PINCKNEY: A written letter.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Sending -- okay. Cathy de Courcy?

MS. DECOURCY: My name is Cathy, C-a-t-h-y, de Courcy, d-e C-o-u-r-c-y. I'm a resident of 782 Tickton Hall Road, Ridgeland, South Carolina.

My comments and concerns are the amount of fresh water that's going to be discharged back into the tributaries. We live in a tidal area that has brackish water in a combination of salt and fresh water, which could cause ecological issues within those. Also, a -- a hundred-foot buffer easement for the power lines and a 50-foot buffer easement for the mining permit, since there is a neighborhood called Graham Hall there, I would like to see a hundred-foot buffer for those residents.

I think that was it.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Carmen Malphrus.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: She left.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Okay.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh, no. Carmen.

MS. MALPHRUS: I'm right here. I'm thinking if I should --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Go ahead.

MS. MALPHRUS: -- write a letter.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. EDDY: You can do both, ma'am. You can speak and write a letter, if you don't get everything you want to say out.

MS. MALPHRUS: I kind of said what I needed --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Say it again.

MS. MALPHRUS: -- to say earlier.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Say it again.

MS. MALPHRUS: My name is Carmen Malphrus, C-a-r-m-e-n, M-a-l-p-h-r-u-s.

Well, I spoke earlier, that, you know, it's really -- it's just really very frustrating to be a resident and a citizen and somebody who was born and raised in Jasper County to have to constantly be battling, you know, requests for the rape of our land. And, you know, like I asked the question

earlier -- I mean, so, you know, these people can ask to have another 30 feet dug down? And I mean, the -- environmentally, it's just -- it's outrageous. But quality of life for those of us who live here -- I mean, I -- I told you I live at the end of the road here on the corner, and you know, it's a lot with the log trucks and the dump trucks and the, you know, people speeding. And you know, I used to be a runner. I used to go running on that road, and I mean -- I mean, it's dangerous. It's dangerous, you know?

I grew up here. I grew up -- my daddy grew up on that corner. We had chickens and donkeys and garden vegetables. And I mean, literally, it's just falling down around -- I mean, it's just -- and I know I-95 is being widened, and I know there's a lot of development going on here. New York Times wrote an article about we're the fastest growing county in the country. Just take, take, take, you know?

I know you guys are going to approve this. I mean, it's not close to a state park or a school. It's just us regular residents and citizens who grew up here. That's all I have to say. Breaks my heart.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Ryan Lyle?
AUDIENCE MEMBER: I guess Ryan left.
AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.
HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Nanci Polk Weckhorst? Bob Crimian?
MR. CRIMIAN: Yes.
HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Is that C? Huh?
MR. CRIMIAN: Robert Crimian, R-o-b-e-r-t, C-r-i-m-i-a-n. I'm here on behalf of the Coastal Conservation League based here in Beaufort.

First, I know that your jobs are bound by the law, hence why I really think it's important for us to eventually start talking about updating the Mine Act from the '70s. Additionally, the amount of freshwater input -- again, one mine may not be a big deal, but as somebody said earlier, there are 15, potentially more, mines in Jasper County, all emptying into the Savannah River or Port Royal Sound, and freshwater is a pollutant to this area because of our unique geography with the sound and the ocean right there.

Additionally, I think, looking at the cumulative impacts of all these mines and how close they are to each other on the environment, which I'm encouraged to hear that the NPDES program will

be looking into that on Hazzard Creek and other areas.

But, again, thank you for what you do serving the state. I know it's not an easy job, but please, let's think about updating our laws so that way you have more flexibility. Thank you very much.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Kay Horton (phonetic)? Okay. All right. And that is everyone who signed up to comment. If anyone else would like to make a comment, please raise your hand. Come on down and state and spell your name for the court reporter, please.

MR. SESLER: Good evening. My name is David Sesler. David, D-a-v-i-d, Sesler, S-e-s-l-e-r.

