



## Relicensing News

### FERC issues draft Environmental Impact Statement

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has issued a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Alcoa's Yadkin Hydroelectric Project and Progress Energy's Yadkin-Pee Dee Hydroelectric project located immediately downstream. [Click here to read the complete document.](#)

The 353-page document addresses all relevant issues related to the continued operation of the Yadkin Project and provides a glimpse of how Alcoa might be required to operate under a new FERC license.

"The draft Environmental Impact Statement appears to support many of the proposals outlined in our Relicensing Settlement Agreement. That validates the hard work that went into crafting an agreement which represents an appropriate balance of interests," said Gene Ellis, licensing and property manager for Alcoa Power Generating Inc.

FERC staff carefully studied the issues by evaluating the Relicensing Settlement Agreement and considering comments submitted by governmental agencies, grassroots organizations and the public. The commission's analysis of the issues and its initial recommendations are included in the draft EIS.

Some items worth noting from the EIS:

- FERC staff recommends accepting proposed operating guides for the Yadkin Project. That includes an extended recreation season and higher water levels at High Rock Lake (4' within full from March 1 to October 31.)
- FERC staff recommends approving the proposed Low Inflow Protocol, designed to better protect lake water levels and downstream flows during drought conditions.
- FERC staff recommends accepting proposed recreational enhancements, including a new swim area, new camp sites and new fishing piers.
- FERC staff recommends that Alcoa work with Salisbury to develop a sedimentation and flood protection plan that will protect the city's water intake, pump station and wastewater treatment facility. Through FERC, Alcoa has requested additional information from Salisbury so it can better understand the scientific basis for this recommendation.
- FERC staff reiterated that it does not consider a federal takeover of the Yadkin Project to be a reasonable alternative. The idea had been proposed by Stanly County officials.

"There's still a lot of work to be done," Ellis said. "It's important to remember this is just a draft document and the FERC staff can change its recommendations before

## On the Lakes



### New boat helps Rowan County sheriff patrol the lakes

One of the newest boats on High Rock Lake belongs to the Rowan County Sheriff's Department, thanks to a \$25,000 grant from the Alcoa Foundation.

Sheriff George Wilhelm recently unveiled the new boat, a 21' Carolina Skiff, that officers will use to patrol High Rock Lake and Tuckertown. The boat travels up to 45 mph, which will help speed response time during emergencies.

"The quicker you can get there once you're on the water, the better off you are," Sheriff Wilhelm said.

Alcoa and the Alcoa Foundation have funded new patrol boats for sheriff departments in Stanly County, Montgomery County and Davidson County in recent years.

"We want to do our part to promote safety on the lakes," said Tommy Gibson, community relations manager at Alcoa-Yadkin. "We appreciate the hard work of the deputies and want to make sure they are well equipped to patrol the lakes and respond to emergency calls."

the new license is issued.”

FERC is expected to schedule public meetings in November 2007 to gather public comments regarding the draft EIS. Comments will be considered by FERC staff as it develops the final EIS, which is scheduled for release in early 2008.

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## Drought Update

### Drought team protecting lake levels, downstream flows

As North Carolina and South Carolina continue to cope with drought conditions, a collection of state and federal agencies, hydro operators, power utilities and the High Rock Lake Association are working to protect lake levels and downstream flows throughout the Yadkin – Pee Dee watershed. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, the watershed is experiencing extreme and exceptional drought conditions - the most severe stages of drought.

The Drought Management Team was established as part of the Yadkin Drought Contingency Plan following a severe drought that affected the Yadkin – Pee Dee watershed in 2002. The group includes representatives from the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Alcoa, Progress Energy Carolinas, Duke Energy Carolinas and the High Rock Lake Association. Additional organizations with an interest in the Yadkin and Pee Dee Rivers also are participating.

The Drought Management Team has been meeting on a weekly basis to monitor the drought and has already adopted measures to help protect North Carolina lake levels while ensuring an adequate flow to downstream users, including local governments and industries in South Carolina.

In August, the group agreed to a 35 percent reduction in the amount of water being released downstream from Alcoa’s Yadkin Hydroelectric Project, which includes four reservoirs along the Yadkin River. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has approved a formal request by Alcoa to reduce flows from 1400 cubic feet per second (CFS) to 900 CFS through the end of October. In addition, FERC approved a request to balance the water levels between Badin Lake and High Rock Lake — a move designed to distribute the impact of the drought conditions more equitably. Progress Energy, whose facilities lie downstream of the Alcoa project, has voluntarily reduced generation at its Tillery plant and is adjusting its operating schedule in order to release 1,000 CFS from its Blewett Falls reservoir. This action will enable downstream industry and public water systems to have a dependable quantity of water each day.

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## Did You Know?

Alcoa is working with the U.S. Army to provide aluminum armor plates for new armored vehicles designed to survive IED (improvised explosive device) and ambush attacks. The aluminum plates will help protect American soldiers, while making the vehicles lighter, faster and stronger.

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This electronic newsletter is designed to keep the community informed about important issues related to the relicensing of the Yadkin Project.

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### Residents Urged to Conserve Water

The Drought Management Team joins officials in North Carolina and South Carolina in calling on communities to reduce their water use.

In North Carolina, Gov. Mike Easley sent a letter earlier to mayors and county commissioners that operate public water systems urging the implementation of water conservation measures in hopes of avoiding mandatory statewide restrictions. Numerous communities across North Carolina have already taken action — 105 public water systems have adopted mandatory water usage restrictions and another 109 systems have enacted voluntary water restrictions.

In South Carolina, the state has declared that 44 of 46 counties are experiencing severe drought and encouraged municipal and industrial water users to begin implementing voluntary conservation measures. Some cities have already adopted mandatory water restrictions.

The latest maps from the U.S. Drought Monitor show that much of North Carolina and South Carolina are now experiencing exceptional, extreme or severe drought — the three worst categories of drought. For more information, visit: [http://drought.unl.edu/dm/DM\\_southeast.htm](http://drought.unl.edu/dm/DM_southeast.htm)



## Balancing Energy Generation, Recreation *and* Environmental Resources