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John Huisman
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Dear Mr Huisman,

At the 2010 public hearings in June and July several members of the public brought into question the benefits and values of Falls Lake. There was specific concern that there were no benefits of Falls Lake to Durham, and when the public stated that recreations benefits were tangible and real in both Raleigh and Durham the value of those benefits was brought into question. Here I hope to provide a few resources that show the value of recreation benefits may be intangible in some respects, but there is a continuum of valuation that can be considered. Falls Lake as a safe and clean place to recreate has enduring value for the region and must be carefully considered.

The benefits of recreation should not be disregarded or undervalued in the context of the Falls Lake Rules. The value of recreation places is indispensable. Falls Lake is a location that provides great opportunities for recreation through boating, fishing, swimming, and hiking. It is in recreation at Falls Lake we find financial, social, cultural, and intangible benefits that bolster the need for cleaning up this resource. Consideration of the values of protected areas is discussed in *The Full Value of Parks: From Economics to the Intangible* (Harmon & Putney, 2003). The diversity of benefits must be considered when placing a value on the recreation and leisure benefits of Falls Lake.

The financial value comes in the use of areas in and around the lake that bring non-local visitors and tourism dollars to the area via public and private entities. Falls Lake is literally surrounded by places for people to visit and access the lake including seven facilities that are part of the Falls Lake State Recreation Area. Economic Contribution of Visitors to Selected North Carolina State Parks, a study conducted for the state park system, shows that the 2004 annual impact of state park tourists (non-local, primary purpose visitors) was \$289 million in sales; \$120 million on residents' income; and 4,924 full-time equivalent jobs (Greenwood & Vick 2008). While this study's state estimates did not include Falls Lake they did examine nearby Jordan Lake with estimated impact of tourists being \$4,096,541 in sales; \$1,732,477 on personal income; and 68.1 full-time equivalent jobs. Tourists will only continue to have this type of impact on recreation areas that are safe for their families to visit.

In examining the value of Falls Lake recreation we may use the benefits transfer method. Benefits transfer is a method to which the benefits of recreation at an unstudied site can be understood using information from sites previously studied (Rosenberger &

Loomis, 2001). Using previously studied areas, such as the Greenwood & Vick (2008) study may be useful in discussing the recreation benefits of Falls Lake. Using this model may be useful in developing content- and context-relevant estimates for Falls Lake. Valuation of Falls Lake benefits should be considered in its current state, moreover the added benefit of future water quality and safety of Falls Lake after the cleanup of the lake has taken place should be taken into consideration.

Please consider the diversity of value in the Falls Lake recreation resources. Do not undervalue recreation benefits to all of the communities surrounding Falls Lake. To do so would be a grievous challenge to the health and wellness of North Carolina residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessica Robinson
Source to Sea.

References:

Greenwood, J.B. and C.G. Vick. (2008). *Economic Contributions of Visitors at North Carolina State Parks*. NC State University: Recreation Resources Service

Harmon, D., and Putney, A.D., eds. (2003). *The Full Value of Parks: From Economics to the Intangible*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.

Rosenberger, Randall S.; and Loomis, John B. (2001). Benefit transfer of outdoor recreation use values: A technical document supporting the Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 revision). Gen. Tech. Rep. RMRS-GTR-72. Fort Collins, CO: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station. 59 p..