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BEFORE THE
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

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IN THE MATTER OF: : Project Number:
YADKIN AND YADKIN-PEE DEE RIVER : P-2197-073
HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS : P-2206-030
- - - - - x

Lockhart Taylor Center-South
Piedmont Community College
514 North Washington Street
Wadesboro, NC

Thursday, January 25, 2007

The above-entitled matter came on for scoping
meeting, pursuant to notice, at 7:10 p.m.

BEFORE:
LEE EMERY, FERC

P R O C E E D I N G S

(7:10 p.m.)

MR. EMERY: Good evening. My name is Lee Emery. I'm from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in Washington, D.C. I want to thank everyone for coming out this evening and I look forward to a productive scoping meeting. We've spent the last couple of days visiting both the Yadkin and Yadkin/Pee Dee projects. It's pretty country around here. We were looking at areas of concern to us at this point in time from our review of the license applications. I got a little wind burn today out on the water.

Before we get started this evening, I'd like to say a couple of words about FERC and what we want accomplish with tonight's meeting and then I'll have Pat Weslowski begin the presentation and introduce the various team members that I have with me this evening.

Some of you may or may not know FERC, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. FERC is the acronym we use for that name. It's a regulatory agency that has among it's many responsibilities of regulation and relicensing or licensing of non-federal hydropower projects. FERC does other things -- transmission lines, rates, pipelines and a

1 number of other responsibilities. But we're involved with
2 the hydropower aspect. We're required under a variety of
3 federal law and our own agency regulations to evaluate the
4 environmental effects of licensing hydropower projects.
5 Scoping is one part of this process.

6 In tonight's meeting we'll be asking you to
7 identify or further refine the scoping issues that we've
8 identified in the scoping document that you've received or
9 have with you this evening. Your input will help us develop
10 an Environmental Impact Statement we will be preparing for
11 the project. We're still early on stages of this process,
12 although the licensee doesn't see it that way. They've been
13 at it since about 2002. But you'll have other opportunities
14 besides this evening to participate in the process before
15 we, the staff, present our recommendations to the five
16 commissioners at FERC. These five commissioners are
17 appointed by the President, confirmed by the Senate and
18 ultimately are the people who will ultimately decide whether
19 the project should be licensed and how the project should be
20 operated in the future. Typically, these five people are
21 divided three with same party as the current president and
22 the current opposite. So it's usually mixed.

23 While Pat Weslowski presents her program, I'll
24 determine how many people have been identified that wish to
25 speak and how much time we can allow for each them. I'll

1 give every speaker a chance to speak and if you haven't
2 signed and decide you want to speak, that's okay. You can
3 do so now if you wish. I'll also be the timekeeper -- the
4 bad cop/good cop, if you will. I'll try to keep people on
5 schedule. If we get through, and there's time left over,
6 then we can have other people speak some more if you like.
7 ask if anybody else would like to say something. We look
8 forward to a productive evening. Thanks.

9 MS. WESLOWSKI: Thank you. We just have a brief
10 program to orient you to the project. Most of you know the
11 project quite well. We will talk about the EIS schedule.
12 You already heard from Lee what the purpose of scoping is.
13 We'll talk about the type of information that will be useful
14 to us. We'll talk about the proposed environmental
15 measures. We'll talk about the scope of our cumulative
16 effects analysis. We'll described the proposed
17 environmental measures. We'll talk about the resource
18 issues that we've identified to date and then you'll get to
19 tell us what's on your minds.

20 We do have a few ground rules. We'd ask you to
21 show respect to one another, which I'm sure you will. We'd
22 ask you to adhere to the time limits that Lee will tell you
23 that you have. As Lee said, you need to sign in if you wish
24 to make comments. We'd like you to sign-in even if you don't
25 wish to make comments. And if you have brought written

1 comments with you, you can leave them with our court
2 stenographer or just at the front desk and we'll make sure
3 that he gets them so that they become part of the public
4 record.

5 Now with us tonight in addition to Lee Emery,
6 who's the co-coordinator for the FERC team -- Lee's a
7 fisheries biologist -- we have Steven Bowler, who's co-
8 coordinator and also a fisheries biologist. At the far
9 right, John Hart who's with the Louis Berger Group. We're
10 contractors to FERC for preparation of the NEPA documents.
11 John is a hydrologist and has a lot of experience in
12 modeling. To the far left, Peter Foote who is with the
13 Louis Berger Group. Peter is also a fisheries biologist.
14 Next to Peter is Sarah Florentino. Sarah's on the FERC team
15 and she's a terrestrial ecologist. Next to Sarah is Allyson
16 Connor. Allyson is on the FERC team and she's a recreation
17 specialist and way over in the corner signing you all in is
18 Ken Hodge who is with Louis Berger Group and Ken is a civil
19 engineer.

20 We have already covered the purpose of scoping,
21 That's what we're here for tonight. The schedule for the
22 Environmental Impact Statement from this point forward,
23 scoping in January, the earliest that the ready-for-
24 environmental notice, REA notice, would be issued would be
25 late February based on whether we have all the information

1 we need to conduct the analysis. Assuming that REA notice
2 is issued in February or early March, the target for release
3 of the draft Environmental Impact Statement is in September.

4 The types of information that would be helpful to
5 us in addition to the comments that you'd like to share with
6 us include information on the significant environmental
7 issues that should be addressed in the Environmental Impact
8 Statement, other studies in the project study that may not
9 already be in the public record and anything that you've
10 filed or others who have filed with the Commission, any of
11 those reports or filings are available to us through the e-
12 Library available at FERC.com. We're also interested in
13 information on data that describes the past and present
14 conditions at the project and any resource plans or very
15 specific future proposals in the project area that would
16 help us in our cumulative effects analysis.

17 I would like to ask Phil Lucas if he could come
18 up and talk to you a bit about Progress Energy's perspective
19 on this.

20 MR. LUCAS; I've been asked to give a brief
21 overview of our process and a little bit of a status of
22 where we are. So I'll be glad to do that. Thank you.

23 We initiated this process -- I guess our formal
24 process in early 2003 with the issuance of our initial
25 consultation document with various resource agencies that we

1 were aware that would have an interest as far as being a
2 stakeholder in this process and also filing with our formal
3 letter with the FERC as far as the Notice of Intent to
4 relicense the project and all that started in 2003.

5 From that point, we went forward and we requested
6 that interested parties that wanted to participate in our
7 process as stakeholders join us in forming resource working
8 groups, which we did in the spring of 2003. With those
9 groups formed, we identified issues and asked those parties
10 if they would help us identify the issues that were relevant
11 to this process, went through those issues and determined
12 which ones we had enough information on hand already to
13 answer those questions and then also which ones would need
14 further study.

15 When we identified those items that needed
16 further study, then we worked with those same individuals
17 and those resource working groups to develop study plans.
18 They were adopted by the resource working groups. From
19 there, we went into actually conducting the studies and
20 gathering that data, which we then got back with the
21 resource working groups and shared that data. That moved us
22 into the next phase of this process, which is we tried to
23 develop solutions to those issues and that culminated last
24 fall with an agreement in principal with the stakeholders
25 that were still participating the process. So we had those

1 stakeholders sign that document. We signed and the document
2 was filed with the FERC in the fall of last year.

