

FISHIN' POLE PACK & PADDLE

Float Fishermen of Virginia

Fall/Winter - 2007, No. 4

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**Winter Business Meeting
December 1, 2007
Cumberland, VA**

Directions:

From Richmond: Rt 60 west to Cumberland; 2 miles west of town turn right on Route 628. Proceed about 3 miles to stop sign. Go straight through gate to State Forest building.

From Lexington: Take route 60 east to Cumberland; 2 miles west of downtown Cumberland, turn left on Route 628. Proceed approximately 3 miles to stop sign. Go straight through gate to State Forest building.

Labor Day Weekend Business Meeting Solitude 2007

On, September 2, the 2007 Labor Day Weekend meeting of the Float Fishermen of Virginia was held at Solitude on the James. Minutes of the Memorial Day meeting were not available.

Treasurer's Report

Incoming funds from membership and river tax boosted funds to \$1,168. Expenditures totaled \$1,392 for the last quarter. The ending balance as of August 31, 2007 is \$6,687.88. Treasurer Waller will reinvest the Certificate of Deposit that matures September 5, 2007.

Membership Report

Don Leeger is resigning his position and will be transferring the membership roles over to a new Membership secretary.

Webmaster's Report

In Webmaster Born's absence, the group was reminded that those who want access via the web to the FFV membership list need to contact Bob Born via Email for a password.

Newsletter Report

In support of Editor Pillow, an ex-editor reminded the organization that the editor doesn't have anything to edit if we don't submit material. So get busy with your wordprocessors; otherwise Bob is threatening to send the next **Pole, Pack and Paddle** out on a postcard.

Conservation Report.

Chair Tanger was not present. Jeff Wold gave an update on access issues. In relation to Balcony Falls access on the James, the sticking point is with CSX. Although there is a permit from the highway department for access SR 501 and the Dominion Power impact study includes an appropriation of \$165,000 to build a put in/take out, CSX will not give permission for boaters to cross their grade. In relation to the access issue at Explore Park on the Roanoke River, Roanoke County does not want us to submit an application to DEQ. In relation to the Woods Ferry access on the Gauley, three of the six property owners are on board to sell.

Other conservation issues include a leaky sewer line along the Roanoke River in Roanoke that was slated for removal and may instead be left in place. Jeff reminded us as individuals to oppose upcoming attempts to gut the state's waste disposal board. FORVA will keep us updated on attempts to get to the bottom of fish kills on the James River.

Foundation Report

No report available.

Old Business

Thanks went to the crew who put Saturday night's dinner together: joint cooking from the George Dickel and Roanoke Valley Chapters.

continued inside...

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The opinions expressed in **FPP&P** are those of the author and not necessarily those of FFV or its members. Articles and material for publication may be submitted to the **FPP&P** editor. Preferred format: Email with attachments in Word or ASCII files, pictures in jpeg. Dates for submitting material for publication: 5th of February, May, August and November. The Editor reserves the right to edit as needed. Comments, criticism and complements are always welcome.

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Labor Day Weekend Business Meeting, continued...

Old Business, continued

Don Simms is donating the printing of the FFV brochure on heavier paper. Get in touch with Don to personalize the contact address on your local chapter's copies of the State FFV brochures.

Erica Sims organized a float from Scottsville to Hardware Landing for inner city kids.



Erica's Kid Float involved 30 volunteers, including FFvers and others. She'd like to offer the Kid Float for inner city children twice in the upcoming year. Erica received a round of applause for her efforts to get kids on the water, some of whom had never seen a river.

New Business

Discussion on meeting locations was tabled until the Winter Meeting at Cumberland State Forest where floats, meetings and locations are decided for the upcoming year.

