

Water Plan Shifts To Lake Gaston

MANTEO — A complete airing of possible water withdrawal from the Albemarle Basin and its tributaries for the Southside Hampton Roads Area was scheduled this week at the Coastal Resources Commission meeting here.

The Environmental Committee of CRC, headed by Dr. Gene Huntsman of Havelock, asked the Norfolk District, Corps of Engineers, to have representatives at the meeting at the Marine Resources Center, Roanoke Island.

This committee became involved in the question several months ago at the insistence of W.B. Gardner, Edenton town administrator, and L.F. Amburn, Jr., Edenton publisher. Both serve on the Executive Committee of the CRC Advisory Council.

Frank Furlough of Columbia, a CRC member, raised questions over the past months of the effect withdrawal of water from any

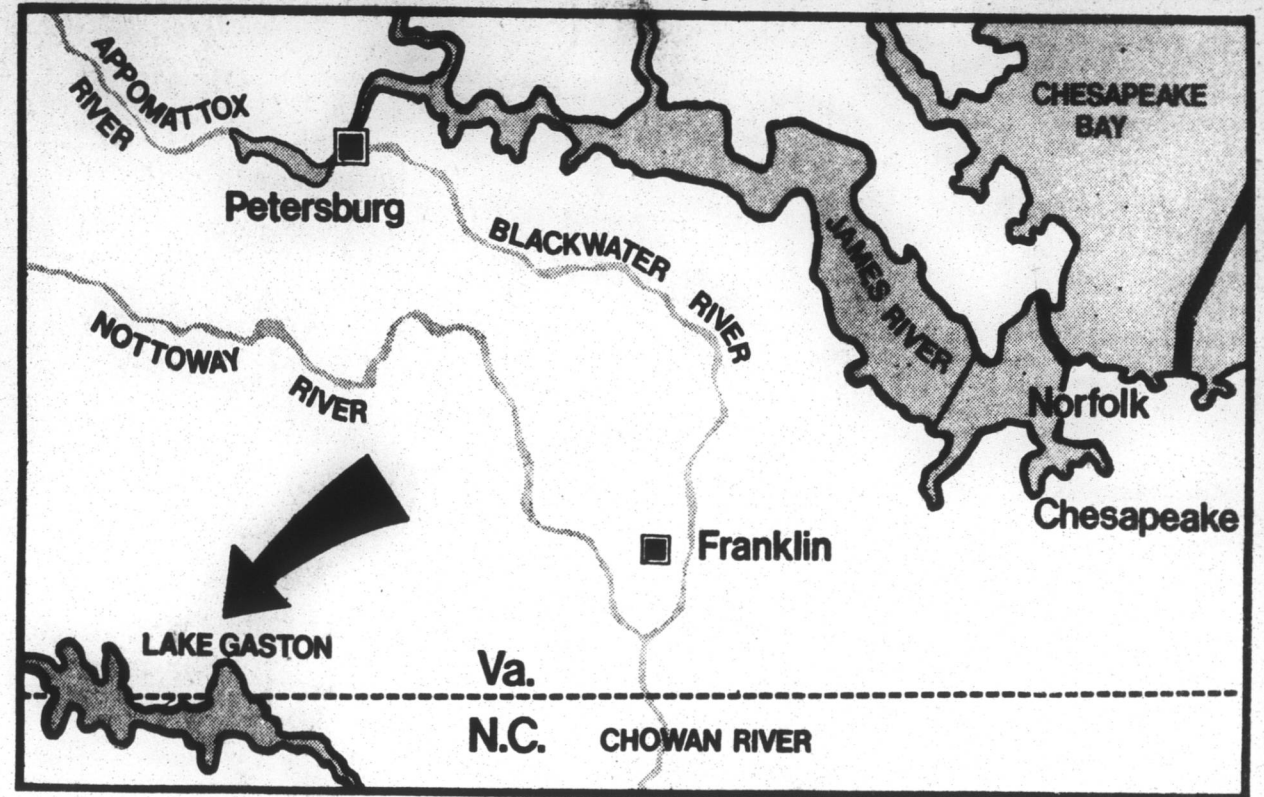
tributary of the Albemarle Basin would have on the quality of the water. He has voiced the opinion that the Norfolk District's proposal to tap the source at Lake Gaston would be equally as bad as

withdrawal from the Nottoway and Blackwater rivers which join south of Franklin, Va., to form the Chowan.

Late last month, Col. Newman A. Howard of the corps' Norfolk

District, said he favored the Lake Gaston alternative for "economic and environmental" reasons. His choice is tentative because public hearings must be held before a

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Arrow shows Tentative Recommendation of Lake Gaston As Future Source Of Water For Tidewater Virginia. Map by Steve McCracken, Virginian-Pilot.



Algae bloom in the Chowan River.