3 Since that point in time, we've been working --
4 because that document was non-binding, we've been working
5 with those same parties to formalize that document and we,
6 as we speak, have pretty much worked through most of the
7 technical sections of that document and have turned them
8 over to an attorney's group that's representing these
9 stakeholders to get this in the proper legal language so
10 that we can make this a formal binding document and the
11 current schedule is to have that document signed by no later
12 than April of this year.

13 So that pretty much gives you an overview of
14 where we've come in the process and how we got to where we
15 are and our next step. At that point, when we have that
16 formal settlement document, we will file that with the FERC
17 and it would be a public document. Thank you.

18 MS. WESLOWSKI: Thank you, Phil.

19 As you know, the project is on the Pee Dee River.
20 It includes the Tillery Development. This is a photo of
21 Tillery Dam and the Blewett Falls Development and this is
22 the Blewett Falls Dam. These two developments stretch along
23 30 miles of the Pee Dee River. The Tillery Development is a
24 store and release operation and the Blewett Falls
25 Development is a re-regulating operation and a run-of-river

1 operation when flows exceed 7400 cubic feet per second.

2 The two developments have a total of 180.6
3 megawatts of installed capacity. There are eight existing
4 recreational facilities at the two developments and there
5 are required minimum flows of 40 cfs below the Tillery Dam
6 and 150 cfs below the Blewett Falls Dam under the existing
7 license. There are operational constraints in the system.
8 The draft Environmental Impact Statement that we are doing
9 will include both the Yadkin and the Yadkin/Pee Dee
10 Projects.

11 The Yadkin Project upstream operates under a
12 headwater benefits agreement and that agreement requires
13 that the Yadkin Project or Alcoa provide specific flow
14 releases to the downstream Yadkin Pee Dee Project.
15 Headwater benefits are the additional energy production
16 that's possible at a downstream project because of the
17 storage and release operations of an upstream project.

18 The proposed measures we are going to describe
19 those that are contained in the draft agreement in principal
20 that Phil described a moment ago. The license application
21 includes a set of proposals that were made by the applicant
22 when that license application was filed. These proposed
23 measures reflect the ongoing negotiations that have been
24 occurring. In the Scoping Document, which you were handed
25 at the front desk, you will find both the original measures

1 proposed by Progress Energy as well as the measures that are
2 contained in the draft agreement in principal. These
3 measures are those in the agreement.

4 The agreement calls for increased minimum flows
5 below Tillery and Blewett Falls Developments, seasonally
6 adjusted to enhance the spring spawning fish. The agreement
7 calls for the maintenance of higher water levels in the
8 reservoirs, the installation of a flow monitoring gauge
9 below Tillery Dam, implementation of a dissolved oxygen
10 enhancement operation plan -- and there's been testing at
11 the two developments on the injection of oxygen -- the
12 development of a dradramous fish plan -- dradramous fish
13 being those fish that migrate between salt water and fresh
14 water -- the protection of riparian lands along the east
15 side of the Pee Dee River, which is also part of the Fish
16 Protection Program, provision of enhancements and accessible
17 improvements at the recreation facilities, provision of new
18 trails and a fishing pier at the Stoney Mountain access
19 area, closing the existing informal public boating access in
20 the Tillery tailraise and providing a new public boating
21 access area at the mouth of Clark's Creek, also discouraging
22 the use of the public fishing area, the informal fishing
23 area at in the Steel Bridge area in Stanly County and
24 generally improving boat ramps at these facilities.

25 The agreement also calls for enhancing the

1 Yadkin/Pee Dee Trail, adopting protective shoreline
2 management policy for Blewett Falls Reservoir, protecting
3 grassy island area lands and the lands needed for canoe
4 portage at Blewett Falls Development, implementing a
5 historic property management plan and providing a joint
6 North Carolina Wildlife Resources mission law enforcement
7 and lake management facility on Lake Tillery.

8 That's a very briefly description of measures
9 that have a lot of nuances to them. The details of those
10 measures are in the Scoping document. The Environmental
11 Impact Statement will include a cumulative effects analysis.
12 We've defined that analysis in the Scoping Document. The
13 analysis, as we see it now, would include sediments, water
14 resources including water quality and water quantity and
15 dradramous fish resources. For water quality and sediments,
16 we would be looking at the geographic area from the upstream
17 influence of the Yadkin Project downstream of the
18 hydrological influence of the Blewett Falls Development.

19 For fisheries resources, we would extend that
20 geographic scope to the ocean because that's where the fish
21 are coming to, at least the dradramous ones. For the
22 timeframe of our analysis, we'll consider past, present and
23 future actions 30 to 50 years into the future. The DIS
24 would include the following resource areas --geology and
25 soils, aquatic, terrestrial, plants, wildlife, threatened

1 and endangered species, recreation, land use, aesthetics,
2 cultural resources and development analysis, socioeconomic
3 and project economics.

4 The specific issues that we've identified thus
5 far through our review of the license applications and other
6 filings that are on the public record include shoreline
7 erosion -- this is for both projects, by the way --
8 shoreline erosion, riparian habitat and wetlands, flood
9 elevations and sedimentation, salinity in the lower Pee Dee
10 River estuary and intercostal waterway, water quality,
11 including temperature and dissolved oxygen, dradramous
12 species at the project facilities and the restoration
13 programs that are proposed, federally-listed rare,
14 threatened and endangered species, wetlands and wildlife,
15 aquatic evasive species, shoreline management and land use
16 practices within the project boundaries, potential effects
17 on aesthetic resources, potential effects on the
18 recreational opportunities, recreational facilities,
19 potential effects on properties included or eligible for
20 inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, and
21 project economics.

22 That is a very brief overview of the proposed
23 measures of the project and the specific resources that we
24 are aware of to date. I'll turn it now over to Stephen will
25 coordinate the commenting.

1 MR. BOWLER: Again I'm Stephen Bowler from the
2 FERC and we're creating a record of the proceedings tonight,
3 so it's important that you come up to the microphone and
4 speak clearly and if you have a name that's not a standard
5 spelling, please spell it for the recorder. I'm Stephen
6 with a P-H, B-O-W-L-E-R, from the Federal Energy Regulatory
7 Commission. Please spell out acronyms.

8 Based on the number of people who have signed up,
9 we have up to six minutes per speaker and I apologize for
10 starting late. This is our fourth public meeting this week
11 and we were on time for all the other ones and apologize for
12 the little bit of delay tonight. Who would have known that
13 there were two community college campus with very similar
14 names.

15 There will be a transcript produced from this
16 record and that will be available in about two weeks. If
17 you'd like to look into getting copies of that, please talk
18 to the recorder and those can be purchased from his company.
19 Also, if you have written comments, please submit them to
20 the recorder. The closing date for written comments, if you
21 want to mail them in, is February 26, 2007.

