

ROANOKE RIVER BASIN REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Claudine's Restaurant
Rich Square, NC

9:30am
March 31, 2000

AGENDA

9:30am	Call to Order and Welcome	Chairman Jerry Holloman
9:35	Roll Call	Joan Giordano
9:45	Acceptance of Minutes (January 21, 2000)	Jerry Holloman
10:00	<u>Old Business</u> -Discussion Caledonia State Prison (what to do?)	All
10:30	<u>New Business</u> -Presentation The "216" Study – What Does It Mean To you?	Sharon Haggett, COE Project Mgr., 216 Study
	-Questions and Answers	All
11:45	Plans for next meeting	
12:00	Adjourn	

Roanoke River Basin Regional Council

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The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by the chairman, Jerry Holloman. It was determined that a quorum of the membership was present.

Members present included:

Jerry Holloman
Michael Taylor
Jim Early
Jimmy Outland
Kay Winn
Bill Pierce, new representative from the Halifax County Board of Commissioners
Alex McLennan, new agricultural representative from Halifax County

Guests included:

Jean Richter, USFWS Roanoke River NWR
Sharon Haggett, Corps of Engineers

Joan Giordano represented the agency.

After a reading of the minutes, they were approved as received and read, following a motion by Michael Taylor and a second by Jimmy Outland.

Under old business, Joan Giordano announced that the contract for the demonstration project has been drawn. The money is in hand, and work will commence shortly. For the benefit of the new members and guests, Jimmy Outland gave a brief summary of the project. Involving a partnership of the Council with Extension, USFWS and the Fishing Creek Soil and Water Conservation District, the project will provide alternative water source, cattle crossings, and fencing to keep a cattle herd out of the river on the Winslow farm in Halifax County. When the appropriate season arrives, hardwoods will be replanted on the riverbank to complete the rehabilitation.

Also under old business, Council discussed the best approach to implement similar changes on the property of Caledonia State Prison. Rather than a resolution, it was agreed that Jerry Holloman would draft a letter to Secretary of DENR Bill Holman. In that letter, in reference to Council's demonstration project, there will also be a reminder to the Secretary of his visit to the river, when he was made aware of the destruction of the riverbank on state-owned property. Council agreed that it would be appropriate to ask

the Secretary to approach the Department of Corrections for its assistance in correcting the problem.

Under new business, Council heard from its guest speaker, Sharon Haggett, Project Manager for the 216 Study that Council supported by resolution. The 216 Study is a look at a previously built Corps project, authorized by Congress. The last study, in 1985, indicated to the Corps that no management changes were needed.

With the FERC relicensing anticipated in 1996, a request for a fresh look was made, and Congress approved the study in 1999. This study will be an operational study, looking at whether the operations and effects of the dam can enhance the lakes, dams, or downstream conditions.

The Recon phase of the study is the beginning of a possible three-phase total study. A 905(b) report will be developed in about nine months. This report will be a checkpoint, where a determination will be made of whether or not a federal interest is at stake.

During her presentation, Ms. Haggett answered questions and received remarks made by Council members. Jimmy Outland mentioned that the management of the river's flow had been altered in 1974. Bill Pierce mentioned that in his area, concern was over whether or not the Corps might possibly conclude that the dam should be removed. Ms. Haggett replied that, while that was possible, she did not believe that would happen due to the economics of the situation.

Alex McLennan asked how different interests were weighed. His farmland is routinely flooded in the spring at flows of 35,000 cfs. This costs him approximately 30% of his crop acreage. Another 10% of his land is still too wet for normal production. He asked what the prioritization of concerns is at present.

Ms. Haggett referred Council to the written explanation of the "Scoping Process For John H, Kerr Dam and Reservoir," which she distributed to the members. Purposes include: "recreation, low flow augmentation, water supply, flood control, hydroelectric power, and fish and wildlife conservation." She further explained that changes in management of the flow of the river at Kerr Dam would be implemented only after a thorough cost/benefit analysis.

Kay Winn explained that the concern of the Council had evolved in over two years of looking at the management of the river. Flow is the primary issue of concern to Council, and the impact of present strategies of flow control has left many downriver citizens and interests "disenfranchised." Loss of economic opportunity, impact of aseasonal high flows on farming, forestry, and wildlife habitat, and the imbalance of political and economic power in the basin are among Council's highest priorities.

