

South Carolina)	
Department of)	Transcript
Environmental Services)	
)	of
In Re:)	
Monroe Tract Surface)	Public Hearing
Mine)	
)	
)	
)	

Date: May 22nd, 2025

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Agape Family Life Center, 5855 S. Okatie
Highway, Hardeeville, South Carolina

Reported by
Breanna Sharper

COPY

APPEARANCES

Hearing Officer: Catherine A. Sawyer, SCDES

SCDES Officials Present: Wendy Hamilton

Speakers from the public:

Edward Beck
Martin Durfey
Mike Anderson
Greg John
John Hewson
Tyrone Price
Lisa Marie Price
Robert Saxon
Courtney Flexon
Vil Vaitas
Lorraine White Bond
Jennifer White
Phillip Flexon
Herman Heyward, Sr.
Sammie Brown
Cathleen DeCourcy
Patricia DuPont
Janice Pinto
Lauren Flexon
Juan Tolley
Ahna Phelps
Larnell Miller
Leroy Bentley
Heidi Reed
William Hajek
Ernesto Crequerodriguez
Mythianne Shelton
William Bell
Donnie Wooden
Henry Fields
V. Barela
Promes Life, III

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PROCEEDINGS

HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Good evening once again. The time is now 7 p.m., on Thursday, May 22nd, 2025, and this public hearing will now begin. This public hearing is being held by the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services, also known as SCDES, to accept comments and supporting information on the application submitted by CFH Monroe, LLC, for a permit to mine sand at a site located on Levy Road in Jasper County, approximately 2.7 miles southeast of Limehouse, South Carolina. As a formal proceeding, the purpose of this hearing is to accept oral comments from the audience and record them for the official record. Therefore, SCDES staff will not be responding to questions or comments during this hearing.

A written transcript will be prepared by the certified court reporter. The transcript will serve as the official record of this public hearing and will be posted on the department's webpage when available. The webpage address is des.sc.gov/MonroeTractServiceMine, and it will be updated with information as it becomes available.

Again, my name is Catherine Sawyer, and I will

1 serve as your hearing officer tonight. Thank you
2 for taking the time to be here for this important
3 step in SCDES's permitting process.

4 Before I go over how we will proceed, there
5 are a couple of items that I would like to address.
6 First, I ask that you please silence your cell
7 phones or other electronic devices so that others
8 are not disturbed during the hearing. Next, if you
9 have not already done so, I encourage each of you
10 to sign the attendance sheet located at the sign-in
11 table so we have a complete record of everyone here
12 tonight. We have asked for your mailing or e-mail
13 address on the sign-in sheet so that we will know
14 how to notify you of future information regarding
15 the proposed mine site.

16 The permitting process at SCDES begins when an
17 application is received for one or more
18 environmental permits. During this process, an
19 applicant must show that his proposed operation can
20 comply with all applicable state and federal
21 regulations. These regulations have been written
22 to ensure that human health and the environment are
23 protected.

24 In addition to reviewing the application, the
25 department's role is to write and give issue,

1 enforce permits that meet the requirements of the
2 regulation. You also have a role in -- in SCDES's
3 permitting process; that's what brings us here
4 tonight: to receive your comments formally for the
5 record. Although a final permit decision cannot be
6 made based on the vote or how many people say the
7 same thing, your comments are important and may
8 influence the terms and conditions written in the
9 permit if one is issued. Comments and concerns
10 given here tonight, as well as those submitted in
11 writing by the end of the public comment period,
12 are welcomed and encouraged.

13 A presentation on the proposed mine and
14 SCDES's permitting processes was provided by Wendy
15 Hamilton during the public meeting held at 6 p.m.
16 This presentation will be made available on our
17 webpage before the end of the public comment
18 period.

19 We will now move on to the order in which we
20 will proceed with this hearing. A brief statement
21 about the proposed mine will be read for the record
22 by Wendy Hamilton. I will then begin the public
23 comment portion of the evening by calling on those
24 of you who indicated on the sign-in sheet that you
25 would like to make a comment. If you have decided

1 that you no longer wish to comment when you are
2 called upon, you may decline at that time. Once
3 everyone has had a chance to speak, I will ask if
4 anyone else in attendance would like to make a
5 comment. After all comments have been heard, I
6 will make closing remarks, and the public hearing
7 will be adjourned.

8 For everyone to have a fair and equal
9 opportunity to participate tonight and to ensure
10 that we proceed in a timely and effective manner,
11 the following four guidelines have been
12 established. First, no questions will be answered
13 during the public hearing.

14 Second, your comments should not go over three
15 minutes per individual or five minutes for elected
16 officials and those speaking on behalf of an
17 organized group. I will remind you if you do not
18 conclude your comments at that time. If you are
19 unable to present all your comments within the
20 allotted time, please remember that you may submit
21 them to SCDES in writing by the close of the public
22 comment period.

23 Third, please be respectful towards anyone
24 speaking here tonight. You each have a unique and
25 valued perspective. No one comment is considered

1 more important than another.

2 And fourth, please do not interrupt or ask
3 other participants to respond to your comments.
4 Should any comments or actions begin to move away
5 from the intent of this hearing, I may ask the
6 speaker to limit their statement and be seated.

7 I will now call on Wendy Hamilton to read a
8 brief statement about the mine operating permit
9 application.

10 MS. HAMILTON: On July the 1st, 2024, CFH Monroe, LLC,
11 submitted an application for the Monroe Surface
12 Tract Mine. The site is located in Jasper County
13 within the city of Hardeeville. The man -- the
14 mine plans request to excavate a total of 21.7
15 acres of a 62.3-acre site. The submitted
16 reclamation plan proposes the operations will be
17 reclaimed to ponds and grasslands.

18 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Thank you, Wendy.

19 As we transition to the comment portion of
20 this public hearing, I would like to reiterate that
21 SCDES staff are here to listen to your comments.
22 Answers or responses to questions will not be
23 provided tonight. All comments made during this
24 hearing are being recorded. If you are unable to
25 complete your comments within the three-minute

1 allotted time, you may submit them in writing
2 through the end of the public comment period on
3 June 6th, 2025.

4 We will now hear from those of you who
5 indicated on the sign-in sheet that you would like
6 to make a comment. You will be called upon in
7 random order. Please clearly state and spell your
8 name for the court reporter. Edward Beck?

9 MR. BECK: Hello, my name is Edward Beck. Edward Beck,
10 E-d-w-a-r-d B-e-c-k. I'm a resident of Osprey
11 Lake. I have seen an open mine project located
12 miles away from residential communities. They're
13 loud. They're dusty. And they're dirty. This
14 proposed project butts up against our community
15 park and directly over five fences of our
16 neighbor's yards. Locating a heavy industrial
17 mining project next door is crazy.

18 In addition, sand pits spread silica dust into
19 the air. This would endanger the children and the
20 families enjoying their yards and the park in the
21 area. Silica is linked to cancer, asthma, and
22 other diseases.

23 This project would also be slammed up against
24 our drainage system that works in connected --
25 connection -- in connection with our lakes and our

1 ponds. The last thing we want to do is see any
2 flooding in our community as a result of this
3 mining project. I'm asking the South Carolina
4 Department of Environmental Services to deny this
5 project. Thank you.

6 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. Next up is Joyce or
7 Martin Durfey. If I were to call on you and you
8 have decided not to speak, please just say you
9 decline.

10 MR. DURFEY: Two -- two majorly(verbatim) things. One,
11 they've known they were going to do this years ago.
12 We found out about it three months ago. Why didn't
13 they tell us a long time ago that they were
14 planning to do this so we could get organized? And
15 I -- I'm going to ask you. I don't trust you. The
16 answer, you don't know how much water you're going
17 to be pumping, the number of gallons? Good Lord.
18 When your house is flooded, it's too late.

19 The -- this parcel of land use to be -- just
20 ask the company -- used to be unincorporated. Back
21 in 2011, somebody came along and turned this into
22 Hardeeville city limits. "That's a little odd," I
23 thought. I just don't trust you folks. I like
24 you. You're a person. You need Jesus as a savior.
25 But I don't trust you in this situation.

1 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. I'm going to ask
2 you to hold clapping for the comments. This is the
3 time for statements. Mike Anderson, it's your turn
4 to speak.

5 MR. ANDERSON: Am I speaking that way, not this way?

6 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: That way.

7 MR. ANDERSON: I'm --

8 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Yes.

9 MR. ANDERSON: -- speaking this way.

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Yep.

11 MR. ANDERSON: Okay. It's a pleasure always to be able
12 to stand in front of your neighbors and fight for
13 your neighborhood. I just wish I was here tonight
14 to fight to better my neighborhood and not to save
15 it. There's a certain romanticism that comes from
16 buying your first home. And my wife and I bought
17 our first home in Osprey Lake neighborhood, and one
18 of the biggest reasons why we bought it was because
19 of the total package. It was -- it was a great
20 neighborhood. There was -- there was wildlife; the
21 environment was beautiful, the ecosystem. It was
22 quiet. There's no dust. There's no flooding. And
23 now all of that is in danger, and I have serious
24 concerns. I have serious concerns about my
25 environment, the flooding, and the quality of life.

1 Today, I've heard a lot of great questions,
2 and I haven't heard specificity when it comes to
3 the answers. The amount of uncertainty in this
4 proposal and the narrative I'm hearing tonight
5 requires a thorough investigation of the direct
6 impact that this sand mine has.

7 I encourage for these individuals to look at
8 other communities, like ours, that have been
9 negatively affected by a sand mine. And more
10 specifically, I encourage this entity to look at
11 the sand mine proposal of Charleston County, the
12 Awendaw sand mine. That sand mine proposal was
13 rejected. And one of the reasons it was rejected
14 is because it was adjacent to seven homes. I think
15 when you look at the map, the correct map, you see
16 there are more than seven homes in this situation.

17 When I looked at the South Carolina Code on my
18 phone here, that I was given by a beautiful not-
19 for-profit, I don't understand how this proposal
20 doesn't violate South Carolina Code 48-20-70
21 Numbers 2,3,4 and 5. How does it not violate all
22 of those?