22 Our first two speakers -- I will call the next
23 speaker and also warn people who are on deck to be prepared.
24 Our first speaker will be Mary Jean McLaurin followed by Joy
25 Hildreth followed by Joseph Goodwin. Please come around on

1 this side and watch for the cables.

2 MR. McLaurin: Good evening. Can everyone hear
3 me? I'm Gene McLaurin. I'm mayor of Rockingham. I have
4 served as mayor since 1997. I'm a native of Rockingham and
5 Richmond County. My wife and I have raised three children
6 in this area. My last name is spelled M-C-L-A-U-R-I-N.

7 I want to thank FERC for allowing us, the public,
8 this opportunity to speak out on this hydroelectric
9 relicensing process. It's crucial that the public have an
10 opportunity to speak on this matter that will effect our
11 quality of life for at least the next 40 years.

12 Also, I want to thank Progress Energy, as Mr.
13 Lucas stated, they have lead the various stakeholders
14 through this process over the last several years. I want to
15 also just comment that Progress Energy is an outstanding
16 corporate citizen in our community. As you may recall, and
17 Mr. Lucas I know and others from Progress Energy will
18 remember, that when this process of the stakeholder meetings
19 began Rockingham City Council went on record as being in
20 favor of the relicensing meetings being held in public and
21 that was not the case. They were held not in public and I
22 think in retrospect had those meetings been held in public,
23 hopefully, everyone would have been in agreement tonight.

24 But I'm not here tonight, of course, to dwell on
25 that and what didn't work. I think we learned from that

1 process. We focus on how we can improve future developments
2 that will impact such a great natural resources as our Pee
3 Dee River. None of us can fully anticipate what a rural
4 community like ours will be 40 years from now. We do know
5 that we'll need electrical power provided by companies like
6 Progress Energy and we know that the communities that are
7 located adjacent to the Pee Dee River need to be able to
8 vetted in their ability and their right to fully utilize and
9 enjoy the benefits of our region's greatest natural asset.

10 When the last relicensing occurred, our
11 communities and our economies were based on textiles and
12 manufacturing. All of us are aware of the dramatic changes
13 that have occurred in our economy since that time with the
14 loss of these jobs and we know that the Pee Dee River has
15 been noted in a study commissioned by the Yadkin/Pee Dee
16 Lakes Project as far back as 1999 that it offers an
17 alternative in regional economic development, in job
18 creation for the future.

19 Rockingham, as well as other cities along the
20 Yadkin/Pee Dee River have studied how the impact of
21 recreation and tourism can help rebuild our economy and
22 improve quality of life, not only for our citizens but for
23 visitors. We believe our area could become a recreation
24 tourism destination for many people. As growth in large
25 cities continues people of this and future generations will

1 be looking for more open space, more recreation
2 opportunities and smaller towns to enjoy retirement. This
3 area has not tapped its potential for recreation and
4 tourism. We believe that strongly.

5 In fact, between one and a half and two hours
6 from here along the I-85/I-40 corridor, there are about 3.2
7 million people that live in that area. Over the next 20
8 years it's projected that 4.7 million people will live in
9 this corridor. The Central Parks Study, which is what this
10 area has become know, the Central Park Area of North
11 Carolina, clearly shows the economic opportunities and
12 potential for this region by hosting visitors within the
13 Yadkin/Pee Dee River as a focal point for all of these
14 visits.

15 On behalf of the citizens of Rockingham, I voice
16 our concerns in reference to the water flow and the levels
17 that are proposed in Progress Energy's relicensing
18 application. It's our city government's opinion that there
19 is insufficient data in the record to support the flow
20 schedule that's currently being proposed. The city firmly
21 believes that the 19-mile stretch of the Yadkin/Pee Dee
22 below Tillery would be greatly enhanced in terms of aquatic
23 and wildlife habitats as well as recreational flows with a
24 minimum flow of 900 cfs instead of the 330 cfs weekend and
25 holiday flow.

1 The people of this region have a right to enjoy
2 full use and access to the Pee Dee River on a full-time
3 basis over the next 40 years. The current and proposed on
4 and off flow of the Pee Dee below Tillery makes the use of
5 the river undependable, resulting in flows that either
6 deprive or diminish the use of the river by the public in
7 our view. The city respectfully requests that FERC require
8 this situation be corrected in the new license.

9 This river is an abundant natural resource with
10 great potential for a small community like ours. Canoeing,
11 kayaking, fishing, wildlife observation are just a few of
12 the uses that could be utilized. Just last year, the City
13 of Rockingham, in conjunction with the North Carolina
14 Wildlife Resources Commission developed a wildlife
15 conservation recreation facility right in the heart of the
16 City of Rockingham. We've been amazed at the usage of this
17 park and facility. Not only are our local citizens enjoying
18 it, but also out-of-state groups. Recently, we hosted a
19 marathon group, an ultra-marathon to enjoy the facility --
20 people from all across the county.

21 If the Henson/Cohen Wildlife Conservation area is
22 being so well-utilized in a small town like Rockingham, can
23 you imagine the potential of the Yadkin/Pee Dee River with
24 flows adequate to support quality recreation. The city has
25 retained the National Heritage Institute to represent us as

1 consideration of this license goes forward. We look forward
2 to working with FERC and Progress Energy to achieve an
3 outcome that best serves the public interest. I'll submit a
4 copy of these comments for the record along with a recent
5 story that appeared in the Richmond County Daily Journal.

6 In closing, I'll just say this is an opportunity
7 that we have probably only once in our lifetime to improve
8 the quality of life for our citizens, to give us
9 recreational opportunities that can truly transform this
10 community and we ask for your support and assistance. Thank
11 you again for giving me this opportunity to speak.

12 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Joy Hildreth followed by
13 Joseph Goodwin and Emily Tucker.

14 MS. HILDRETH: My name is Joy Hildreth. That's
15 J-O-Y, H-I-L-D-R-E-T-H. I'm a resident on Blewett Falls
16 Lake. I representing the Spencer Point Homeowners
17 Association. I've been fortunate enough to live there and
18 be able to view the lake. There's a lot of people that
19 cannot enjoy the lake unless they go to the only public
20 access we have because most of the lands that are
21 surrounding Blewett Falls Lake are surrounded by private
22 landowners, except for Progress' property that is
23 surrounding it.

24 Our main concern on our property is that the
25 shoreline is eroding and there is about 12 irons that are

1 out of place on our shoreline. Some of those irons should
2 be in the lake up to 50 feet and they're not there. I sent
3 some information -- I believe I spoke to you on the phone
4 and have already mailed some information in to FERC.