The Nominating Committee announced the slate of State FFV officers and chairpersons. The slate was accepted and approved: President Ginnie Peck, Vice President/President Elect Don Simms, Vice Presidents Erica Sims, Richard Webster and Ken Ingram, Secretary Linda VanLuik, Treasurer, Katherine Waller and Membership Secretary Beth Willoby; Webmaster Bob Born, Newsletter Editor Bob Pillow and Conservation Chair Bill Tanger will continue in their positions.

Thanks to the outgoing (in more ways than one) Lenny Koenig, Wayne Storey, Don Leeger and Brian Vande Sande for their service to FFV.

With no further business or announcements, the serious business of floating the river got underway.



Access Updates :

Cushaw Letter to FERC from FORVA, FFV & Coastal Canoeist



October 9, 2007

Ms. Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N. E.
Room 1-A
Washington, D. C. 20426

Re: Virginia Electric & Power Company (Dominion) Project: P-906-006

Dear Secretary Bose:

Friends of the Rivers of Virginia (FORVA), the Float Fishermen of Virginia (FFV) and Coastal Canoeists have reviewed the Environmental Assessment for the new hydropower license for the Cushaw Hydroelectric Project and we have the following comments.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) does not recognize the relationship between the dam that created Cushaw pool and the impact to white water boaters. The relationship is direct. The EA states that the relationship is only "loosely connected to the project" which is completely wrong.

If the dam were not there, paddlers would have no problem getting to the public boat landing at Rocky Row Run, plus they would have another 1.6 miles of free-flowing whitewater river to paddle. However, the flat water section that the dam creates is a major obstacle. This is especially difficult for novice or older paddlers. The fact is that the hydroelectric project has a direct impact on the public's use of the James River. Paddlers need a takeout alternative at the head of the Cushaw pool.

The EA states that the priorities for a new takeout are: 1. Lock 14; 2. CSX Culvert; 3. VDOT Picnic area. The EA does not reflect the extensive study, consideration and revisions made by the participants in the process since April 2004. The correct priorities are: 1. Lock 14; 2. Matts Creek (referred to as "Snowden" in the Dominion/DCR MOA); 3. Locher Landing.

In the event that none of these access points are found feasible, the funds were to go to: 1. an alternative site in the region as agreed to by the parties or a portage around the dam; 2. remaining funds were to go to public access to any stream in the James River Basin west of Lynchburg. The EA has this incorrect as well, stating that the funds would go a portage around the dam and an upgrade of Locher Landing. No mention was made of the alternative site in the region.

Dominion has pledged to provide \$165,000 to develop a take out at the head of pool. FERC should recognize the need for that mitigation in the EA and require Dominion to meet that requirement. We strongly disagree with the FERC recommendation against "developing a whitewater boating take-out area". Further, addressing the matter of access "outside of the FERC license" obviates the need for the existence of FERC.

The EA states that no user groups commented on the REA notice. This is not accurate. The three groups above have consistently provided input and comments to Dominion, DCR and FERC throughout the process. The information in the EA seems to be disconnected from the entire EA process.

The recommendations of our boater groups have been accepted and endorsed by Dominion and other project participants. We believe FERC should require Dominion to provide those project improvements as agreed to in the multi-party MOA that has already been signed.

We also believe that FERC should require Dominion to provide the \$10,000 to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for the restoration of the endangered James River spiny mussel and take other measures to protect wildlife as Dominion has agreed to do.

We look forward to your prompt revision of this EA.

Sincerely,

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Ferc-ea-forva comments-10-7-07

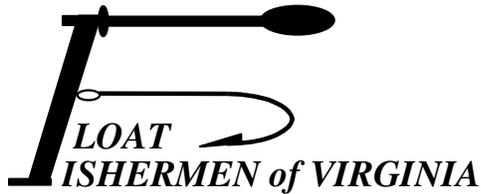
River Access in Jeopardy On Roanoke River



A fundamental conservation need is river access. If we can not access Virginia's rivers, then we can not use them, enjoy them, know what condition they are in, determine the cause of problems or fix the problems.

