

## **The Board of Directors of the High Rock Lake Association voted this spring to sign the Relicensing Settlement Agreement (RSA).**

Complete text of the RSA is available on Alcoa's website. [Click here](#)

### **Reasons for Signing the RSA**

Water Levels in High Rock that are, on average, levels that our membership desired

- Bridge Clearance was a dominate issue, with member preferences ranging from 2 ft to 4ft normal drawdown (4 ½ to 6 ½ bridge clearance)
- Lots of members like winter drawdowns for pier and shoreline maintenance

### **RSA TERMS INCLUDE A NEW RULE CURVE WITH CLEAR and NON-AMBIGUOUS MINIMUM LAKE LEVEL LIMITS**

High Rock Lake will be operated to keep water level within 4' of full between April 1 to October 31; and within 10' of full between November 1 and March 31. Alcoa operational computer models provided to RSA signatories provided assurances that this Rule Curve will result in:

- An average water level of 3 ft below full 4/1 thru 10/31
- An average water level of 8 ft below full 12/1 thru 2/28

At such times low inflows and minimum downstream flow requirements cause the reservoir to fall below Minimum Elevation there shall be curtailment of discharge rates. There is a contractual agreement that requires a draw-down of BOTH Badin Lake and High Rock Lake when necessary to sustain downstream river flows (the LINKAGE CLAUSE). Actual Text is as follows:

*The Licensee shall operate High Rock Reservoir at or above the normal minimum elevation (NME) as depicted on the High Rock Operating Curve (Figure PO-1), except as needed in order to maintain minimum flows or as provided under the Low Inflow Protocol (LIP) or the Hydro Project Maintenance and Emergency Protocol (HPMEP). High Rock Reservoir may be drawn down below its NME in order to meet the Required Minimum Instream Flow at Falls, as specified in License Article PO-2, only after Narrows Reservoir has reached its NME. If High Rock Reservoir water elevation is below the NME at 12:01 AM on any operating day, where the operating day is defined as 12:01 AM through 12:00 midnight, the Licensee shall reduce releases from High Rock Reservoir for that operating day up to a maximum of the daily average flow equivalent of the minimum flow requirement at Falls, as specified in License Article PO-2. Under this condition, releases from Falls will be limited to those defined in License Article PO-2.*

The Narrows (Badin Lake) NME is (-) 5.0 ft. below full

The High Rock Lake NME is (-) 4.0 ft. below full

In addition, additional assurances are provided to High Rock Lake in the terms of the Low Inflow Protocol (LIP) section of the RSA. When dry or drought conditions exist in the watershed, the LIP will likely be invoked. When operating under terms of the LIP, Badin and High Rock must be drawn down equally below their respective Normal Minimum elevations if necessary to satisfy downstream flow requirements.

### **Improvements to the Shoreline Management Plan**

- 50 ft. minimum Lot width for individual and shared piers in subdivisions developed prior to May 1, 1987
- Overall Pier length – 75 ft
- Pier Dimensions and size, 1,100 sf allowed
- Pier design flexibility
- Floater required, size and location optional
- Alternative Pier Construction Materials allowed
- Min. Water Depth = 6' within 75' of High Water
- Current requirement is 8' within 75' of shore
- Boat Lifts, either piling supported or floating
- Currently only floating type lifts allowed
- Boat Covers
- Pier Roofs/Gazebos
- Will permit roofed area of maximum 240 sq.ft.
- Vegetation Management in the 100ft. Forested buffer
- Much greater flexibility allowed to create scenic views

- Sitting Areas within the Buffer Zone

### More Reasons for Signing

- Approximately 2500 acres of land around High Rock will be placed in permanent conservation
  - Reduces potential long term development
  - Enhances water quality
  - Environmentally desirable
- Enhancement of Public Use Areas and Facilities
- Existing public recreation sites on High Rock, Tuckertown and Narrows reservoirs will be improved to provide compliance with federal and state ADA regulations, dusk to dawn security lighting, and toilet facilities.
- APGI will develop and operate a new public recreation site on High Rock Lake in Rowan County.
- APGI will provide ADA accessible Fishing Piers on High Rock in Rowan County and one on Tuckertown Lake. Fishing Pier locations will be at existing public sites; determined in consultation with the NCWRC, USFWS, and the Counties.
- Improvements to Tailrace fishing access
- Installation of 10 dispersed camp sites, water accessible, throughout the project.
- Annual Alcoa funding to NCWRC for public access area maintenance in amount of \$35,000.
- Gift of Land at Eagle Point to Rowan County
- Sale of 2,500 acres of land for Conservation and/or Recreation, North of I-85 Bridge
- Assist NCWRC with construction of Boathouse for enforcement use at Second Dutch Creek Access Area
- Provide annual funding to NCWRC for Buoy maintenance.
- Participate in NCDWQ High Rock TMDL Process

That's why the HRLA signed the RELICENSING SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT. We believe the RSA represents a fair compromise between all stakeholders in the Yadkin-Pee Dee River watershed.

THERE IS OPPOSITION TO THE RSA and License Application, and the following is a quick highlight of the issues FERC is being asked to consider:

- Davidson Co., Duke Power, and some High Rock Lake interest groups
  - These folks are lobbying to change the 3 month winter drawdown limit to 6 ft. They appear satisfied with the 4' limit for the rest of the year.
- Stanley County
  - Wants a huge economic payoff including as much as 25% of Project Revenues
- Salisbury-Rowan Utilities
  - Wants Alcoa to "Floodproof" its pump station and waste treatment facilities; and establish continuous dredging operations in the area of its water intake
  - Directing a major lobbying effort seeking to have Alcoa dredge approximately 14 million tons of sediment out of the headwaters of High Rock Lake
- Salisbury, Rowan, and some Rowan County Municipalities have asked FERC to require Alcoa to remove accumulated sediment from High Rock and the Yadkin River.
  - Using Salisbury's estimate of 14 million tons, this would cost about \$150,000,000.00 using US Corp of Engineers cost figures
  - Dredged material would cover an area of 10 miles of shoreline, for a distance of 1,000 ft. from waters edge, to a depth of 7 ft.
  - Described differently, 14 million tons of dredged material is approximately 8,700 acres one foot deep
  - Would the Politicians advocating this action be willing to find the area for dredging disposal and provide the required permits for such a land filling operation?
  - The Yadkin River is recognized as one of the most heavily sediment laden rivers in the nation. No one debates that building a dam creates a sediment trap on a river.
  - Would we prefer High Rock dam was never built, and there not be a lake in Davidson/Rowan Counties?
  - Does anyone advocate removal of High Rock Dam to alleviate Salisbury's issues?
  - Does anyone really believe Alcoa is the ONLY beneficiary of the benefits of High Rock Lake?

Just Remember ....

- If political means are employed by Stanley County or Salisbury-Rowan to influence FERC, the relicensing will likely be in the courts for an un-determined time.

- If a new license is not accepted by Alcoa next Spring, we will see the lakes continue to be operated under existing guidelines until the matter is resolved in the courts; and a repeat of the 2002 lake draining disaster could happen again.