5 I've been living there for two years and on my
6 property, which Progress Energy owns a little strip in front
7 of me, I've lost five trees and about 6 feet of shoreline in
8 two years. Progress has ignored us. I've been in this
9 process for three years. I've been to the meetings and I
10 was asked not to come back after I voted no on the trial
11 balloon on the shoreline management plan. So I haven't
12 attended any meetings since then, but they have ignored us
13 with the shoreline. They have told us that they're studying
14 it. They're working on it. But if we were to cut a branch
15 off of one of their trees on their property, you bet they'd
16 be down there to see us the next day. But you know, if I
17 were to come to your home and destroy your property, your
18 trees, your land, you wouldn't like it. You wouldn't want
19 to sit there and just ignore it and that's our main concern
20 is our shoreline. And if it just continues to wash away, is
21 it going to wash our whole property away and then we have
22 nothing? So that is our main concern there and we would
23 like someone to talk to us about it.

24 Everybody that we have spoke to with Progress
25 Energy about it and met with they'll say we're doing a

1 study. You'll get back with you. We don't hear anything.
2 I call back. That person is no longer working with Progress
3 or they're no longer in that area. They're somewhere else.
4 I have to talk to somebody new. But we just haven't been
5 able to get anywhere with it and so that is our main concern
6 here with the relicensing. We've been told before that they
7 weren't able to get a license without a contour line and
8 they physically do not have a contour line in about maybe
9 1200 feet of the property, which has eroded away. But I
10 haven't had anybody tell me that for sure.

11 Is anyone here could they answer that question?

12 VOICE: (Off mike.)

13 MS. HILDRETH: Okay. But anyway, that's pretty
14 much all I have to say. Thank you for listening to me.

15 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Let me try to do a
16 repair here.

17 (Pause.)

18 MR. GOODWIN: My name is Joseph Michael Goodwin
19 and actually everybody calls me Mike. I don't know if I
20 should spell it for you or not, but anyway, it's J-O-S-E-P-
21 H, M-I-C-H-A-E-L, G-O-O-D-W-I-N.

22 I just pretty much want to confirm what the very
23 eloquent speech that the mayor or Rockingham gave. I think
24 he pretty much hit the nail on the head. There's a lot of
25 things I don't understand about public speaking and that

1 sort of thing, but I do know that if you notice going
2 through the film, that there's very little said about
3 Blewett Falls Lake here in Richmond County and I think most
4 of the local people probably would agree that there needs to
5 be some changes made before we have another 50 years like we
6 had the last 50 years.

7 And Joy was trying to explain about the erosion
8 problems that we have and nobody seems to want to address
9 that problem and I don't know if I can explain it any
10 better. I don't know if I should try to explain it any
11 better or not, but the erosion just continues to -- you
12 know, I know we've got embankments that are 50, 75 feet high
13 that are not going to change, not our property -- you know,
14 not Progress' property or not within the or outside the
15 shoreline or what they refer to as the project. They're
16 just continuing to erode away.

17 We started out with 175 acres, personally --
18 George Bowers and myself and we're not sure how much dirt we
19 got left. So speaking in small terms for small people, you
20 know, that could be very personal if it belonged to you
21 guys. So I understand that Washington, D.C. is kind of a
22 fantasy for me because it's this big thing that exists that
23 nobody really understands.

24 Joe Everetts here tonight, he and his wife. He's
25 bought a home there at Blewett Falls Lake and he's

1 experiencing some of the same problems that we're
2 experiencing and our people in Anson County are ill-
3 informed. It's not due to anybody else's fault. We don't
4 have a publication or a newspaper here that's willing to
5 report the news, so I feel like that I know we got -- let's
6 have a little hand raise.

7 How many people here are from Richmond County?

8 (Show of hands.)

9 MR. GOODWIN: How many people are here from Anson
10 County. I see maybe six. We've got one commissioner here.
11 We've got one good attorney here. But I just think we're
12 ill-represented. I'm glad the people that are here tonight
13 are here and I'm not taking a stab at progress. It's just
14 one of those kind of things where if somebody doesn't start
15 somewhere, you know, it's like -- a lot of people don't
16 understanding what scoping means.

17 I'm a little ignorant, but I'm not going to
18 apologize for it because I know it. A lot of people just
19 don't understand the process and that's one of the problems
20 I think we've had here in our county. So there's a lot of
21 issues that need to be addressed that haven't been
22 addressed. I don't know exactly what the proper words are
23 or how to put it into proper terms for everybody to
24 understand -- and I'm glad this meeting is here tonight and
25 I'm glad for the people that are here. And I think the

1 mayor of Rockingham really put it very, very simple. You
2 know he brought out some of the strongest points that I've
3 seen.

4 It's not all about development. Everybody thinks
5 it's always the environmental issues that everybody wants to
6 face and we probably -- part of our lake is probably one of
7 the most environmentally sensitive areas in North and South
8 Carolina. Also, the Piedmont section of the whole East
9 Coast. But then there are other areas that are well suited
10 for recreation to all different degrees and it's not just
11 for one person to decide, but it should be for everybody to
12 decide. So in this process, I hope the little people are
13 willing or somehow can be heard. I wish I knew what to say
14 or what words would be the right words for the right people
15 to hear.

16 You know, they talk about the concessions for the
17 Stanly area and they talked about the number of landings
18 that they had. We don't have a good access to our lake.
19 The people in Richmond County have to use our access here in
20 our county. They talk about the water flows. If you lived
21 here in the driest, hottest part of the summer, you see the
22 fish with diseases on the side and those kind of things
23 happening because the oxygen levels are low because the flow
24 are determined, however they're determined -- who knows. I
25 just know we used to have one of the greatest crappy seasons

1 in this county and Richmond County probably in three states
2 and now our crappy don't get to spawn because of the levels
3 of the lake. When they're laying their eggs, it's
4 fluctuating so much. There's always this great fluctuation
5 and it's more about corporate America and I don't mean it's
6 bad toward anybody with progress.

7 Phil, I probably upset you a few times over the
8 last three years, I guess. But it just seems odd to me that
9 when you get down to it, you've got these rules set up and
10 everybody's agreed about this and it's basically what
11 Progress has decided for us and then they say if you're not
12 going to vote for what we want, we don't want you to vote at
13 all. So I sort of declined to attend any further of those
14 meetings because it seemed more like a dictatorship and
15 don't take that personally. Everybody says don't take this
16 personally because it's a corporation or whatever, but I do
17 take it personal, not against Phil, but I'm personal about
18 the process is basically what I'm trying to say.

19 Like I say, I wish I could find all the words for
20 all the expenses I've had over the last 50 years surrounding
21 that lake. I've lived in the county my whole life and
22 everybody says I'd like to be able to access that lake for
23 whatever reason. I'd like to do this. I'd like to do that.
24 Then we've got half the county that don't even know that
25 lake exists because it's been so quiet. For my entire life,

1 Corporate America, for the most part, owned everything
2 around that lake.

3 MR. EMERY: Your time is up.

4 MR. GOODWIN: Sir?

5 MR. EMERY: Your time is up.

6 MR. GOODWIN: Well, I got the same process I went
7 through with. You ain't got no more speakers. You guys
8 said you were late getting here.

9 MR. EMERY: We have more speakers.

10 MR. GOODWIN: Well, I'm sorry. Excuse me then.
11 But anyway, I appreciate you letting me speak for as long as
12 you have.