23 I think all of us that are here tonight have a
24 serious concern. And to the entity that is
25 deciding to reject or go through with this

1 proposal, how do you not look at the sheer amount
2 of people that are here tonight that took time away
3 from their Thursday evening and are arguing against
4 it? How do you not look at that and say, "This is
5 directly reflective of what we're trying not to
6 do"? We are trying, in South Carolina, to improve
7 the quality of life, not hurt it. And how do you
8 see this many people who are vehemently opposed to
9 this and not, from a logical point of view, an
10 emotional point of view, take a step back and say,
11 "Well something's going on here. We need to look
12 further"?

13 And that's what I ask OF you tonight. Look
14 further. Look at the faces of all these people and
15 realize that mines like this have been rejected in
16 2024 in the state of South Carolina, and this one
17 should be rejected for similar reasons and for more
18 dire reasons as well. Thank you.

19 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. I'm going to remind
20 you of two things. Please do not clap. It's just
21 making this take a little bit longer. And,
22 secondly, please state and spell your name clearly
23 for the court reporter when you step up and speak
24 so that she can get you on the record correctly.
25 Greg John?

1 MR. JOHN: Yeah. She said my name. It's G-r-e-g
2 J-o-h-n. Thank you. The people from Columbia are
3 supposed to be a neutral party in this entire
4 thing, and I find, when Wendy answers questions,
5 it's almost as if she has already decided that this
6 mine is happening. And I think that tone is -- is
7 frightening on top of the fact that they do not
8 have ways of measuring the quantity, and they
9 really don't have any plan to regulate how this
10 works. So that's my thoughts on -- on them.

11 For me, I -- I look at people, and I look at
12 homeowners and families, not corporations, not big
13 money operations, and people -- people make plans,
14 and they have dreams and they have goals, and they
15 make plans based on the information at hand. And
16 they move to neighborhoods because they've done
17 good research. And they look at what might happen
18 or what may not happen.

19 I represent -- I'm a real estate agent, and my
20 -- my goal in my career of a full time -- you know,
21 that's what I do for a living. My goal is to help
22 people achieve their plans and their goals. And I
23 -- I am -- you know, real-time, real-life
24 experience, right now: I represent Doug and Kathy
25 Olson from 1470 Osprey Lake Drive, and they have

1 plans. They -- they love Osprey Lake. They bought
2 in there because it's gorgeous, it's clean, it's
3 quiet. They have a half acre on the water. They
4 can breathe the air. They don't have a flooding
5 problem, and they want to move to another state for
6 personal reasons. And they and I have been working
7 together to make that dream a reality, and at the
8 moment, we have their property listed. We were in
9 receipt of an offer one week ago, roughly, very
10 good offer where both sides were satisfied. It was
11 a clean document. We were moments away from
12 ratifying the deal so that they could pursue their
13 plans. And the buyers were very excited about
14 moving into this incredible neighborhood as well,
15 that does not have a mining operation next door
16 within earshot and a stone's throw.

17 They found out -- the buyers discovered that
18 there were some plans and a potential mine coming
19 in, and they pulled their offer right out from
20 under the table. I'm not blaming them for
21 anything; I'm just saying this is -- this is real-
22 time. These are property values, and they are
23 going to be majorly affected by this operation. So
24 I say to vote against this and to -- do not let a
25 mine be put into your back yard. Thank you.

1 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. Our next speaker is
2 John Hewson.

3 MR. HEWSON: My name is John M. Hewson, and my wife and
4 I live just to the north of this proposed mining
5 operation. I want to thank you for letting me make
6 these comments and for giving us this opportunity
7 to meet with you.

8 First of all, let me tell you that we have the
9 longest common boundary line with this proposed
10 mine of 2,855 linear feet. And, lo and behold, we
11 never received any notice. Can you imagine that?
12 And on top of that, Mr. Monroe knows me
13 individually for years. And we never received the
14 first bit of notice. The first time we found out
15 about this was from some neighbors after you-all
16 gave the notice.

17 Secondly, we maintain fire lines all around
18 our property. And a man and I who work together
19 have been doing that for years. We plow those fire
20 lines three, four, or five times a year to keep
21 them in place. We control burn. And would you
22 imagine that we never saw any evidence on the
23 ground during calendar years 2024 and 2025 of any
24 surveying, any soil borings -- soil tests, or any
25 water tests at all on this property until

1 yesterday. And then we happened to see a stake
2 from a surveyor with a purple ribbon on it. That's
3 the first time we ever saw any kind of due
4 diligence on the part of these people and their
5 consultants.

6 Secondly, I don't know how many of you are
7 familiar with this, but these subdivisions that are
8 here now have been here for a long time. Carroll
9 Estates was actually a subdivision; it was done by
10 Dr. T.D. Carroll, the medical doctor, in
11 Hardeeville, South Carolina, back in the late
12 1960s. And all of the drainage coming out of
13 Carroll Estates comes down by my house because I
14 happen to own the last two lots to the west in
15 Carroll Estates. And so there is a drainage ditch
16 in the front of every house. There's a drainage
17 ditch between the houses that are adjacent to
18 Osprey Lakes. And those -- the -- those drainage
19 things drain down, and they happen to all go into a
20 north-south main drainage ditch that then carries
21 the water off to the north and ultimately into
22 Monkey John Swamp. The last proposed sand mine,
23 number three, is going to be right over that main
24 north-south drainage ditch.

25 I have not seen any -- anything in the

1 information provided by DES that shows how they
2 plan to do this. What are they going to do? They
3 haven't come out, and they haven't done anything on
4 the ground. They probably don't even know that
5 drainage ditch is there. And so what's going to
6 happen is they're going to come out and block off
7 that drainage ditch, and what that's going to do is
8 going to mean that, when heavy rains come, all the
9 water is going to back up in Carroll Estates. It's
10 going to back up in Osprey Lakes, and it's going to
11 back up on our property.

12 And so -- just a moment, ma'am. I just wanted
13 you to know that I think that we ought to -- to
14 require DES to require the applicant to do the
15 proper due diligence and sort all of this out ahead
16 of time. And the idea that we have a 50-foot
17 setback is clearly insufficient and inappropriate.

18 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. I'm going to have
19 to ask you -- no.

20 MR. HEWSON: Just one more minute, ma'am. Just one more
21 thing.

22 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: You -- you --

23 MR. HEWSON: I know.

24 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: -- you've gone over your time
25 limit.

1 MR. HEWSON: I just want --

2 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: I'll give you one more second.

3 (Yelling from the crowd.)

4 MR. HEWSON: I wanted you to know that --

5 (Yelling from the crowd.)

6 MR. HEWSON: -- that the -- the consultants did not do
7 their due diligence on the wildlife. At my fish
8 pond, we have wood storks. We have bald eagles.
9 This morning, when I walked out, I could hear
10 whippoorwills, chuck-will's-widows, to be more
11 accurate. And guess what? They didn't see that.
12 They couldn't find them. But they know that
13 they're over in Osprey Lakes.

14 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. I'm --

15 MR. HEWSON: And so --

16 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: -- going to have to cut you off
17 there.

18 MR. HEWSON: I know --

19 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: We will have time at the end
20 for more comments --

21 MR. HEWSON: Okay.

22 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: -- but right now we need Tyrone
23 Price.

24 MR. HEWSON: I ask that this permit be denied.

25 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Tyrone Price? Do -- would you

1 still like to comment?

2 MR. PRICE: The name is Tyrone Price. I'm also a
3 neighbor of John's. And what I'm here today is to
4 just make sure that we get a sense of clarity. I
5 think that's what the basis is. We just don't
6 understand what's going on. And all the
7 information this past week, just a core of us has
8 been out in the community trying to do outreach to
9 inform everyone. This is just a small segment of
10 our neighborhood, our residence, our neighbors. We
11 need clarity. We need to understand it before
12 decisions are made. And I also support denying
13 this project. Thank you.

14 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Lisa Marie Price?

15 MS. PRICE: Lisa Marie Price. L-i-s-a M-a-r-i-e
16 P-r-i-c-e. And I am a resident of Florida Drive.
17 And as much everybody is here to try and keep
18 something from happening in the future, I am here
19 because I don't have time to deal with that that's
20 happening in the future, because for the past ten
21 years, at the end of Florida Drive, that's my yard.
22 Ever since Osprey Lakes became a subdivision, this
23 is my yard. When it rains or when it just rains
24 for a couple of days, the water drainage -- like
25 this gentleman indicated, water directions change.

1 When the developments come and the sand pits are --
2 are built, water changes. It goes somewhere.
3 Well, this water has now decided to come to my
4 house. So there are portions and times during a
5 regular week where we just avoid certain areas of
6 our yard because they are flooded. So I am
7 requesting that this be sternly denied because I am
8 busy right now trying to figure out how to get this
9 water out of my yard. I don't have time to get a
10 sand pit water out of my yard. Thank you.

11 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Robert -- Robert Saxon?

12 MR. SAXON: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, everyone.

13 I wasn't going to say anything, but I decided to
14 come up here for just a few minutes to mention back
15 in the day, when I first built my house, and I was
16 trying to get insurance for it, okay, and they told
17 me that I couldn't get flood insurance, okay? So I
18 wonder why they wouldn't even sell me flood
19 insurance. But now, I'm going to tell you if they
20 build a sand pit, the ones of you who have or do
21 not have insurance, they can cancel your insurance,
22 and you're going to be done. So what -- so I don't
23 know. You got to hold your head up, open your
24 eyes, and look up. Okay. Thank you.

25 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Courtney Flexon?

1 MS. C. FLEXON: I'm Courtney Flexon, C-o-u-r-t-n-e-y "F"
2 like "Frank," l-e-x-o-n. My family and I have
3 lived here 25 years. We're at 2712 Levy Road, but
4 we're actually up that private dirt road Callajoe
5 Way on the little farm. And I don't have a
6 permanent easement on that road.