After a full explanation of the possible further phases of the study, Ms. Haggett invited Council to participate in the "Citizens Listening Sessions" on April 4, 5, and 6. She encouraged members to voice their concerns at these sessions.

As an overlooked item of old business, Council appointed its officers for the coming year. Jimmy Outland made a motion, seconded by Jim Early, that the present officers remain in their roles. This was the decision of Council at its January meeting, and reported in the mailing of the minutes of that meeting. Council approved the motion unanimously.

Under informational items, the following meetings were noted:

North Carolina Water Resources Association – Workshop on depletion of the aquifers of eastern NC – Raleigh, April 10

DWQ – Basinwide Water Quality Plan public meeting – Windsor, April 10, 1-5 p.m.

“Save Our State” meeting – Vernon James Center, April 28, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The next meeting of Council was set for June 2 at Claudine’s.

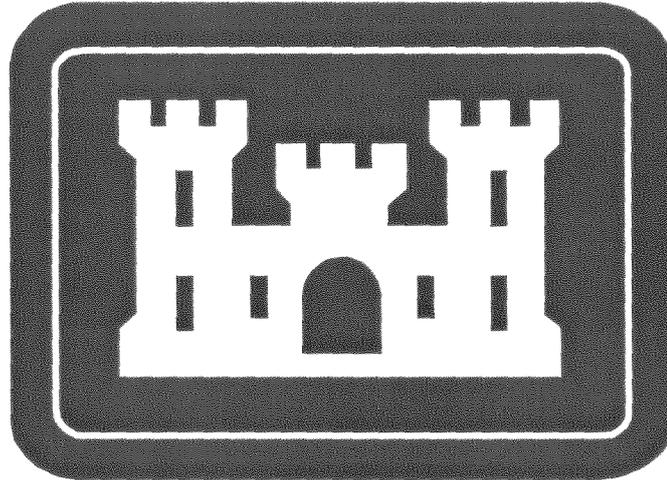
Having no further business, Council adjourned for luncheon and informal discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Kay Winn, Secretary

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

Wilmington District



Scoping Process For John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir Virginia and North Carolina Section 216 Project

**April 4, 2000
The Inn at Roanoke Rapids
Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina**

**April 5, 2000
Clarksville Community Center
Clarksville, Virginia**

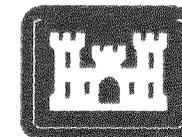
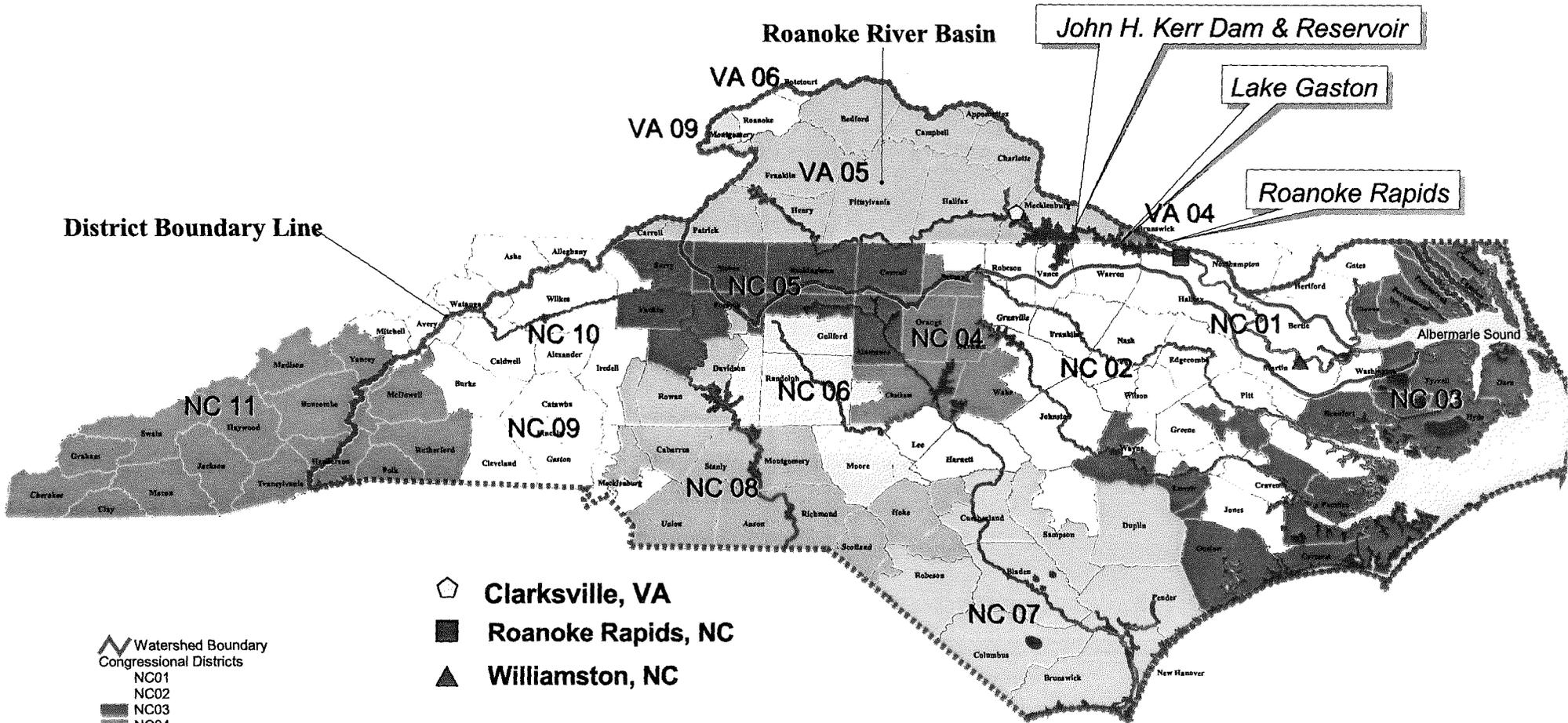
**April 6, 2000
Martin Community College
Building 2 Auditorium
Williamston, North Carolina**