13 MR. EMERY: (Off mike.)

14 MR. GOODWIN: Mr. FERC, that's the same response
15 I get from Progress. Thank you so much for letting me speak
16 and I hope I've embarrassed too many people other than
17 myself.

18 MR. BOWLER: Thank you for braving the podium.
19 Next up Emily Tucker followed by Jerry Meacham and George
20 Bower.

21 MS. TUCKER: Thank you. My name is Emily Tucker
22 and I represent the Richmond County Chamber of Commerce and
23 my job is mainly to represent the best interest of the
24 Richmond County business community and mainly the voice of
25 the business community. The Chamber can see the benefits of

1 the new recreational opportunities and what it would do when
2 those opportunities were to develop.

3 At the Chamber of Commerce, most of the time when
4 we get calls in our office the calls come in from newcomers
5 and tourists and those type of folks and when we get those
6 calls most people are looking for things to do and places to
7 go. We can see the benefits from new recreational
8 opportunities. And if those things were to develop along
9 the river and things, we can see how that would benefit the
10 business community. We weren't really planning to speak or
11 anything like that when we came, but we felt like, you know,
12 we would get up and speak on behalf of the business
13 community. But our main goal here tonight was to just come
14 and have a clearer understanding of the relicensing project
15 and hopefully, after tonight, that we'll have that and have
16 more facts and things to explain to the business community
17 if they have questions or concerns or explain to people, you
18 know, about Blewett Falls and about Progress Energy. I
19 think Progress Energy is a great Chamber member and they're
20 a great corporate citizen and we appreciate everything they
21 do, but recreational opportunities sometimes they are few
22 and far between and anything, you know, that develops in
23 Richmond County is a positive thing and we appreciate
24 everything that happens in Richmond County.

25 So I appreciate the time. Thank you.

1 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Jerry Meacham followed
2 by George Bower and Steve Morris.

3 MR. MEACHAM: Ladies and gentlemen, Jerry
4 Meacham, Elerby, North Carolina, member of the Council in
5 Elerby. Also I'm here to represent the Sand Hills Rod and
6 Gun Club. It's located in Elerby and we have about 70
7 members. I believe we are the major users of the Blewett
8 Falls Lake on the Richmond County side. I'd like to thank
9 Progress Energy and Mr. Lucas for coming down and meeting
10 with us.

11 Here's what we need. We need access to the lake.
12 Our only access right now is through Mountain Creek boat
13 landing. Should the water drop about 3 feet, we're unable
14 to access the lake. If you're out on the lake fishing, you
15 can't get back to your car because Mountain Creek is only
16 about 3 to 4 feet deep in most areas going out to the lake.
17 Because Blewett Falls is the shallowest of the chain of
18 lakes, it is very difficult to regulate the water depth.
19 Our lake average is about 10 feet. In the upper part of the
20 lake it's about 6 feet. They have huge boulders in the
21 upper part of the lake. And if you're up in Smith Lake
22 fishing and they start dropping the water, those boulders
23 can do some severe damage to your motor if anybody's been up
24 there fishing.

25 One solution would be to release water from the

1 upper lakes that coincide with Progress Energy's pumping.
2 This would reduce the stress on our lake and maintain some
3 continuity.

4 Here's what we would not like to happen. I am
5 not a biologist, however we do have some biologists that
6 belong to our club. Common sense tells you that when the
7 water fluctuation causes some damage to the fish
8 reproduction during the spawning season, the fish build
9 their beds close to the bank. When the constant water
10 fluctuation causes some damage to the beds, the spawning
11 fish also lose the habitat cover of fallen trees and under
12 brush, which is the protection from larger species.

13 In other words, when the water drops, you've
14 gotten fallen trees, you've got under growth and those
15 little minnows can go up into that and hide. When the water
16 drops 3 feet in some areas, it may go 25 to 30 feet because
17 of the shallow water. In addition, when the water is lowered
18 to about 5 feet, the smaller fish are relegated to large
19 pools of water in the upper end and they're easy prey for
20 the larger species of cat fish.

21 Here are some of the issues concerning habitat
22 and growth surrounding the lake. We are diverse river
23 corridor. We have a very low density of human population.
24 We have a large and diverse population of wild animals. We
25 have an abundance of water fowl, turkey and deer. Hunting

1 and fishing contribute approximately 35,000 jobs and \$1.5
2 billion annually in North Carolina. The return to some form
3 of free-flowing water will contribute greatly to the economy
4 and provide excellent recreation opportunities.

5 Please do not let the uncontrolled growth ruin
6 our opportunities to preserve this rich and tradition
7 heritage of hunting and fishing. If we destroy or loss this
8 pristine lake and the surrounding area, our children and the
9 others will never have the opportunity to enjoy what we have
10 so much loved and enjoyed. Thank you for allowing our club
11 to express our opinion.

12 VOICE: (Off mike.)

13 MR. MEACHAM: Well, releasing water, sir.

14 VOICE: (Off mike.)

15 MR. MEACHAM: The hunting for turkey on the
16 islands out there. There's turkey on the islands. There's
17 geese, ducks, the deer feed around the lake.

18 Any other questions?

19 VOICE: (Off mike.)

20 MR. MEACHAM: Who gets the copies? I also have
21 copies for the media if they'd like them.

22 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. We did see some of those
23 turkeys today actually and the deer.

24 George Bower followed by Steve Morris and Larry
25 Westforth.

1 MR. BOWER: Good evening. My name is George
2 Bower and that's B-O-W-E-R. I'm a local attorney and I'm a
3 co-developer with Mr. Goodwin of Spencer Point subdivision
4 out there on the lake.

5 I'm very pleased that you all were able to get
6 out on the lake today and I'm glad you were able to find an
7 access point. That's one of the problems with the lake is
8 the access and that's been a problem for a number of years
9 and will continue to be unless it's addressed now. We're
10 looking at this on a long-term basis and if you look at the
11 need for recreational opportunities in this region, Blewett
12 Falls provides a wonderful opportunity. It's one of the
13 most beautiful and pristine areas and you look one county to
14 the west of us and you're at one of the fastest growing
15 counties in the United States. The need for recreational
16 opportunities in this area is tremendous and we believe that
17 Blewett Falls provides a great avenue for that and we
18 believe that additional access to the lake is important
19 while maintain it in it's beautiful and natural state.

20 Also I would like to address the issue of
21 erosion. We have suffered tremendous erosion in our area
22 because of the lake, the water flow and the failure to
23 address it on Progress Energy's part. It's been a chronic
24 problem and we've not been presented with any solution to
25 it. We would also, in addition to public access, we believe

1 some limited private access would be appropriate, given the
2 number of people who are beginning to build in the area,
3 especially in areas where there is not dense population, but
4 large lot sizes. We believe it can be done at the same as
5 preserving the present environment on the lake.

6 I would like to thank you for the opportunity to
7 speak tonight and look forward to the process.

8 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Steve Morris followed by
9 Larry Westforth and James Haynes.