7 I come at this from my experience as having
8 been on the Jasper County Planning Commission as
9 well as, way back in the day, I was an alderman in
10 Savannah on City Council for two terms, and so I'm
11 look at this from planning and zoning point of
12 view, and I'm horrified. Because of -- of just the
13 -- the inconsiderateness of the owner in -- in
14 considering his neighbors, and from a planning
15 point of view, you know, having worked with Jasper
16 County -- and the problem is that this property is
17 in Hardeeville and none of us are constituents. We
18 all live in Jasper County. But Levy at -- the Levy
19 area as a hamlet has been addressed beautifully.
20 The 2018 master plan talks about including it as a
21 hamlet. Talks about the major roads like 315 and
22 -- and 17 are commercial, and that's why we have
23 Dollar General and, you know, the gas stations and
24 so forth. And we -- we patronize them, but Levy
25 Road is supposed to be residential. And the whole

1 area from Jasper County is either rural residential
2 or residential. It -- it was never intended for
3 this to happen. But guess what? We don't have a
4 say.

5 But I did take a real hard look at the
6 application, and there are several things that
7 really concern me. And I -- in my written
8 statement, I go one by one, but I'm going to be
9 real quick for y'all. But the thing about the
10 wildlife just enrages me, that they would have the
11 nerve to say, "Oh, there's nothing there." I don't
12 know who did this study at the DNR, but that is
13 just patently ridiculous. They're -- they are
14 asked about land usage of contiguous areas, and
15 they say, you know, a farm and some residential,
16 but they don't acknowledge the -- the contiguous
17 "neighborhood," which is the Monkey John Swamp.
18 And that is what -- that's huge. It's thousands of
19 acres. It goes way down past all of us into the
20 Savannah Wild -- National Wildlife Refuge, and you
21 just can't tell me that that isn't affected by this
22 proposed discharge.

23 They ask about physical hazards to houses:
24 flooding. They ask about physical hazards to, you
25 know, churches and so forth and what areas of

1 cultural interests. Well, there's a cemetery,
2 Cooper Cemetery on Callajoe Way, 15 feet from where
3 the trucks are going to go by with all that dust
4 and dirt and so forth. And it is contiguous with
5 the Monkey John Swamp, so if water levels change --
6 that cemetery has been there since the Civil War.
7 It is an active cemetery where families still bury
8 their loved ones. Nobody's ever looked there.

9 There's a question of the wetlands, and this
10 is really important; they -- the Corps of
11 Engineers, because of the backlog and so forth,
12 they are allowed to accept analysis performed by a
13 consultant for, "Wetland boundaries if there are no
14 purposed impacts." And so they were allowed to get
15 a -- a private consultant, and he spoke to them.
16 On his website, he says he is, guess what, an
17 endangered species specialist, and here we are with
18 no acknowledgment whatsoever of any of that stuff.
19 And he apparently has assured them that there's no
20 concern.

21 I just find all of this so unacceptable, and I
22 think for all of these reasons and a lot of the
23 other ones that have been mentioned already, please
24 take my advice and deny this. Thank you.

25 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Christopher John Curry?

1 MR. C. CURRY: Pass. Pass.

2 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Christopher Curry, are you
3 declining?

4 MR. C. CURRY: I'm not going to speak.

5 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Okay.

6 MR. C. CURRY: Thank you.

7 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Sorry. I thought that was
8 Christopher. How about Matthew Curry?

9 MR. M. CURRY: No. No. comment.

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: No? All right. Vil "VAY-toss"
11 (phonetic)?

12 MR. VAITAS: "VITE-us."

13 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Vaitas?

14 MR. VAITAS: Good evening. My name is Vil Vaitas. I'm
15 a -- I'm a concerned Hardeeville citizen. I live
16 at 17 Osprey Way Circle. The issue that I'd like
17 to address tonight is the impact that the Monroe
18 Tract Sand Pit Mine will have on the surface and
19 groundwater systems. Stormwater runoff contains
20 contaminants that can contaminate ground water
21 through sand pits, particularly when the surface
22 water levels rise above the groundwater table.
23 Initially, sand pits can influence local
24 groundwater levels, especially in areas where there
25 is -- connected to swamps, lakes, and streams.

1 These are some of the wild animals that you
2 see in Osprey Lake. It's a benefit of -- our
3 community just simply came together last week and
4 took pictures -- sent me pictures of what they've
5 seen in the area, including the endangered wood
6 stork as well as the bald eagle.

7 The sand pits are characterized by steep banks
8 and deep water and unstable bank bottoms and
9 shoreline areas due to sand. Surface Mine Segment
10 Number 3 is only 180 feet wide at most, and the
11 western section of Mine Number 1 exhibits the same
12 characteristics. At a depth of 25 feet, as
13 proposed in -- proposed in the permit, the steep
14 banks, deep water, and unstable bottom make it very
15 susceptible to erosion and changes in the water
16 levels. The erosion of the 8-foot-tall berm and
17 the wetlands adjacent to Mine Number 1 and Mine
18 Number 3 will result in groundwater being affected
19 greatly around Osprey Lake and the Carroll Estates
20 community. The proposed mine will excavate
21 directly over the main ditch that services both
22 Osprey Lake and Carroll Estates, effectively
23 destroying it and is allowing severe flooding to
24 threaten our homes.

25 The flooding and/or draining of Osprey Lake,

1 which is directly connected to these wetlands, will
2 result in the loss of quality of water quality,
3 wildlife, and property values. Osprey Lakes' depth
4 is, on the average of 10 to 12 feet deep. The
5 proposed mines that are going to be dug are going
6 to be 25 foot deep. Remember, Osprey Lake is
7 directly connected to the sand pits through the
8 drainage systems approved by the Army Corps of
9 Engineers in the 1990s, while 6 through 13, Lots 38
10 through 44, and the community park on the northwest
11 side of Osprey Lake are directly adjacent to one
12 portion or another of the approved drainage system.
13 The balance of the development is directly affected
14 as well, too, by the water quality and the water
15 levels within the lake. There are a total of 62
16 homes in the Osprey Lake community. If you look on
17 the old topographical maps that were provided by
18 Monroe Tract Facility and the engineering firm,
19 they show all empty lots. Believe me, they aren't
20 empty lots.

21 Sand pit mining can result in two scenarios
22 depending on the stage of mine's operation. Lake
23 water quality and levels changed occurred --
24 changes occur during mining, mine generated
25 wastewater and water mine -- mine dewatering and

1 reclamation. Rising water levels will result in
2 the failure of septic systems throughout this
3 neighborhood. The average property above --
4 elevation above the lake level is approximately
5 2 to 5 feet. Rising water levels will result in
6 failed systems polluting the lake, the swamp, and
7 the adjacent waterways. Poor turbidity levels of
8 the lake will also kill the fish, turtles, and
9 other wildlife that live there. Birds and animals
10 will leave our community that depend on the lake as
11 a food source. One of those is the bald eagle and
12 the osprey and the woodland stork. Wildlife
13 habitat in our homes would be rendered unusable.
14 Pumping Osprey Lake would also -- dry would be also
15 a problem. (To Hearing Officer Sawyer) Do I have
16 three minutes or five minutes?

17 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Three minutes. Are you
18 speaking on behalf of the -- all right.

19 MR. VAITAS: Osprey Lake.

20 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: You got one more minute. I
21 didn't realize that.

22 MR. VAITAS: Okay. Pumping Osprey Lake dry would also
23 be a disaster as well, too. Property values would
24 plummet. Professor Hite from Auburn University has
25 shown that the property values within a mile of a

1 sand pit dropped an average of 38 percent. Based
2 on 62 homes averaging a value of \$500,000, this
3 would result in an \$11.8 million tax-based loss to
4 Hardeeville per year. 493 property owners live
5 within a mile of this sand pit, and those are
6 properties that could be further subdivided for
7 homes.

8 Wildlife that relies on Osprey Lake would also
9 suffer and die as well. As you see from the
10 pictures, we have the wood stork, the frosted
11 flatwoods salamander, the shortnose sturgeon, the
12 chuck-will's-widow, the East Indigo snake, and
13 there's many other species in the area, as the
14 pictures show.

15 The permit that was issued for discharge of
16 waste by the DES was flawed, and then a 404 permit
17 is required from the Corps of Engineers for
18 designated areas of federal wetlands. Monroe Tract
19 application incorrectly identifies the water as
20 flowing into the Wright River when it actually
21 flows into the Monkey John Swamp, which eventually
22 goes through the culvert under 17, and into the
23 Back River, as well as our federally protected
24 wildlife preserve.

25 It's for these reasons, the loss of wildlife,

1 quality of water, loss of the physical Osprey Lake,
2 the loss of home values, property taxes, and the
3 loss of community, that we ask that the sand pit
4 not be approved. Thank you.

5 I'm sorry. I forgot one thing. The pictures
6 that I provided to the court stenographer and the
7 board are in black and white, because I'm hoping
8 that, unlike the pictures, they won't be a dark
9 memory of what lives in and around our lakes.

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Lorraine White Bond? Do you
11 still -- okay.

12 MS. BOND: Good evening.

13 (Responses from the crowd.)

14 MS. BOND: My name is Lorraine, L-o-r-r-a-i-n-e, White,
15 W-h-i-t-e, Bond, B-o-n-d. And I live at 2289 Levy
16 Road. My statement here is based on living
17 actually on Levy Road. Okay. For the past year or
18 more, my tranquility and the tranquility of my
19 neighbors has been destroyed. Levy is a quiet --
20 was a quiet residential area that has been turned
21 into an industrial park. Imagine how many loads of
22 dirt it takes to expand Highway 17 from two lanes
23 to four lanes. And that's not the only project
24 that these trucks are supplying. Day after day,
25 back and forth, to fill the demand of the -- of the

1 dirt needed to finish the project.

2 The other problem is that the community has
3 had squirrels and rabbits and deer that ran through
4 our yards. But they are disappearing because the
5 tearing down of the trees, the clearing of the
6 land, and the digging of the dirt, is taking away
7 their homes and food.