Public Parade

River Edition

The Chowan River and Albemarle Basin are fragile. This was not news prior to 1972 but it blossomed along with the algae. Since then thousands of words have been written and dollars spent in assessing the problem.

Today's newspaper could well be called a "River Edition" because of the coverage given the subject. It is by design, rather than accident.

State and federal management of one of a great natural resource has been the target of our criticism for a long time. The "green tide" of the early '70s didn't deter the Southside Hampton Roads Area of Virginia from going pell mell into a water withdrawal program.

At first the Coastal Resources Commission thought intervention was premature, but later discovered, at the insistence of local voices, that the problem was so serious as to not delay.

If there is anything more picturesque than the Chowan River and Albemarle Basin, as well as an economic stimulus, it has not yet been identified. Regardless of where you live in Tar Heelia, you have a stake in its future.

Protection of this natural resource must be protected from the courthouse to the statehouse. That is what is being done as representatives of local government and Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., take a strong stand on any withdrawal of water which might affect the flow in the already fragile river.

While we might weep for our neighbors in Virginia, we maintain that the integrity of the waters along the Public Parade and throughout Northeastern North Carolina must be maintained. It is comforting to have CRC, NR&CD and Gov. Hunt on our side.

Back On Track

Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., a foremost advocate of regionalism, has asked his newly formed Local Government Advocacy Council to develop a state policy on Multi-county planning regions. And by the time the council acts, it appears that the 10-county Albemarle Regional Planning & Development Commission will have its act together—again.

R.S. Monds, Jr., of Hertford, ARPDC chairman, declared at a recent meeting that the agency operated on a "good financial keel" for a 15-month period ending September 30, 1977. He said the "dark hours" of the past were to be forgotten and the agency was starting anew.

These are bold statements which couldn't have been made had the regional organization gone back to the drawing board to draft a plan in keeping with its purpose—comprehensive planning rather than program operation.

In our opinion, had the agency not gotten greedy and carried away with the "big bucks" and "visibility", which program operation brings the black eye it has sported over the past months would have never appeared.

Multi-county regions were not designed to be in the program operation and-or administration business in the first place. Staff was intended to consist of a

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Algae Bloom Threatens River

SANDBANKS — The Chowan River may be on the verge of having another algae bloom, according to an Environmental Management Commission report.

Nutrients are building in the river which could spark another bloom, a commission report reveals.

Any addition input of nutrients from industry or agriculture could cause an algae bloom, the report stated.

The Chowan River project is a study that was begun in 1973 to establish the basis of a water-quality management plan to prevent the algae blooms that have at times choked the North-eastern river.

A mathematical model has been developed to predict the effects of changes in the river on algae growth.

This can be used to give an idea what effect a proposed industrial discharge may have, according to Dr. David Howells, one of the authors of the report and the former director of the Water Resources Research Institute.

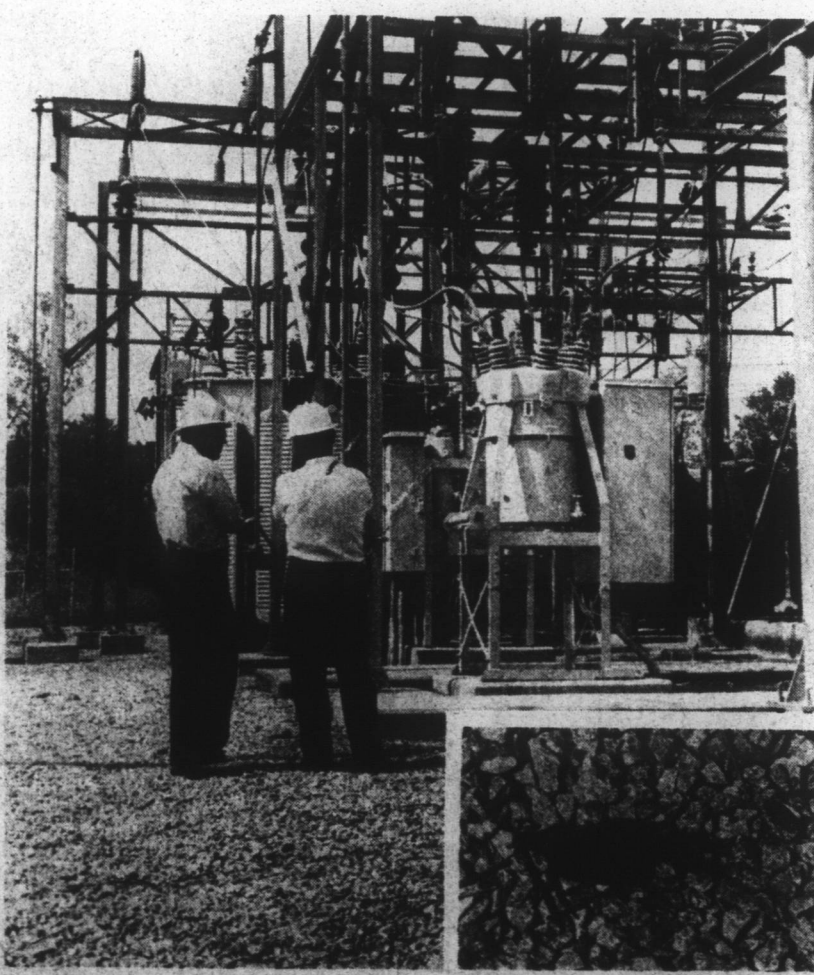
The worst bloom of algae in recent history took place in 1972. "People living along the river," the report noted, "were in an uproar over the green scum covering the Chowan." Commercial fishing and recreation were harmed.