10 MR. MORRIS: Thank you. My name is Steve Morris,
11 M-O-R-R-I-S. I'm a resident of Rockingham. I'm a member of
12 the Rockingham City Council, proudly serve with the mayor.
13 I'm also a member of the Economic Development Team for
14 Richmond County, although I'm not authorized to speak for
15 them and will not try to do so tonight, but that is an
16 interest of mine.

17 I'm glad to hear you folks are from Washington or
18 living there now. May I give you a little bit of history
19 lesson. Look around this room, pass the people to the walls
20 and the ceiling and the flooring and the other things here.
21 Imagine over there about 150 bales of cotton stacked up and
22 there are looms sitting right back here and my ancestors and
23 these folks ancestors took that cotton and rolled it over
24 and put it on the machines. And long before your and my
25 clothes were made in Malaysia and China and Taiwan, they

1 were made in Anson County and they were made in Richmond
2 County and we're proud of our heritage.

3 But we've got the same problem that many, many
4 southern communities have today. In Rockingham, we have a
5 half a dozen buildings just like this. It hasn't been
6 refurbished and turned into a public building. It's just
7 sort of rotting away. It's empty. It no longer provides
8 jobs. Where once a proud, bustling textile industry boom,
9 today these buildings are empty. They've been shut down by
10 their owners and they're no longer of any use to us. We
11 can't use them.

12 About 15 miles northeast of here stands the North
13 Carolina Motor Speedway. Once it was the proud host for two
14 Nascar racing events, major league stockcar racing 15 miles
15 from here. The racetrack was sold. For all practical
16 purpose, it's been abandoned and it is no longer is of any
17 use to us.

18 As many of us try to plan and implement economic
19 development for Richmond County and our area, we realize
20 that General Motors and Dell Computers and all these other
21 mega-national companies are not going to locate new
22 manufacturing facilities here and where our people labored
23 proudly in the textile industry, we need to find work for
24 them. And we've pretty much said we need to stake some big
25 emphasis on recreation and perhaps our future and our future

1 economic development will rely heavily on recreation. And
2 if so, we feel that the Pee Dee River is a mighty important
3 part of that. Beautiful, scenic, Pee Dee River flows
4 through our county and need to be able to use that river for
5 recreation and tourism. Hence, adequate water flows at that
6 facility need to be available.

7 Please don't make this another great facility
8 that once was very usable that now is empty and we have no
9 use of any more. We have to have adequate water flows for
10 recreation. These water flows, as they're now projected,
11 will not support that and the Pee Dee River to our county
12 will just be like these empty textile mill buildings or that
13 old racetrack out there that sort of falling down. I beg
14 you to give consideration to more water flow so that it can
15 be used so our people can make a living and I thank you.

16 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Larry Westforth followed
17 by James Haynes and Anna Baucomb.

18 MR. WESTFORTH: My name is Larry Westforth, W-E-
19 S-T-F-O-R-T-H. I'm a 19-year resident of Richmond County.
20 Two months ago I moved to Moore County, Seven Lakes.
21 Everyone has had such lofty ideals and purposes up here I
22 feel a little inadequate. I'm a duck hunter and I used
23 Blewett Falls. I love Blewett Falls. My concern is with
24 the radical and aggressive fluctuations that we're
25 experiencing on Blewett Falls now. Now I'm concerned about

1 the fishery, but I think other people are dealing with the
2 fishery. But that's changed. Our fishery has changed over
3 the last few years, but our water flow situation has changed
4 dramatically.

5 You know, I go out there. I get to Mountain
6 Creek and when I go I get there between 3:30 and 3:45 in the
7 morning and off load and I'm on the river by 4 o'clock. Now
8 the problem is, if I call the Progress Energy water level
9 line, which is supposed to be updated at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.
10 daily, it's probably the water levels from three days ago or
11 two days ago. That's the norm. And so I don't know really
12 what's going to happen to the river. And when I go out
13 there as a duck hunter, I don't want to sit out in the deep
14 water and fish. I want to go back into the flooded timber.
15 I'm going to get back in the saw grass, back in the marshes.
16 I'm going to get back in the bay as far as I can because
17 that's where the ducks are.

18 Once you get set up, the radical and aggressive
19 water drop that we experience, I mean, after a while you're
20 going, is the water going out that fast? Well, you don't
21 want to stop hunting. Maybe they'll stop the water. Then
22 you realize it's not stopped and then you've got to hurry
23 and break everything back down, get your decoys picked up
24 and then manhandle your boat to try and get it out of there.
25 Well, three weeks ago I didn't watch very well and I got

1 stuck because I was alone and I had to stay out there. I
2 was prepared to stay the night. My battery was failing on
3 my phone. I did get a message to my daughter. She figured
4 it out and called a game warden that came out that evening
5 and he and I was able to drag my boat to where the river
6 once was the 15 feet over to where it is now and I was able
7 to get out for the night. But that's my concern.

8 Every since Progress began to manage -- and I'm
9 sure they're a fine company -- I've seen a big change in the
10 fishery and a big change in our water flow because when you
11 have such radical fluctuation in the water level, it sucks
12 the water out of the bays and the marshes. No. 1, it's
13 going to impact our hatch for local birds in the spring.
14 They're just not going to be able to produce young ones back
15 there because there's no water and the water fowl population
16 don't stay here very long because they can't get back and
17 rest securely because there's no water back in these bays.
18 I don't know what the answer is, but I never been able to
19 figure out we get from 3 and 4 and 5, which is acceptable,
20 but 6 and 7 feet of drops in water is just amazing. I think
21 that should be addressed, at least during the months of
22 October, November, December and January when we call the
23 water line, tell us currently what the water level is and
24 then tell us over the next five hours we're going to do this
25 with the lake level. It will at least save us a lot of

1 grief. Because if you do get out of the marsh, by the time
2 you get back to the thoroughfare and you try and get back up
3 Mountain Creek, the water is so low you've got to get out of
4 your boat and pull your boat up there the last mile anyway
5 and it's just incredible.

6 But this has happened to me several times. At
7 least when I had my boys with me, we could manhandle the
8 boat back through the muck, get back to the water and get
9 out. Now they're in Montana living, so it's just me. So
10 that's my concern is the fluctuation. I think it's harmed
11 our fishery and it's harming our water fowl because the
12 water fowl is not here in the numbers they used to be. I
13 think it's directly attributable to the water level
14 fluctuation. I talked to a lot of duck hunters. I'm part
15 of several duck national websites and anybody that hunts
16 Blewett Falls they hunt Blewett Falls from a couple hundred
17 miles away and we all have the same concerns. What are they
18 doing with this water and why it is aggressive? Those are
19 our concerns about the fluctuation.

20 VOICE: I have a question for you. Do you have
21 any idea how many members of duck hunters are using that
22 lake?

23 MR. WESTFORTH: Not as many as there used to be.
24 Five or six years ago, you could go up there to Mountain
25 Creek and have 20, 25 out there. Now you might have 6, 8,

1 10, 12 and that would be a good day. Now I'm sure there's
2 other guys parked somewhere and go in, but the numbers are
3 dropping.