8 The problems that we are having with the first
9 underground mining project are the trucks have no
10 regard to the speed limit. They drive so fast that
11 I personally put my blinkers on almost a half a
12 mile away from my house if they're behind me before
13 I reach my property so that they will slow down and
14 not ram the back of my car when I turn into my
15 driveway. The real danger of speeding dump trucks
16 with heavy loads, it can lead to the dump truck to
17 turn over if there is a shift in the weight.

18 The noise from the trucks flying from --
19 flying by is an issue. My house sits back from the
20 road, and in the past I was in the back of my
21 house, I never heard the traffic. But now I do
22 hear the traffic of the trucks.

23 The air is polluted from the exhaust coming
24 from the trucks and the sand that is seeping off
25 the side of the trucks that don't have covers.

1 There's a family that lives directly across from
2 the pit with their young toddlers who can only come
3 outside to play when the pit is closed, because the
4 sand flying -- flying around and the noise of the
5 trucks. It makes it unsafe for the children -- not
6 for those -- not just those children, but all the
7 children in the neighborhood.

8 The cars that travel the road daily are
9 constantly collecting dust on their cars,
10 especially after it rains when the sand gets muddy
11 and then gets dusty when it -- when it dries.

12 Now the City of Hardeeville and Monroe has the
13 audacity to come back to request a permit for
14 another pit behind another set of home that'll
15 still have to use Levy Road to enter and exit and
16 create more damage to the community. The road
17 doesn't even seem wide enough to be able to fit two
18 trucks side by side.

19 I have a question. I know that you have
20 aerial views. This is for SCDES/DHEC. I know that
21 you have aerial views of whole state -- of the
22 whole state, but do you have people from your
23 office come to the neighborhood to see if it is an
24 appropriate area to put these pits in? To see if
25 it is a appropriate place to put -- your property

1 value will go down 38 percent if you live within
2 three miles of the pit. This turnout tonight is
3 fantastic. And for a couple of months we've been
4 trying to get to -- to as many people as we
5 possibly could. Levy Limehouse Bellinger Hill
6 Community has a web site -- no, not -- not a
7 website -- a Facebook page, and you can place
8 information on it all the time, so check it out.
9 And I do not want them to do this pit either. Save
10 Levy.

11 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Jennifer White?

12 MS. WHITE: I'm Jennifer White, W-h-i-t-e. I live at --
13 in Osprey Lake. In addition to being a member of
14 the community, I'm also on the Homeowner's
15 Association Board. So for those of my neighbors
16 who have spoken tonight, I'm also here representing
17 those who were not able to be here or chose not to
18 speak. After reviewing the application when we
19 became aware of it earlier this year, we had
20 initially concerns about the extreme potential
21 impact to our neighborhood and surrounding
22 neighborhoods due to the flooding -- the potential
23 for flooding. It's very significant; we're a
24 smaller community, but that should be irrelevant.
25 Our homes would be damaged by the flooding.

1 We're too close to a small lake that is not very
2 deep and that would be impacted by this.

3 I'm concerned about the responses that I heard
4 earlier tonight from the DES in regard to flooding.
5 I'm concerned that the response was, if your home
6 is flooded, you need to contact the appropriate
7 people (indiscernible).

8 Our concern, our stance here is that we need
9 to be proactive and consider what will happen in
10 all likelihood, and not come back and try to
11 mitigate damage, with or without flood insurance,
12 that sounds like we may not be able to get. We
13 need to be proactive and say, if this is going to
14 happen, to what extent and degree is it going to
15 impact our homes? And if it's going to be to the
16 extent that it will cause financial or personal
17 damage to ourselves and our property, it must be
18 denied.

19 We're also very concerned about the
20 displacement of wildlife. Thank you, Vill, for
21 sharing so many pictures. I also have personal
22 pictures on my cell phone of a bald eagle and an
23 eaglet, actually, a young one fishing and catching
24 fish in our little lake. Hard to believe in such a
25 small community right outside a, you know, larger

1 metropolitan area like Savannah or even Bluffton,
2 but I have those pictures. They -- so to deny that
3 that wildlife is here is absurd. It's wrong. It
4 just tells me that insufficient diligence or lack
5 of due diligence was done in the evaluation of this
6 permit. It may or may not be the responsibility of
7 the South Carolina Department of Environmental
8 Services to do all of those evaluations. But in
9 the process of permitting, somebody needs to ensure
10 that the appropriate agencies are involved and that
11 did not happen; that very clearly has not happened.

12 So I saw that a note was made and to evaluate
13 discharge volumes of water after Vil made a note
14 about his calculations. The fact that that hadn't
15 been considered to this point before tonight also
16 incredibly irresponsible in our opinion. Just
17 irresponsible if you haven't considered how much
18 water may be pumped out. And again, if it's not
19 the responsibility of the South Carolina Department
20 of Environmental Services, whose is it and why
21 wasn't it done? Because if that isn't part of the
22 application review process, then what's being
23 reviewed?

24 Another concern is that some of the zoning.
25 It was brought up in a comment that the zoning

1 initially was back on determined to me -- or the
2 zoning was determined to be residential. And
3 Hardeeville, the City of Hardeeville was contacted
4 and approved this application to move forward
5 because of the Hardeeville zoning. Osprey Lake, at
6 least, is not part of Hardeeville. We are not
7 incorporated. We are part of Jasper County. That
8 again is something that should've come up in an
9 application review process.

10 So to say the Hardeeville was already approved
11 this -- they won't even let me get an -- they won't
12 even approve an application of mine to be part of
13 the rec center because I'm not a Hardeeville
14 resident. So that's another lack of
15 responsibility.

16 So anyway, I don't want to go on. We have the
17 same concerns that many others have brought up.
18 What I've heard a lot tonight is -- from the South
19 Carolina Department of Environmental Services is
20 that we have processes that we can follow to
21 mitigate our damages should this mine be approved
22 and these damages become realized. That's not
23 acceptable. It's not acceptable to try and
24 mitigate damages after the fact when we can
25 justifiably predict that they will, in fact,

1 happen. And in this case they absolutely have
2 already happened. And from where I'm sitting I can
3 see that flooding in your yard and that is
4 catastrophic. I mean it's just terrible. So I
5 encourage that this be turned down on behalf of the
6 Osprey Lake neighborhood.

7 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. Next up is Phillip
8 Flexon?

9 MR. FLEXON: This will be in the back, but I encourage
10 people to -- to look at this. It's Phillip -- it's
11 Phillip Flexon, F-l-e-x-o-n, first name is Phillip
12 with two Ls, P-h-i-l-l-i-p. And welcome fellow
13 Levy neighbors. I too have been a resident of Levy
14 for 25 years. And before I start my -- what I
15 wanted to discuss simply about -- about this mine,
16 I wanted to remind the members of the panel of
17 South Carolina DES that you are bound by law to
18 follow South Carolina Code, legal code, 40-28-70.
19 I believe another member here mentioned that,
20 specifically Item 4. Because you -- there seems to
21 be always a tendency for everyone to say, "Well,
22 it's not me ; it's that -- that department or that
23 department. It's not my responsibility." And you
24 don't put any references to land values and house
25 values. So I specifically wish to state my

1 objection to the proposed Monroe sand quarry
2 application as it poses a hazardous drop in home
3 values surrounding the mine, and I wish to refer a
4 little more specifically to the Professor Diane
5 Hite of Auburn University and her numerous studies
6 about mining in my letter in great detail, which
7 you already have. But Dr. Hite performed studies
8 in 2006 to 2017 that included 21,441 homes in Ohio
9 and New York, which showed -- as you've already
10 heard -- homebuyers can lose up to 38 percent if
11 they're immediately adjacent, and they go out three
12 miles. Now here's -- here's the mine. I -- I
13 could only fit -- I could only fit about 2.2 miles,
14 you see the dashed line? There's probably 200
15 homes, 300 homes, that this mine will impact the
16 value.

17 Now, in addition to her studies, she -- again
18 she showed that -- that the 5 percent loss at three
19 miles, and up -- be up to 38 percent. She had some
20 -- some push back in 2017. She collaborated with
21 two outstanding mathematicians who did a very
22 sophisticated autoregressive analysis with the data
23 that would -- made her data and her results even
24 stronger. She's considered the gold standard now
25 on the impact of quarries, gravel quarries and

1 sand. And there's no difference. Sand goes up to
2 point -- or it goes up to 4 millimeters, and -- and
3 I think 4 to 7 millimeters is gravel. And -- and
4 for all practical purposes they're identical. And
5 her conclusions have held up to real world
6 observations.

7 This proposed Monroe quarry is 50 feet from
8 Osprey Lake. There's 61 homes, and they're valued
9 over 450,000 each. A 30 percent reduction in
10 Osprey Lake would cost over a \$11 million reduction
11 in the owners of those properties. In this -- this
12 area, all of us here, this guy is going to cause us
13 to lose over \$30 million. These things are going
14 to steal it from us. And then -- and, you know,
15 that's -- this is -- the study's been reported over
16 and over.

17 And you guys can say, "Well, it's not my
18 responsibility to discuss the values of our home."
19 But you're bound by these laws, and I'll read that
20 to you. It says, "You must deny the -- this permit
21 if it poses a hazard to surrounding neighbors."
22 Now, I want to ask everyone here, if you suffer a
23 cash profit loss in the value of your home -- some
24 people probably have it, you know, \$100 to \$150,000
25 in their home, does that not pose a hazard?

1 Everyone raise your hand -- you believe -- it's a
2 hazard, right? It's a hazard. You are bound by
3 law to reject this. You need to reject this
4 permit.

5 You can't say, "Oh, we don't deal with home
6 values." It says right here, "If it poses a hazard
7 to surrounding neighbors, you must reject it.
8 That's the law, so reject it. Thank you.

9 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Herman Heyward, Sr.?

10 MR. HEYWARD: Top of the evening to everyone. My name
11 is Herman Heyward, Sr. I live at 231 Chalmers
12 Road. Now, a gentleman back there, he's at Osprey
13 Lake. I understand that. And it's going to affect
14 you, and it's going to affect me, too, back at
15 Chalmers Road. And if that sand mine or whatever,
16 you know, comes through there, I got loved ones --
17 nobody thinking about the graveyard. I'm a grave
18 digger. That's my passion. I love to do that.