I'm speaking on behalf of the Keep Chelsea Rural organization. I'm a steering committee member, whose -- our mission is to protect Jasper County's history, culture, and ecosystem. We want to approach the -- these mines realistically. This property, these two that have had hearings today -- as of today, are within the town of Ridgeland and within the Genesis PDD, where substantial residential development has long been contemplated. Several thousand homes across a larger development

have been planned. So from our perspective, this is not simply a choice between mining and preserving untouched land. If mining does not occur, then the development could ultimately have an even greater impact through thousands of homes, roads, utilities, and other infrastructure.

But we do have concerns. There are already multiple mining operations; it's been mentioned. We are asking DES to look not only at the impact of this individual mine, but at the cumulative effect of these mine operations on groundwater and neighboring wells.

We also believe there is an opportunity here. The conservation landscape around these mines is changing dramatically. We now have approximately 2700 homes in the new Chelsea State -- sorry -- 2700 acres in the new Chelsea State Forest, along with another 212 acres recently acquired by The Nature Conservancy in the Rabbit Cleland -- including the Rabbit Cleland Road area. What if we started thinking now about how the mine could eventually complement those protected lands? Mining will create lakes. Rather than simply leaving behind deep pits filled with water, reclamation plans could intentionally create

islands, shallow water areas, wetlands, native vegetation, and protected shorelines. Those areas could provide habitat for birds and other wildlife and, perhaps, even become a rookery habitat.

This isn't an unrealistic idea. Former mining properties elsewhere in the country have been successfully transformed into conservation areas, wildlife habitat, and public recreation lands. And portions of this property could potentially be permanently protected through conservation easements, while compatible development remains elsewhere within the Genesis PDD. There may even be opportunities to involve Jasper County's Greenbelt Program, Beaufort County's Green Space Program, the Open Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and other conservation partners.

That's why we're asking DES, the applicant, and the Town of Ridgeland for our conservation organizations to begin that conversation now, not 20 years from now when the mine is finished. Mining will change the land; development could change it even more permanently. But there is a third possibility -- allow -- allow responsible economic use of the property today while planning now for what comes afterward -- clean water,

reclaimed lakes, wildlife habitat, permanent conservation, and compatible future development. Keep Chelsea Rural believes that is an opportunity worth pursuing. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Would anyone else like to speak tonight? All right.

On behalf of SCDES, thank you for attending and sharing your comments. All comments will be reviewed and, if necessary, additional information may be requested from the applicant. A decision to approve or deny the permit will then be issued. At that time, a summary response to comments and the final decision will be sent to everyone on the mailing list and will be posted online. If you would like to receive this notice by certified mail, please submit that request in writing by October 2nd, 2026, and know that October 2nd, 2026, is the end of the comment period.

So the time is now 7:24 p.m., and this public hearing is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the public hearing was concluded at 7:24 p.m.)

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

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)

CERTIFICATE

Be it known that Julie Taradash took the foregoing proceeding and hereby attests:

that I was then and there a notary public in and for the State of South Carolina-at-large and that by virtue thereof I was duly authorized to administer an oath;

that the deponent/witness, if any, was first duly sworn to testify to the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, concerning the matter in the controversy aforesaid;

that the foregoing transcript represents a true, accurate, and complete transcription of the testimony so given at the time and place aforesaid to the best of my skill and ability;

that I am neither a relative nor an employee of any of the parties hereto, nor of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor interested in the outcome of this action;

that, if a recording of an event was supplied by another party for purposes of transcription and I was not present during that event, the foregoing pages were transcribed to the best of my skill and ability; additionally, any identifications of speakers were provided to me by the party supplying the recording;

that, in the event of a nonappearance by the witness, the foregoing details for the nonappearance are accurate.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto affixed my signature and title.



Julie Taradash

Date: 9/24/2026
Notary public for South Carolina
My commission expires March 27, 2035
*Unless otherwise noted, this notary public administered the oath. Please refer to the transcript for any exceptions.
**For details on reading and signing, please refer to the transcript.