Today we are losing river access all over the Commonwealth. One river access location in jeopardy is in Roanoke County, at the point where Rutrough Road meets the Roanoke River. This access has been used by Virginians for over 75 years. Before Smith Mountain Lake was created, it was the location of a ford where Rutrough Road crossed the river into Bedford County.

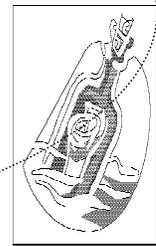
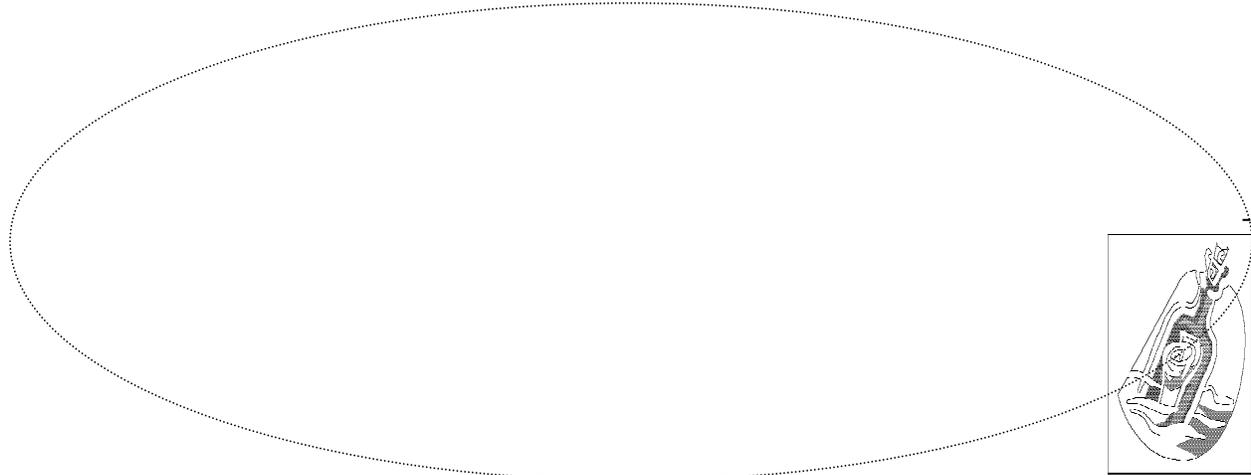
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River Access in Jeopardy On Roanoke River, continued...

Now this location is claimed by Explore Park for use by Larry Vander Maten for his private enterprise park development. The Float Fishermen of Virginia (FFV) believes this location should remain a public access, available to all without charge or restriction.

The FFV plans to put in a paddler take-out ramp, consisting of steps and a canoe slide. The DGIF has looked at our plans and said they are a good design.

VDOT has ruled that the location is "...a public road running to the Roanoke River", and has said we need no permit from them to proceed to build the ramp. Unfortunately, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) has said we need to have VDOT sign on our JPA (Joint Permit Application) since the property owner must sign along with the applicant (FFV).

Explore Park has written letters to the state agencies stating that Explore Park owns the road. Even if this is proven wrong, we believe Vander Maten will ask Roanoke County to abandon this section of the road that accesses the river so he can use the road for his project. VDOT will then be forced to deal with a lengthy and controversial public process and court decision on abandonment.

We write to alert the DGIF board and others to this possible action and to ask the board members if they will support the position of boaters, fishermen, bird-watchers, hikers and all users of this river access to keep this location as a public right-of-way to the river. Specifically, we would like DGIF to contact VDOT and urge VDOT to sign the application so we can proceed.

We wanted you to know about this matter before the FFV moves forward with building the ramp. We hope you will agree that this public right-of-way should remain public.

Please feel free to contact the FFV with your questions or thoughts.

Pat Williams, President - Roanoke Chapter, FFV // Bill Tanger, Chair - FORVA (Friends of the Rivers of Virginia)