Citizens Listening Sessions

4:00 – 9:00 p.m.

John H. Kerr Dam & Reservoir

NC & VA Section 216 Project



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Wilmington District

CITIZENS LISTENING SESSIONS

JOHN H. KERR DAM AND RESERVOIR VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA SECTION 216 PROJECT

PURPOSE OF THE CITIZENS LISTENING SESSIONS

The Wilmington District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, (Corps) has a reconnaissance study underway to identify needs and opportunities for changes to the John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir project and its operation. This study will consider environmental resources, land use, water supply, flood control, hydropower, and other issues yet to be identified. A significant part of this study will be a scoping process. The scoping process enables us to gather ideas from throughout the region affected by John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir. We are conducting this study under Section 216 of the Flood Control Act of 1970. Potential changes of significant scope will be analyzed in more detail in a subsequent feasibility study. If significant changes are recommended, it is likely that further authorization from the United States Congress will be required.

We realize individuals living in close proximity to any proposed project want to be informed of possible effects of the project on their homes and businesses. However, the Corps is currently in the very preliminary stages (scoping the project) of the planning process. Therefore, minimal details are available as to what the final project may entail. As additional efforts are expended more detailed information will be available. The purpose of these listening sessions is to gather the citizens' input before decisions are made as to the scope of the Section 216 project.

Written comments may be provided on the enclosed form and may be left with a Corps representative at these listening sessions or submitted through the mail by April 28, 2000. We will keep these for the record. If additional information is needed or you would like to submit comments after these Listening Sessions, please address your requests and comments to:

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District
Attention: CESAW-PM-C/Haggett
Post Office Box 1890
Wilmington, North Carolina 28402-1890

A summary regarding the Corps' public involvement and project development process is attached for your information.

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir are located in south central Virginia and North Carolina. This 50,000 acre lake extends 39 miles up the Roanoke River and has about 800 miles of shoreline. Downstream from Kerr Dam, the lower Roanoke River extends from Boydton, Virginia nearly 180 river miles to the Albemarle Sound near Plymouth in Washington County, North Carolina. The twentieth century need for flood control and hydroelectric power led to the development of the John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir. It is one of a series of reservoirs planned by the Corps to manage water resources in the Roanoke River basin. Kerr is the largest dam in the system and its authorized purposes are: recreation, low flow augmentation, water supply, flood control, hydroelectric power, and fish and wildlife conservation. Kerr is not now specifically operated for low water regulation since low flow requirements have been assigned by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to Virginia Power Company who owns two downstream projects; Gaston and Roanoke Rapids. Kerr's principal functions are to control floodwaters that would otherwise engulf agricultural, industrial and residential lands along the lower Roanoke River and to generate hydroelectric power for use in Virginia and North Carolina. Of the series of reservoirs initially planned, the Corps has constructed one other, Philpott Lake, and private concerns have built four others: Roanoke Rapids, Gaston, Leesville and Smith Mountain.