4 VOICE: Is this like a five-year period?

5 MR. WESTFORTH: In the last four or five years,
6 yes, radical changes. Yes.

7 VOICE: Thanks very much.

8 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. James Haynes followed by
9 Anna Baucomb and Jane Watson.

10 MR. HAYNES: Thank you. My name is James Haynes,
11 Jim Haynes. I'm the county manager in Richmond County
12 speaking on behalf of the Richmond County Board of
13 Commissioners who represent the citizens of Richmond County.
14 The speaker prior to me or just previous to me explained to
15 you in better terms and with first-hand knowledge better
16 than I can the problem that the folks in Richmond County
17 experiences for the only one access from Richmond County
18 into the river and into Blewett Falls Lake.

19 The commissioners representing the citizens of
20 Richmond County have asked that flow amounts that would be
21 sufficient to allow the use of the river between Blewett and
22 Tillery be allowed or authorized, licensed -- whatever the
23 proper terminology would be -- early in the process of
24 writing the draft plan. Numbers were tossed around such as
25 850 to 950 cfs, which we felt like might be suitable and

1 would probably be suitable for opening that part of the
2 river for use -- recreational use, whether it be hunting or
3 just getting a boat onto the river to come down into the
4 lake for fishing or sightseeing or whatever it might be.

5 At the very end of the process, those numbers
6 dropped down around the 300 cfs range and we feel like those
7 are not adequate to provide access into the river or into
8 the only access that Richmond County has into the water. We
9 feel like the lake and the river is an asset or could be an
10 asset to the county for recreation as others have better
11 stated before me. But I wanted to go on record representing
12 the commissioners to say we feel like those flows should be
13 studied, should be looked at and should be adjusted to where
14 the river and the lake can be accessible to the folks in
15 Richmond County.

16 Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.
17 I do want to say that Progress Energy has been a valuable
18 corporate citizen in Richmond County and they're our
19 friends. So this is something we're taking to you on behalf
20 of the citizens hoping that you can help us with problem.

21 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Anna Baucomb, Jane
22 Watson and Larry Stogner. I apologize if I messed up your
23 name.

24 MS. BAUCOMB: You did better I did the first time
25 I heard the name Baucomb. Good evening. I'm Anna Baucomb

1 and I'm wearing several hats this evening.

2 I'll first get the county commissioner hat on and
3 join with the other residents of Anson County in welcoming
4 all of our neighbors to the east and all you folks from
5 Washington. We're always thrilled when folks come from
6 Washington or Raleigh to help us.

7 I would also tell you that another hat is Tourism
8 Development Authority here in Anson County. With all
9 respect to Mr. Lucas, I would share with you something
10 that's been on my mind since I decided I would speak is the
11 last time I said anything that could have been mildly
12 critical of then CP&L, I went home from that meeting and my
13 power was off for three hours.

14 (Laughter.)

15 MS. BAUCOMB: So you can kind of understand how
16 reluctant and cautiously I'm going to speak. Basically, I
17 would just support, endorse, punctuate everything that's
18 been said. Anson County struggles to compete in a global
19 economy. This building is a testimony. It was a cotton
20 mill. It has been, inch by inch, about 35 to 40,000 square
21 feet rehabilitated and converted into a tremendous
22 opportunities for the citizens through the county, the
23 state, federal government and South Piedmont Community
24 College. So we are struggling to compete in the global
25 economy and we have some natural resources, just as has been

1 said before. We think that tourism and recreational
2 opportunities are going to be a big part of our economy.

3 I've just got to tell you in our experience with
4 Progress Energy and noticing maybe some lack of attention to
5 detail and we're very concerned about entrusting so much of
6 our natural resources to their care. And so just very
7 briefly that's what I would say to you. You have in your
8 hands a lot of our resources and we would just caution you
9 folks to be very careful with it because when they're gone
10 there won't be any more. Thank you.

11 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Jane Watson and Larry
12 Stogner.

13 MS. WATSON: Well, I hope the podium doesn't
14 collapse here. I'm Jane Lee Watson. I am speaking just as
15 a private citizen and a property owner on Lake Tillery. My
16 daddy bought, back in the 1960s the Turner Place, which is
17 the Piney Point area of Lake Tillery down near the dam and I
18 remember my mother, who is now 93 and still alive, told him
19 he was crazy. What did he want with that useless land?
20 Well, we've seen what's happened almost 50 years later and
21 I've seen that growth. And everyone hear has talked about
22 the large numbers -- some numbers that I heard that just are
23 phenomenal. That of the 68 million retiring baby boomers,
24 North Carolina is third only behind Arizona and Florida of
25 the places that they want to retire to. So I don't know

1 that any of us are prepared for the tidal wave of growth
2 that's coming and what really concerns me about the lake is
3 that Tillery is still, even though it's only an hour due
4 east of Charlotte with 485 and 2425, which I'll get to in a
5 minute, being widened, it is still pretty much a well-kept
6 secret. It's still quiet. The only busy times that it's
7 really dangerous to be on the lake is maybe the 4th of July.
8 Otherwise, it's quiet. We have bald eagles. We have our
9 personal heron, who my husband has named Balthazar. He's in
10 our area and much other wild life and obviously, it's a big
11 fishing lake.

12 My biggest concern is that in the admirable quest
13 for economic development for both Stanly and Anson counties,
14 that our leaders, though well-intentioned, are going to
15 destroy the exact things that make this area attractive --
16 the farmland, the rivers and the lake. So I am just hopeful
17 that the structure and the constraints and the requirements
18 of your relicensing process will help maybe reel us in maybe
19 a little bit in our enthusiasm for attracting manufacturing
20 or whatever. So that is my biggest hope is that what you
21 are required to do by law will help us control the growth
22 that's coming. So that's one big point I wanted to make.

23 Secondly, I'm very concerned. You've read
24 recently about the water wars that have already started
25 upstream for us in Canapolis. On Tillery, we have been very

1 fortunate. The only time our lake level has been down like
2 the Charlotte lakes are was with the drought, which I guess
3 was two or three years ago. But if the water wars start
4 upstream from us, I am very concerned about what's going to
5 happen in the future. Will we still have the water
6 downstream?

7 Thirdly, my biggest concern -- and I try to keep
8 my blood pressure down on this -- I'm not sure if it's come
9 to your attention, but a proposed widening of 24/27 I gather
10 it just came up in conversation in one of these meetings in
11 just the beginning of the process is that it would be
12 rerouted, come down 731 and the bridge right below the
13 Tillery Dam would be widened to four lanes.