19 Now I don't know whether you guys ever saw
20 water gets underneath a grave and lift it up. You
21 don't want to see that. You don't want to see your
22 loved one like that. So I'm -- I had that down in
23 (indiscernible) the other day. So I'm telling you
24 now. These people come in here, and they will dig
25 up -- dig -- leave the ground -- they don't give a

1 rat's ass -- excuse my expression. Excuse my
2 expression, but I'm going to tell you like it is.
3 They don't give a rat's ass in a hailstorm about
4 us. They're going to do what they've got to do,
5 and when they're done digging through there,
6 they're going haul ass somewhere, and we -- you
7 know, we left holding the bag. We're left holding
8 the bag, you know. I got a nice place down on
9 Chalmers Road down there, you know. Nice house. I
10 mean, you know, I -- I don't want to see my place
11 get all flooded up and, you know, have to buy more
12 furniture or whatever, even though it's floodproof,
13 but still, you know. So I'm just telling y'all
14 right now, you know, I'm -- I'm -- I'm not for it.
15 I'm not for it.

16 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Next up, Sammie Brown?

17 MR. BROWN: My name is Sammie, S-a-m-m-i-e
18 B-r-o-w-n. And I'm here today to -- to say that I
19 have in the area -- local area, I have a farm in
20 the local area where I have a lot of animals there.
21 And I think that the -- the things with this --
22 this mining pit would do will affect those animals,
23 because the animals that they're moving out of the
24 area that the -- that the -- that the pit is in,
25 like foxes and raccoons and things like that, they

1 will come over and attack my chickens. They will
2 attack my -- my -- all my other little birds and
3 stuff that I have there. I have goats and sheeps
4 and all of that. So I think all of these things
5 will affect my animals, so I think it would be
6 something that we need to kind of take a good look
7 at and make sure that -- that we -- we go out and
8 -- and vote that this project be denied. Thank
9 you.

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Cathleen DeCouray (verbatim).

11 MS. DECOURCY: Cathleen, C-a-t-h-l-e-e-n, DeCourcy,
12 D-e-C-o-u-r-c-y. I came here tonight because I
13 advocate for the cemeteries. But I'm sitting here
14 listening to everybody's concerns, and something
15 that she had said earlier, you said that you were
16 -- you were -- you're charged with making sure that
17 everything is complete. The application is . . . :
18 Okay. So -- but listening to everything, I find a
19 lot of things that are missing. There's no
20 cultural resource survey. The wildlife survey is
21 inaccurate. So I think that gives you reason right
22 there to deny the application. They did not fulfil
23 their obligation. You don't even have to listen to
24 all these poor people. Right there, they didn't
25 fulfill their obligation. Deny the application.

1 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Patricia DuPont?

2 MS. DUPONT: Peace and blessings. How y'all you doing?

3 I have to give you a hand for coming together.

4 Come on everybody. Hallelujah. United we stand,

5 divided we fall. Patricia Hicks DuPont,

6 P-a-t-r-i-c-i-a H-i-c-k-s D-u-P-o-n-t.

7 I just rise to say to you -- I'm from the
8 north side -- and welcome to reality Jasper County.

9 But together we can make a difference. We can stop
10 it, and so I am here to support what you're doing
11 today, because if we don't stop it -- there is a
12 photo and I wanted -- I should have brought it, of
13 an alligator a year later coming to a spot that it
14 was now a residential, him and his mate. There was
15 two alligators, and the alligator actually was up
16 trying to get in. And so how many of our wildlife
17 today are enjoying it? But next year at this time,
18 they won't have that habitation to be able to come
19 and reproduce, so be encouraged. There are levels
20 higher than this. We have the state and we have
21 the federal government. Do not give up. And I,
22 also, agree this should not be permitted. Thank
23 you very much.

24 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Janice Paite? I may be saying
25 the last name incorrectly. It looks like "Janice

1 P-a-i-t-e." Okay.

2 MS. PINTO: Is it "Pinto"?

3 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Possibly.

4 MS. PINTO: Then it's got to be me.

5 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: 2364 Osprey Lake?

6 MS. PINTO: That's me.

7 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Okay.

8 MS. PINTO: Hello. I'm Janice Pinto, and P-i-n-t-o.

9 And I live at 2364 Osprey Lake Circle. I'm also a
10 member of the board of -- for Osprey Lake.

11 I am against everything they -- they even said.

12 They do not define anything. It's everything, "I
13 don't know. We have to check. We have to look."

14 They don't know what they're talking about. The
15 pollution would be horrible for people. The mess.

16 We are not used to that. My partner and I moved to
17 where we are for the peace and the quiet. And
18 that's what we have right now. That will all be
19 destroyed if we don't all band together and stop
20 this, so please say no.

21 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Quiristin Chisolm? Last name
22 is Chisolm, and the first name stars with a Q?

23 (No response.)

24 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Okay. Lauren Flexon?

25 MS. L. FLEXON: Hello. I'm Lauren, L-a-u-r-e-n Flexon,

1 F, like "Frank," l-e-x-o-n. I have two things
2 before I really get started. I -- I think I -- I'm
3 glad this is on the record because I want to go on
4 the record to remind you-all that your job is to
5 review this application, despite how we've talked
6 about it tonight, not assuage our concerns. I also
7 want to go on the record to ask you to review this
8 independent consultant that has been hired by the
9 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, because when you look
10 further, you will find that he's actually a hired
11 consultant by the applicant, not the corps of
12 engineers, so we are asking as a community that the
13 corps of engineers review our application that is
14 being discussed here tonight.

15 I also have in front of me Section 48-20-70 of
16 the South Carolina Mining Act that we are here to
17 discuss right now. And it states that "the
18 Department shall deny an operating permit upon
19 finding these seven things" -- a few of them not so
20 much relevant, but Number 2, "The operation will
21 have undue adverse effects on the wildlife or
22 freshwater, estuarine, or marine fisheries." You
23 have heard tonight and seen proof of the endangered
24 wildlife that lives in the Monkey John Swamp, a
25 federally protected wetland directly next door to

1 this sand mine. We have unequivocal proof of it.
2 Right there, you are legally required to deny this
3 permit. But I'm going to continue because there's
4 a lot more here.

5 You have heard about the cemetery on the
6 actually historic C&S Railroad, not Callajoe Way.
7 It's an old railroad, a historic railroad, that has
8 a historic cemetery, that has historic gravesites
9 that date back to the Civil War. You want to talk
10 about hazards? This -- this will affect that road,
11 that cemetery, all of it. We can go on.

12 "The operation will violate standards of air
13 quality, surface water quality, or groundwater
14 quality, which has been promulgated by the South
15 Carolina Department of Health Environmental
16 Control." We've talked about wells. We've talked
17 about septic tanks. We've talked about
18 insufficient buffers. We've talked about all of
19 it. Again, if you're following your own law, you
20 are legally required to deny this permit.

21 I'm going to keep going. Number 4, "The
22 operation will constitute a substantial physical
23 hazard to a neighboring dwelling house, school,
24 church, hospital, commercial or industrial
25 building, public road, or other public property."

1 You've heard about the silica dust; that's a
2 hazard. You've heard about the flooding; that's a
3 hazard. Again, if you are following your own law,
4 you will deny this permit.

5 "The operation will have a significantly
6 adverse effect on the purposes of publicly owned
7 parks, publicly owned forests, or publicly owned
8 recreation area." We've heard about the park that
9 is directly next door to the sand mine. A park.

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: (To Ms. Flexon) I'm going to
11 give you 15 seconds to wrap up, please.

12 MS. L. FLEXON: I've got a lot more to say. You -- and
13 this is your law.

14 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: There will be more then --
15 there will be more time at the end.

16 MS. L. FLEXON: Okay. I'll come right back up.

17 "Publicly-owned recreation areas." I guess, to
18 say, that a wildlife refuge where the Monkey John
19 Swamp drains into should count. I'll come back up.
20 That's no problem.

21 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Juan Tolley?

22 MS. TOLLEY: Good afternoon. I'm Juan Tolley. I'm an
23 attorney with the South Carolina Environmental Law
24 Project. And I'm here speaking on behalf of the
25 Coastal Conservation League. That's Juan, J-u-a-n,

1 Tolley, T-o-l-l-e-y. And we are here opposing this
2 application, and we're asking DES to deny the
3 permit.

4 I think there are a lot of reasons all stated
5 by the members of the community. There are a lot
6 of unanswered questions, and sounds like there's a
7 lot of due diligence that still needs to be done.
8 The site -- for example, somebody already started
9 stating some of the law, and one of the questions
10 that was asked tonight was whether or not DES can
11 deny this application. And the answer to that
12 question is yes. DES has the laws and the power to
13 deny this application.

14 First, the application is incomplete, and I
15 think somebody has already spoken to that. One of
16 the questions on the application is whether or not
17 the mining will occur on undisturbed land, which is
18 a significant factor when evaluating ecological
19 risks, permitting stringency, and the cumulative
20 environmental impact. CMP-3-14(1)(b), one of the
21 goals is, "To protect and, where possible, to
22 restore and enhance the resources of the state's
23 coastal zone."

24 Here, the mine does not enhance or restore the
25 costal zone. It introduces a new industrial

1 activity into an undisturbed site adjacent to
2 wetlands. And speaking of the wetlands, according
3 to the applicant, the wetland delineation for the
4 site identifies 6.76 acres of wetlands. The
5 application itself says no to the question, "Will
6 jurisdictional wetlands be affected, filled, or
7 altered in any fashion that will require a Section
8 404 dredge and fill permit?" And there seems to be
9 quite a lot of questions with regard to whether or
10 not the wetlands will be affected, and that's
11 something that still needs to be investigated.
12 This is a wet site, and the public needs
13 confirmation that DES will not allow them to harm
14 any onsite wetlands.