Kerr Reservoir construction began in 1946 and was completed in 1953. Section 216 of the Flood Control Act of 1970, Public Law 91-611 states: **“The Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, is authorized to review the operations of projects the construction of which has been completed and which were constructed by the Corps of Engineers in the interest of navigation, flood control, water supply and related purposes, when found advisable due to significantly changed physical or economic conditions, and to report thereon to Congress with recommendations on the advisability of modifying the structures or their operations, and for improving the quality of the environment in the overall public interest.”** In other words, we are authorized to study significant changes in physical and economic conditions to determine whether the project or its operation should be changed to improve the quality of the environment in the overall public interest. This will include studying the effects of growing communities and changing land uses.

It is within this authority that in July 1996 the Wilmington District Commander requested a Reconnaissance Study for the John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir and the downstream Roanoke River Basin. Through normal budgetary processes we received funding to initiate the John H. Kerr 216 Reconnaissance Study in December 1999. The Corps participated in a kick off meeting with interested state and local officials in Raleigh, North Carolina in January 2000 and

mailed a Scoping Letter to known interested parties on March 13, 2000. Through news releases and in the scoping letter we announced these public listening sessions that are being conducted today. The purpose of these sessions is to hear your concerns and questions. Also we need to capture a written record of your areas of interest so that we may consider them in the Recon study.

We thank you for your participation and invite each of you to take a few minutes of your time to meet with one of the Corps representatives present. Please tell them your concerns or, you may take a handout and complete it here or at your convenience. We request that if you take the handout home, you provide a response to the address indicated by April 28, 2000 so that we will have adequate time to consider your concerns and take appropriate action.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The Corps' typical process for a project consists of three phases prior to implementation of a change or construction. These phases are Reconnaissance (Recon), Feasibility, and Planning Engineering Design (PED). Each phase involves a significant amount of time and dollars (of which a portion must be cost shared with a project sponsor beyond the Recon phase). We are currently in the very early stages of the planning process and do not as of yet have a defined project. If funding continues to be available and a Federal project remains viable, a typical schedule and funding source for a project of this nature may be as follows:

<u>PROJECT STAGE</u>	<u>SCHEDULE</u>	<u>FUNDING SOURCE</u>
Recon	12-18 months	100 % Federal
Feasibility	36 – 60 months	50% Federal 50% non-Federal
PED	36 +/- months	75% Federal 25% non-Federal
Construction	Variable	Varies based on project purpose.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Planning and environmental studies for Federally funded projects are conducted in order to comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The type of document published following the planning study depends on the magnitude of the project and its expected environmental impact. The document prepared will discuss the purpose and need for the proposed improvements, evaluate alternatives, and analyze the project's impact on both the human and natural environment.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Public involvement is an integral part of the Corps' project development process. The concerns of citizens and interest groups are always considered during project development studies. Often, additional project alternatives are studied, or recommended alternatives are changed, based on comments received from the public and/or local officials. The Corps provides a number of opportunities for citizen and interest group participation. Some of these opportunities are listed below:

SCOPING LETTER

This letter notifies, at a minimum, agencies and groups on a State Clearinghouse mailing list that a project study has been initiated and solicits comments from them.

CITIZENS LISTENING SESSIONS

Informal meetings with the public. Corps staff conduct these workshops to speak one-on-one with the citizens about projects. Comment sheets are provided for citizens to write down their questions, comments, and concerns. The number of workshops scheduled for a project depends on the scope and anticipated project impacts.

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

Copies of published documents are available upon requests to the Corps. Copies are available for public viewing at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District.

CITIZEN LETTER

Citizens may be on the Corps mailing list for the Scoping Letter. They are encouraged to write the Corps and provide information and express concerns regarding proposed improvements. Correspondence from citizens and interest groups is considered during the course of the planning study and is included in the project file.