14 I'll try to control myself. The idea of going
15 that far out of the way away from the primary growth along
16 the existing 24/27 corridor through Albemarle, which, if you
17 look on the map, it's straight shot. But I think the
18 concern that I hope your process will help with is the
19 devastation of the nesting grounds below the dam, between
20 the dam and the bridge for bald eagles. You see herons down
21 there. You see many other birds. I'm very concerned about
22 the environmental impact of that. And then there's the
23 noise pollution and I'm not sure everyone understands. We,
24 on our Stanly County side of the lake, can hear people
25 talking on the Montgomery County side and we're at the

1 MS. BAUCOMB: The Stanly News and Press.

2 VOICE: Thank you very much.

3 MS. BAUCOMB: Okay. Thank you. No one can read
4 this. I will send this is writing.

5 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Larry Stogner and then
6 we will ask for anybody who wants to speak who didn't fill
7 out a sheet.

8 MR. STOGNER: My name is Larry Stogner. I'm a
9 resident of Richmond County for my whole life and I own a
10 small piece of property in the Grassy Island area, which I
11 go to practically every week for the last five years and
12 I've been using Blewett Falls probably for about the last 30
13 to 40 years of my life. So I've seen all the changes that
14 have come through that whole time. It's amazing to me that
15 I go up there and there's a small group of people that live
16 in the Grassy Island area of how much we see the water
17 fluctuate up and down and also we're right there at Mountain
18 Creek, so we see every day what the water levels are and how
19 much of a drastic change that we see.

20 Most of this has already been said and my point
21 is what I would like to see and hear a little bit more about
22 is how we're going to have access to the lake, not only for
23 the public as well private landowners. I talked to a lot of
24 the landowners and nobody seems to know anything about what
25 Progress has proposed as far as allowing private piers.

1 Personally, I don't really care if there's a pier
2 on the lake because I like the beauty of the lake, but I
3 would like you guys to address the issue at least that
4 private piers are allowed, but that they're set to a certain
5 standard so that the lake can maintain its beauty. That's
6 about all I want to say. Thanks.

7 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. We do have some more
8 time if there's anybody who didn't sign up, but would like
9 to speak.

10 Can you please give your name to the recorder?
11 Thank you.

12 MR. O'NEAL: My name is Don O'Neal, O-N-E-A-L.
13 I'm a citizen of Richmond County and Rockingham, born and
14 raised there. I have a special attachment to -- I always
15 call it the Great Pee Dee River. In my eyes it is because I
16 remember my first trips holding my daddy's hand like this
17 walking across the skirt of the dam barely being light
18 enough to see. The people who have talked about fishing,
19 for those of you who know me, I fish. That's what I do when
20 I have spare time and the drastic water flows -- I wasn't
21 going to say anything. I was just going to write a letter,
22 but the comment in here that they maintain the flow to 1
23 foot during -- I think it's April 15th to May 15th,
24 voluntarily maintain it -- I don't know. Maybe I have a
25 different calendar, but anyway.

1 For those of you who are biologists and know
2 about spawning fish, they spawn right around the full moon
3 and I remember one Friday I was off of work and I went to
4 the river to fish on a Friday. The water level was perfect.
5 I'm up gigging crappy, snatching crappy off the bank. I
6 actually see crappy beating up against roots and stuff
7 spawning, in the process of spawning. It's a beautiful
8 sight if you've never seen it. But anyway, I go back Sunday
9 afternoon to enjoy myself some more after church and the
10 water was so low I couldn't get the boat in. So all those
11 eggs that were laid that Friday were high and dry.

12 For you who like to eat fish, like to get on the
13 river -- I don't know. Anybody who's ever fished, raise
14 your hand. Let me just see how many fishermen we do have in
15 here.

16 (Show of hands.)

17 MR. STOGNER: Can you explain that feeling you
18 get when it hits it? I can't either. My wife asked me why
19 do I do this. I said I don't know. You just have to have
20 that feeling. It's like lightning running all through you
21 when it happens. But anyway, there's a lot of things that
22 can be done. I promised some ladies in my church that I
23 would try to do what I could to catch some fish for a fish
24 fry we were having at church to raise some money Lottiman
25 Christmas Fund. For you Baptist, you know what that is. I

1 fortunately was able to catch enough fish to have that fish
2 fry, fried about 50 pounds of cat fish New Year's Eve and
3 raised a good bit of money for the Fund, so I find it very,
4 very, very important that we try to do -- and one of the
5 gentleman was talking about release flows to control, when
6 you asked the question how would we do this, I think the
7 point he was trying to make was when you know you're going
8 to drain it down in Blewett, turn loose water in Tillery --
9 I mean you're making power at the same time, so instead of
10 Blewett going like this, Tillery releases and Blewett
11 remains steady. I mean it's not rocket science I don't
12 think.

13 Another thing I would like to see looked into is
14 inevitably, when you have the floods of spring, February and
15 March usually it hits bad. When we're saying that we're
16 going to maintain water within a foot voluntarily and try to
17 maintain it within 3 or 4 -- and I know you can't control
18 the deluge that comes. I have water run over my dam here a
19 couple of years ago about knee deep and there's nothing you
20 can do about it. I know that. But the flash boards on top
21 of the dam are our flood control. When they blow out and I
22 say "blow out," they're washed out, at this point in time
23 there is going to be inevitably a 4, 5 foot drop so that
24 they can bring this boat up here and replace those flash
25 boards.

1 I thought about it. I'm not an engineer, but I
2 do have some common sense. There ought to be a way and
3 there is a way. If we can put a man on the moon, there is a
4 way to go in and replace those flash boards without this
5 drop. Safely do it now. I don't want anybody endangering
6 their life so that I can catch crappy, but I remember as a
7 younger man back 10, 15 years ago it was nothing to go to
8 Blewett Falls and catch almost 100 crappy in a day and it
9 hurts when somebody tells you, you don't catch as many fish
10 as you used to, do you? It's a sad thing. It hurts and I'd
11 like to see that changed and I appreciate your time. You
12 all take care.

13 MR. BOWLER: Thank you. Is there anybody else
14 who didn't sign up, but would like to speak?

15 MR. BOWLER: In that case, I'll remind you that
16 the closing date for filing written comments is February
17 26th. We have a sheet out at the table where you signed in
18 with the address for the Secretary of the Federal Energy
19 Regulatory Commission to mail those comments. You can also
20 use the website if you're inclined, www.FERC.gov and you
21 might want to take that sheet anyway because it has the
22 project number on it which you'll need if you go through the
23 website. Please give written materials that you have with
24 you today to the recorder.

25 The one other thing I'll say is I gather that

1 there are some people here who were involved in the
2 transition to create this space and I booked this room
3 having no idea what it was, but I appreciate this space
4 being available to us tonight. Thank you for your comments
5 and I think Lee might have something to wrap up.

6 MR. EMERY: We appreciate your help this evening.
7 There were some good ideas. We'll consider each of them.
8 There are some other scoping documents left over outside if
9 you'd like to take some to give to your friends. We're not
10 going to carry them back to Washington, D.C., but if you'd
11 like to have some please. But I appreciate your input and
12 thanks. You'll see us again. Thank you.

13 (Whereupon, at 9:20 p.m., the above-entitled
14 matter was concluded.)

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