15 Third, CMP-3-14-93 wants to know if there's an
16 assessment of the extent and significance of impact
17 on historic or archeological resources,
18 "Irretrievable loss of sites identified as
19 significant by the South Carolina Institute of
20 Archeology and Anthropology." And, here, it's
21 deeply disturbing that the applicant does not seem
22 to know whether or not that's the case. There are
23 a lot of things that still need to be investigated,
24 and these reports need to be done before this
25 application can be approved or even considered.

1 The application needs to be complete before there
2 can be a ruling on it.

3 Fourth, the reclamation plan document prepared
4 for the Monroe Tract Mine under the site
5 description section in the reclamation map pdf
6 show, "A dramatic increase in impervious surfaces
7 and runoff potential." In fact, the runoff
8 coefficient jumps from 75 to 88 and impervious area
9 increases from 5 percent to 47 percent,
10 significantly raising the risk of water quality
11 degradation from sedimentation and stormwater
12 pollution, which raises serious concerns about
13 stormwater quantity and quality impacts, especially
14 in the coastal watershed with nearby wetlands and
15 estuary receiving water."

16 Fifth, the application explicitly confirms
17 that no habitat or species impact assessment was
18 provided. We've already heard from many of the
19 community members that there -- there are wildlife
20 inhabit -- and species in the area that need to be
21 considered when considering this application.

22 Sixth, CMP3-14-7's goal is, "To consider the
23 long-range cumulative effects and the context of
24 development." And, here, no cumulative analysis is
25 provided despite potential for this project to

1 trigger further industrialization of a rural
2 environmentally sensitive area.

3 And, seven, CMP3-14-5 wants to know the extent
4 to which the project includes consideration for the
5 maintenance or improvement of the economic
6 stability of coastal communities. And, here, the
7 applicant and landowner are Georgia based, and
8 there is no evidence this mine provides jobs or
9 benefits to local residents. Ownership is based in
10 Georgia, and the profits will likely leave the
11 community. We're asking that this permit be
12 denied. That the comment period be extended, and
13 that DES demand that the applicant conduct the
14 studies that are necessary for this application to
15 be considered.

16 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Ahna Phelps?

17 MS. PHELPS: Hi. Thank you-all so much for coming. My
18 name is Ahna Phelps. It's A-h-n-a P-h-e-l-p-s.
19 I'm another Osprey Lake resident. I happen to be
20 one of the five homes that are directly touching
21 this mine. My backyard is going to be Segment 3.
22 So that 8-foot buffer that they're going to be
23 putting in is going to be -- what they are telling
24 me is going to keep the noise out of my backyard.

25 So when I brought this property, I thought

1 that it was a rural preservation. I looked at the
2 Jasper County website because I live in Jasper
3 County. I'm moving from Virginia. Why would I
4 think I would look in Hardeeville? So I was quite
5 surprised when I got this letter informing me that
6 this was happening in my backyard. So when I
7 called the DES to see what the heck was happening,
8 first of all, I was told, actually, it's
9 Hardeeville, and its zoned PDD, Plan Develop
10 District. Well, what the heck is that? Oh, it
11 means they can pretty much do whatever they want
12 light industrial. And then I was also told, "This
13 is a DOT project, so they don't even actually need
14 a permit. This is just due diligence, and they're
15 just digging some ponds in your backyard." That's
16 essentially how it was sold to me. And it was
17 very, very disturbing.

18 I brought that property thinking that this was
19 going to be my solace, my home. And I came here
20 tonight -- and thank you-all so much for coming. I
21 mean, it's just amazing to see the community. And
22 I have to say I am a little discouraged at the tone
23 in the beginning. It seems like I was told before
24 this that it's a done deal, so to speak, and it
25 sounds like that that was the narrative in the

1 first hour, so I'm really hoping that you're going
2 to listen to all of the concerns. Sorry. I'm
3 getting a little emotional.

4 The concerns I have are the same as everybody
5 else has stated, but one very personal concern,
6 like my neighbors in Carroll Estates, like this --
7 this affects us as individuals, and I bought in a
8 gated community. It's no secret. Like, I live
9 alone. I'm a single woman. Safety is key and you
10 can't tell me that an 8-foot buffer is going to
11 keep strange, temporary workmen from having access
12 to my backyard, at any time apparently because now
13 there's no hours. What is that? Like, are they
14 going to be mining at ten o'clock at night and then
15 stop in for drinks at my house? Like -- but it was
16 just insane to me that everything that was asked of
17 them earlier there was not a sufficient answer to
18 how they think I'm going to be safe, my property's
19 going to be safe. After my -- I mean, I'm 50 feet
20 from that mine, so after my property floods, I'm
21 supposed to call some number in Columbia and have
22 them come unflood my house?

23 So I -- I really hope that you are taking to
24 heart everything you're hearing tonight and that
25 due diligence will be done. If this is a done

1 deal, so to speak, I would like it to be better
2 investigated for the wildlife, the flooding, for
3 all of my neighbors, for our safety, for our well-
4 being, for this community, and this hamlet that we
5 love to live in. So I am asking undoubtedly to
6 deny this permit until it's further investigated.

7 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: That concludes everyone who
8 signed up to make a comment tonight. In the
9 interest of time, I would like to remind you that
10 you may still make comments through any of these
11 ways: e-mail, ePermitting, U.S. Mail through June
12 6th of 2025.

13 I will now call on folks who said that they
14 were not sure whether or not they would like to
15 make a comment tonight. If -- if your comment has
16 already been spoken, if someone has already said
17 what you were going to stand up and say, you may
18 pass. So the next person is Larnell Miller.

19 MR. MILLER: Yes. My name is Larnell Miller,
20 L-a-r-n-e-l-l M-i-l-l-e-r. I'm a resident of Shad
21 Road. I live on the on the other side from Osprey
22 Lake. So I'm kind of close to where this mine is
23 going to be or hopefully not. But, anyway, I'm
24 more concerned about Cooper Cemetery. It's a -- a
25 month ago we buried my mother there, so I'm a

1 member of the Jenkins family. We have a lot of
2 family members buried there. My grandfather, James
3 Jenkins, Sr., he was a veteran of World War I, and
4 there's other veterans buried in that cemetery,
5 also. In fact, when we had the funeral there, I
6 noticed that there's another World War I veteran in
7 there from the Johnson Family, so we have a lot of
8 memories buried down there. It's a very small
9 cemetery, but when you get down a little bit, you
10 hit water. It ain't nothing to -- to hit water
11 quick. And that Callawassie Road, the -- the
12 former railroad track, that is a very narrow road.
13 I can't see big trucks coming up and down the road
14 going to Levy Road to exit and enter. I mean, even
15 when we had the funeral there, you can -- you can't
16 even get to two cars down that road, you know,
17 going opposite of each other; it's just that tight.
18 So for them to have trucks coming down the road,
19 there's been nothing done to that road, you know,
20 so it's going to really ruin that road, and it's
21 going to be horrible for the cemetery.

22 I really -- I really, really don't want that
23 to happen, honestly. We have a lot of trouble
24 upkeeping that cemetery as it is. With big trucks
25 coming down there constantly, I think it's going to

1 ruin the access to the cemetery, as well as some of
2 the -- the gravesites in there, as well.

3 And when it comes to flooding on Shad Road, a
4 good hard rain and I can't access my backyard. I
5 have to wait for a good hot day to cut that. You
6 can cut the front, but not the back. And I've got
7 a small, little pond in basically a wetland area
8 there.

9 And when you talk about the -- the wildlife,
10 I've got all kind of storks. I've got a -- a red
11 hawk that's over there, and there's a owl that --
12 he only comes out at night, but they're there.
13 There's a lot of wildlife in our area. And it's
14 amazing that they haven't, you know, verified the
15 wildlife.

16 But there's a lot of reasons to deny this;
17 there's a lot of reasons. And most of these
18 reasons are right here, and it's amazing to
19 understand that no due diligence has been done to
20 investigate this before contacting us as a
21 community. So now I ask, honestly, big-time deny
22 this. Deny this tract. Thank you.

23 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Aaron Saxon?

24 (No response.)

25 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Okay. Connie Maybin?

1 (No response.)

2 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Jordan Johnson?

3 (No response.)

4 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Wilie Mae Herrington?

5 MS. HARRINGTON: Decline. Decline.

6 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Leroy Bentley?

7 (No response.)

8 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Vera Bright?

9 (No response.)

10 UNKNOWN FEMALE: There's Leroy. Here's Leroy.

11 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Oh, that's Leroy?

12 MR. BENTLEY: Evening, everyone. My name is Leroy

13 Bentley. Looks like everybody probably knows me

14 here mostly, but I've been here for years now, and

15 I've watched that road and Shad Road and 315. I

16 have seen the water sit there. We couldn't even

17 leave our house sometimes right at the Shad Road,

18 you know, so they do this, it's going to be worse.

19 You know, we can't go to Savannah, you know. But,

20 like I say, those things should be denied.

21 And another thing that I'm concerned about is

22 safety. We mentioned safety, but even my school

23 buses got to come through there. Right now, people

24 going to Beaufort and stuff, the traffic -- you --

25 you can't even get out, the people living on 315,

1 and it's going to get worse, so, like I say,
2 everybody asking the same, we should deny. It
3 should be denied. Thank you.

4 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. Vera Bright?

5 (No response.)

6 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Lindsay Johnson?

7 (No response.)

8 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Jason Marankoski?

9 (No response.)

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Amy Willoughby?

11 (No response.)

12 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Albera Collins?

13 (No response.)

14 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Kristin Johnson?

15 (No response.)

16 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Patick Dantzler?

17 (No response.)

18 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Thomas Bright?

19 (No response.)

20 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Bryan Jefferson?

21 (No response.)

22 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Willie Aiken?

23 (No response.)

24 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Edith Smith?

25 (No response.)

1 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Jo Ann Ford?

2 (No response.)

3 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: John Harper?

4 (No response.)

5 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Dell Harper?

6 (No response.)

7 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Jamie Vander Arn?

8 (No response.)

9 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Beatrice Anderson?

10 (No response.)

11 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Ruthie Chatman?

12 (No response.)

13 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Keith Willoughby?

14 (No response.)

15 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Jeffrey Hardy?

16 (No response.)

17 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Heidi Reed?

18 MS. REED: Right here. My name is -- my name is Heidi
19 Reed, H-e-i-d-i R-e-e-d. And I live less than a
20 mile as the crow flies from the proposed sand mine.
21 John Hewson is my good neighbor. I've lived here
22 seven years, and I've never been passionate about
23 anything -- this passionate, in my life because I
24 feel so strongly that this is not the right thing
25 for our community. Levy is such as a special

1 place. It's quiet. Nobody really -- nobody really
2 knows much about us, and so this is a really
3 amazing evening, I think, just to gain more
4 visibility. And I really want to emphasize that I
5 think the PDD is the key. It's not -- I -- I -- I
6 analyzed it, and I don't -- I do not think that it
7 is allowed to have -- this is beyond what that
8 allows, so I think that needs to be investigated
9 further. And I really urge the South Carolina
10 Department of Environmental Services to care about
11 the people as much as they care about the mine
12 owners.

13 And, by the way, when I was researching this
14 whole thing, the Cleland Site Prep, it's very much
15 -- they need to answer for why they didn't really
16 disclose their full involvement with the
17 permitting. They established the LLC -- the
18 daughter of Avery Cleland was the one -- she was
19 general counsel for the Cleland Site Prep, and
20 she's the one that -- that established the LLC
21 months after the application was submitted. So if
22 there's just -- it's not adding up, and I just
23 think we need to hold the Clelands to account, as
24 well. So thank you very much. Good night.

25 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Karen Dunbar?

1 (No response.)

2 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Cheryl Strobhart?

3 (No response.)

4 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Jacqueline Scott?

5 (No response.)

6 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Michael Lewis?

7 (No response.)

8 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Douglas Olson?

9 (No response.)

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Ben Hajek?

11 (No response.)

12 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Betty Hamiliton?

13 (No response.)

14 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Seth Goodwin or Will Goodwin?

15 (No response.)

16 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: William Hajek?

17 MR. HAJEK: My name is William J., I'll spell the last

18 name, H-a-j-e-k. I live at the 1148 Osprey Lake

19 Circle. Just to give you an idea, they were saying

20 that nobody is studying on water or anything like

21 that. How many people were around when the guys

22 came to put the cable in your front yard? They dug

23 down 3 feet, and they were wearing boots because

24 there was a foot of water down. We had a very dry

25 March and April with no rain, and they were

1 standing in mud up to their knees, them poor guys.
2 They had to dig deeper in spots because of the
3 water that they hit.

4 It seems to me that everybody here on the --
5 on the -- from DES is deflecting, "It's not my job.
6 You need to send an e-mail. You need to notify
7 this. I -- I don't know. I can't give you an
8 answer." How can you even move a permit forward
9 when you have -- you can't even give us simple
10 answers tonight. It's like, "Contact this person.
11 I don't know who we see. Contact that person. I
12 don't know." And nobody has been out there. Has
13 anybody been out there to walk around the property
14 and see how much water? We haven't had rain, and I
15 have -- in my front yard, I have a gulley -- one
16 gulley, never dries out. I can't go in there when
17 -- I can't even walk in there because it's wet
18 right now. And we've had 98-degree weather for the
19 last three or four days, and it just never dries
20 out.

21 To me, somebody -- it needs to be denied just
22 on the facts that they can't give one person here a
23 simple answer to a simple question. That proves to
24 me that it just was approved, pushed on to somebody
25 else, and they decided, "It's not my problem now.

1 It's somebody else," and if that person doesn't do
2 it or I don't do it and the homeowner misses it,
3 too bad for the homeowner. Why aren't there
4 answers that, if I get flooded, that this guy is
5 going to have a policy to cover the flooding?
6 There's no -- no flooding -- nothing has been
7 done. It has to be denied. Somebody -- somebody
8 -- maybe all of you have not done your job to see
9 what is out there and what needs to be done and
10 needs to be looked at and denied. That's all I got
11 to say.

12 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Kathy Olson?

13 MS. OLSON: I decline.

14 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Barbara Lancaster?

15 MS. LANCASTER: I decline.

16 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Okay. Cheryal Burnett?

17 (No response.)

18 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Angela or Scott Weiland? Last
19 name "W-e-i-a-n-d," it looks like.

20 (No response.)

21 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Nope? Sally -- Sally Ford? I
22 can't read the last name on this one, either.

23 (No response.)

24 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Nope. Jamie Pinckney or Billy?

25 (No response.)

1 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Matthew Hoffman?

2 (No response.)

3 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Amy Hoffman?

4 (No response.)

5 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Janice Jones?

6 (No response.)

7 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Shaleea Heyward?

8 (No response.)

9 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Margie Fields?

10 (No response.)

11 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Chris Bland?

12 (No response.)

13 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Annette Bland?

14 (No response.)

15 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Vera Heyward?

16 (No response.)

17 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Ernesto --

18 MR. CREQUERODRIGUEZ: Yes.

19 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: -- "Grayco" (phonetic)

20 Rodriguez?

21 MR. CREQUERODRIGUEZ: Okay. Ernesto Crequerodriguez,

22 E-r-n-e-s-t-o C-r-e-q-u-e-r-o-d-r-i-g-u-e-z

23 (indiscernible).

24 So thank you, everybody, for coming. I'm here

25 representing Osprey Lake Circle. I'm part of the

1 HOA there. I just want to make one statement
2 because there's a lot that's already iterated. I
3 just wanted to say on the record, there was almost
4 250 people here. If I multiply that by four that's
5 a thousand people that we represent today. We're
6 all here saying this should be rejected. If I just
7 take a thousand, and I say, "Okay. How many
8 weren't represented?" And I say, "Ten percent."
9 We have 10,000 people here who don't want this
10 mine. It affects us, whether the company wants to
11 make money or whatever is their objective, there's
12 people here who are going to be affected by this
13 mine, and we need to keep that in mind. Thank you
14 for your time.

15 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Cherelle Lasseter?

16 (No response.)

17 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: David Chisolm?

18 (No response.)

19 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Kyle Lomprez?

20 (No response.)

21 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Beth Buchanan?

22 (No response.)

23 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Patricia Walls?

24 (No response.)

25 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: George Ford, Jr.?

1 (No response.)

2 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Gene Esteves?

3 (No response.)

4 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Mythianne Shelton?

5 MS. SHELTON: My name is Mythianne Shelton. That's
6 M-y-t-h-i-a-n-n-e, Shelton, S-h-e-l-t-o-n. Most
7 everything has already been said. Growing up --
8 I'm also from Virginia. I grew up just across the
9 road from a rock quarry, and you said, "Oh, it's
10 totally different," and you talk about spraying the
11 roads. I can tell you they sprayed the roads with
12 water. How often? You might be lucky twice a day.
13 It's not constantly, at least where we lived at.
14 And maybe this company might would be different. I
15 doubt it.

16 But there's so much other -- we moved in this
17 community because we liked the quietness. You like
18 the tranquility. You have great neighbors. And
19 you have a company that comes in for this -- for
20 profit, we know that. The rock quarry where it is
21 now, they -- is not operational. Is it like they
22 said it would be? It's just like a lake.
23 Everything was abandoned that was there. And yes,
24 this might be different, so they say. It might
25 take five years. It might take longer. We don't

1 know. If it's longer than that, and the people who
2 are butting right up against it, that's a long
3 time.

4 You talk about the hearing, okay. Yes, the
5 worker's protected; we're not. You're still going
6 to hear that sound no matter how high the berm is
7 built. The sound is going to go over it. The dust
8 is still going to be there, so -- but I ask you to
9 vote no, to reject this for this community. You
10 know, is it worth destroying the park view, the
11 land, and what we have here? The flooding, to have
12 that to happen, is it worth it for just five years?
13 You think about how long you're going to affect
14 this community, the wildlife, the animals. You say
15 they'll come back, but they may not; they may not.
16 May decide to just go on, and some of them may not
17 exist anymore, so I ask you to reject the permit.

18 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Rebecca Young?

19 (No response.)

20 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Catherine Dekker?

21 (No response.)

22 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Shirley Young?

23 (No response.)

24 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: William Ford?

25 (No response.)

1 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: William Bell?

2 MR. BELL: My name's William Bell, W-i-l-l-i-a-m

3 B-e-l-l. I live in Delta Estates, which is a
4 little further south than Osprey Lakes, but we have
5 been plagued with flooding more so in the last
6 couple of years than before. One thing is the
7 water doesn't get out across Delta Estates on the
8 other side of the road, and it doesn't get out on
9 17. And just lately the DOT decided to block off
10 three of the culverts on 17, which really caused us
11 a flooding issue. The back of my yard has been up
12 about -- probably about 2 feet higher than it's
13 ever been and stayed that way for months.

14 The other thing that I don't hear them
15 addressing about wildlife, when I got on my phone,
16 as of last night, owls in the yard; turkeys, which
17 is a protected bird, flocks of them walk through
18 the yard two or three times a year, and they --
19 they go up and down through Monkey John Swamp. So
20 I don't think that all that traffic around Monkey
21 John Swamp is going to help that bird population at
22 all. Thank you.

23 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Lyn Boyles?

24 (No response.)

25 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Donnie Wooden?

1 MR. WOODEN: My name is Donnie Wooden. And what y'all
2 are experiencing here tonight is something I
3 already experienced in Ridgeway, South Carolina,
4 when they came through and dug a mine in there.
5 And what they're not telling you that -- when they
6 dig, all these particles from the dust that's going
7 to be in the atmosphere, and we have to breathe
8 that. And we have mothers that's impregnated with
9 their kids and they have to breathe this air. A
10 lot of women that was impregnated there, by
11 breathing that air and dust and particles that's in
12 that dust caused their kids to be born with
13 defects.

14 And also when you begin to dig, you got the
15 water table. When you tap into that water table,
16 the water's going to come out of your faucet muddy.
17 It took us six months before our water got right.
18 We had to buy water or boil water.

19 So -- and then they dig a little deeper, you
20 going to tap into certain gases that's been
21 building up. That's going to be in the atmosphere;
22 you're going to breathe that, as well. So it's a
23 variety down in Ridgeway, South Carolina, died
24 early because they was breathing that gas that was
25 released into the atmosphere, but they don't tell

1 you that stuff. I tell you that one. And so I'm
2 just telling you now that you should deny this here
3 because it's just not worth it. It's not good.

4 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Tom Peyton?

5 (No response.)

6 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: David Davis, Sr.?

7 (No response.)

8 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Adrenna Chatman?

9 MS. CHATMAN: Chatman. I'm going to decline so the
10 other lady can come back.

11 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Louise Chisolm?

12 (No response.)

13 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Jeff Foreman?

14 (No response.)

15 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Henry Fields?

16 MR. FIELDS: Good evening, neighbors. My name is Henry
17 Fields, H-e-n-r-y F-i-e-l-d-s. Driving in and out
18 of these mines, that's what I do. Not Cleland, so
19 don't throw the brick at me. But what they're not
20 telling you is the noise disturbance; the dust
21 that's going to turn into really, really fine dust;
22 the trucks that's going to come there five/six
23 o'clock in the morning, sometimes four o'clock,
24 because we're -- we're going to come get the dirt.
25 And it's -- it's one of those things that --

1 they're asking for 23 acres, but they will take the
2 whole 64. So vote no. Vote no.

3 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: V. Barela?

4 MS. BARELA: I'm V. Barela, B-a-r-e-l-a. I live in
5 Osprey Lake, and I don't really know much about the
6 mine other than what I've heard here pretty much
7 tonight. I'm really concerned, of course, about
8 the wildlife and the fact that we don't actually
9 have an impact analysis done by these corps of
10 engineering people. Instead, it was by somebody
11 that was paid for by the applicant of this permit,
12 so I think that needs to be looked at. There is a
13 lot of wildlife there in Osprey Lake. I -- I know,
14 I live back across from the lake, but my house
15 backs up to the woods, and we get deer and all
16 kinds of animals.

17 I'm also concerned with a couple of things
18 that were mentioned tonight in the earlier session
19 regarding the quality of water. They did make all
20 kinds of analysis and have limits on the quality of
21 the water, but not on anything -- or on the
22 quantity itself about how much they're going to be
23 dumping out. And that should be analyzed and
24 addressed.

25 And also the sale of the houses and stuff like

1 that. I heard a gentleman come up earlier about
2 Doug and Kathy Olson, who live across the street
3 from me who are trying to sell their house, and the
4 people pulled out. And this applicant -- this
5 permit hasn't even been approved or anything, but
6 we're already experiencing some kind of -- of a hit
7 on this. And I'm really concerned about the prices
8 of the homes, as well, you know. I mean, 38
9 percent, seriously? This is my first home that
10 I've bought, and I've worked since I was 16 years
11 old.

12 And I am telling you that this is my
13 retirement home. I don't want to listen to noise.
14 I don't want to listen to hear that my house now is
15 going to be 38 or even -- possibly even 10 percent,
16 15 percent, or whatever it's going to be. But
17 that's a lot of money to people like us. I mean,
18 we work hard for our stuff.

19 And they're telling us that, if the flooding
20 occurs after this permit is approved or if there's
21 noise level from trucks going up and down the
22 streets and/or dust and stuff like that that's
23 affecting us, we just going to call a number. Call
24 a number? Seriously? Come on. Who's going to
25 answer that number? There's a gentleman up here

1 who said that he's sending e-mail after e-mail
2 after e-mail, making call after call after call,
3 and nobody's going to do anything about it? So
4 what are we going to do? We're going to sit here
5 and have to take it for years. Because I don't
6 care if it's five years, if they're going to sit
7 here and dig down and do all this mining and all
8 this stuff. But I'm telling you, it's going to
9 take 20 decades to recover from it. And they're
10 going to do this reclamation? That's not enough.
11 None of it. I think that we should just not
12 approve this permit. We need to stand up.

13 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Anthony Cohen?

14 (No response.)

15 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Juanita Kinlaw?

16 (No response.)

17 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Laverne Williams?

18 (No response.)

19 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Richard Arzillo?

20 MR. ARZILLO: No comment.

21 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: LaQuandra Ford?

22 (No response.)

23 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Calvin Jones?

24 (No response.)

25 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Felicia or Jamie Washington?

1 (No response.)

2 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Michelle Lomprez?

3 (No response.)

4 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Rafael Ramos?

5 (No response.)

6 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Alicia Thompson?

7 (No response.)

8 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Kelly Arzillo?

9 (No response.)

10 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: All right. That concludes
11 everyone who signed up to make a comment tonight.

12 If anyone else would like to make a comment, raise
13 your hand. Hang on. We got this gentleman coming
14 first.

15 MR. LIFE: Promes Life, with a "P."
16 P-r-o-m-e-s L-i-f-e. One of the things that I want
17 to bring to your attention about these kids. Okay.
18 Say five years. They need to get all the dirt out
19 of that pit. If you can remember last year,
20 Savannah had a big fire, a big fire from a pit.
21 Once they dug all of the dirt out of this pit, then
22 they started hauling all the debris to fill the pit
23 back up. So it's not just going to be five years.
24 It's going to take more years to fill that pit back
25 up with debris, tree stumps, and everything. We

1 don't need that. I say no.

2 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: State your name and spell it.

3 WITNESS PRICE: Lisa Marie Price, L-i-s-a M-a-r-i-e
4 P-r-i-c-e. And I just wanted to comment on some
5 things someone said earlier. Every done deal can
6 be undone. So unless they're already back there
7 digging and we are unaware of it, this is not a
8 done deal. So we urge you to recognize the impact
9 that this is going to have on our community and
10 deny this application. Thank you.

11 MS. L. FLEXON: So once again, I'm Lauren Flexon.
12 L-a-u-r-e-n, "F" like "Frank" l-e-x-o-n. I do have
13 a lot to say. Fortunately, the wonderful
14 conservation league covered a lot of it. She was
15 wonderful.

16 The one thing that I think has not yet been
17 put on the record is Number 7 of Section 48-27(d).
18 The operator has not corrected all violations which
19 he may have committed under an operating permit or
20 certification of exploration. The operator in this
21 instance, being Cleland Site Prep. If there are
22 any violations of the current -- with the current
23 sand quarry you are, again, required by law to deny
24 this permit. That's something that needs to be put
25 on the record. Everything else was covered

1 previously, so I won't. Try to let y'all go home.

2 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: State and spell your name

3 again, please.

4 MR. VAITAS: My name is Vil Vaitas. V-i-l is the first
5 name. Last name is Vaitas, V-a-i-t-a-s. One thing
6 that wasn't covered and it was covered in my
7 speech, but I gave to the board, they have a copy
8 of it, is that water from the sand pits has a
9 negative impact on plant growth. We haven't really
10 addressed the fact that the Monkey John Swamp
11 relies on the ebb and flow of water through it to
12 regenerate. The seedlings rely on the fact that
13 the water draws back and that it allows it to take
14 growth to proceed to provide a revegetation of the
15 area. By even putting clean water into Monkey John
16 Swamp will flood those areas and not permit the
17 swamp to regenerate itself. This will further go
18 down this line to the National Wildlife Preserve,
19 as well, too. And then they won't be able to
20 repropagate.

21 The last thing I want to cover was the sound.
22 The workers on the job site, they have earmuffs,
23 they have all sorts of hearing protection to
24 provide the protection that they need when they're
25 operating that heavy equipment. We as neighbors to

1 the sand pit don't have that same protection. We
2 have to listen to it every day of the week. I
3 know. I feel very sorry for you. I happen to live
4 across the street from Ahna Phelps. And that's
5 basically it. Thank you.

6 HEARING OFFICER SAWYER: Thank you. Would anyone else
7 like to speak tonight? Okay. Since there are no
8 other attendees who would like to speak, the
9 comment portion of tonight's public hearing is
10 concluded.

11 On behalf of the South Carolina Department of
12 Environmental Services, I would like to thank
13 everyone for coming here tonight and giving your
14 comments. Please note once again that written
15 comments may be submitted to SCDES through June
16 6th, 2025. All written comments received on or
17 before this date will be considered in SCDES's
18 decision-making process. If you have a question
19 about submitting written comments after tonight,
20 please see a staff member before you leave.
21 SCDES's Bureau of Land and Waste Management will
22 review and consider all comments received and may
23 request additional information from the applicant
24 if necessary. A decision will then be made to
25 approve or deny the mine permit application and the

1 mine operating permit.

2 Once a final decision is made, SCDES will
3 provide a summary response to all comments
4 received. The permit decision and summary response
5 will be provided to everyone who signed in here
6 tonight, as well as those who submitted written
7 comments during the public comment period. The
8 final permit decision and summary response will
9 also be posted on our webpage. You will receive
10 notification of SCDES's permit decision by standard
11 U.S. mail or e-mail. If you wish to be notified of
12 SCDES's final decision by certified mail instead,
13 please make your request known in writing no later
14 than June 6th, 2025.

15 If you have questions or if you're interested
16 in discussing specific aspects of the proposed
17 mine, please reach out to any of our staff members.
18 We will be happy to begin a conversation with you.

19 On behalf of the South Carolina Department of
20 Environmental Services, thank you again for your
21 attendance and comments this evening. The time is
22 now 8:53 p.m. and the public hearing is officially
23 adjourned.

24 (Whereupon the within hearing was
25 concluded at 8:53 p.m.)

1 (*This transcript may contain quoted material.
2 Such material is reproduced as read or quoted
3 by the speaker.)
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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND) CERTIFICATE

Be it known that Breanna Sharper 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.

Breanna Sharper

Date: 06/10/2025

Notary public for South Carolina

My commission expires November 29, 2033

*Unless otherwise noted, this notary public administered the oath. Please refer to the transcript for any exceptions.