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Program Offers Summer Jobs

Summer jobs are available to economically disadvantaged youth in Region R, ages 14 - 21, the Employment Security Commission reports.

Applications for the program may be obtained from the local high school principals, Employment Security Commission office on North Broad Street, or from the Economic Resource Center on Oakum Street.



ROOT OF PROBLEM—A bird flew into a high voltage switch at 5:40 A.M. Thursday at the Vepeco substation on Freemason Street, putting some 3,200 homes and businesses in the dark. It was 8:32 A.M. before authorization was given from Richmond, Va., to restore current to electric customers of the Town of Edenton, Edenton Cotton Mills and some Electric Membership Corporation subscribers. The culprit is shown in the foreground.

Memorial Day Schedule Set

The Postal Service, town and county offices, and local banking institutions will be closed this Monday in observance of Memorial Day, but otherwise the Edenton Chamber of Commerce states that it will be business as usual for merchants and other firms.

Joining stepped up enforcement of highway laws by the N.C. Highway Patrol will be safety and travel assistance offered to motorists by professional safety men and patrol cars from the North Carolina Motor Carriers Association.

Col. John T. Jenkins, commander of the Highway Patrol stated that "the wide experience of these safety professionals and their record of motorists' cooperation will certainly help us during this period of high density traffic as motorists return from the long holiday week-end."

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ARPDC Day Care Deficit Is Discussed

COLUMBIA — Albemarle Regional Planning & Development Commission operated on a "good financial keel" for the 15-month period ending September 30, 1977, yet some member governments objected to Chowan County and Edenton-Chowan Schools not being billed for a deficit of some

\$18,000 from a previous Day Care project.

In presenting the 1977 audit report Thursday night, Speight Burrus of Elizabeth City said deficits from the Day Care and the Integration of Services projects, amounting to more than \$20,000 may be reduced to about \$6,000 because some ARPDC funding agencies have not requested payment of fund balances.

R.S. Monds, Jr., of Hertford, chairman, said the commission decided months ago "to forget the dark hours and to start anew." He said since then "We have done pretty good...and in the past 15 months this organization is on a good financial keel."

Burrus said "positive balances" in existing programs have allowed the 10-county regional commission to continue to operate. And he said all findings in a September, 1976, management letter have been handled "to our satisfaction." While he didn't find any exceptions in the 15-month audit (brought about by the board's decision to go to the federal government's fiscal year) his firm "does not express an opinion on the financial condition (of ARPDC) because of possible liability to funding sources due to inability to track some expenditures in past years."

The agency had some \$1-million in revenue during the past audit period and showed in excess of \$38,000 in fund balances. The auditor found a "considerable amount" of improvements in internal control and procedures.

Eddie McDuffie, Gates County manager, presented a resolution seeking ARPDC support in opposition to abandonment of a rail

Water Level Major Factor In Algae Growth

A recent study of the Chowan River has shown that a reduction of water flow is a major factor contributing to the algae growth in the body of water.

So says a comprehensive study of the Chowan River System

published by the Water Resources Research Institute of the University of North Carolina.

The development of the publication was headed by David H. Howells, former director of the institute, and Grover Cook, coordinator of the Chowan River project. Cook is now environmental coordinator of the Division of Health Services, N.C. Department of Human Resources.

A mathematical model was developed by the U.S. Geological Survey to estimate flows in the Chowan River. The study, through this model, has determined that the flow exerts a strong influence on the growth of the algae. The growth says the report will decline with rising flow will and intensify with the low flow.

In addition, the study indicated that concentrations of nutrients and algae vary greatly with location and time.

"During the summer, temperature, light and flow are more favorable to algae growth than at any other time of the year. Because of the intensity of the growth at this time, levels of nutrients dissolved in the water are greatly reduced," according to the study.

The limiting factor for the algae growth in summer is nitrogen concentration. The study indicates that most nitrogen assimilated by algae during this period comes from recycling processes such as the regeneration of dissolved inorganic nitrogen from dead organic matter in the water and sediments.

Little can be done about this process except to reduce the total amount entering the river, according to the report. "Rooted aquatic plants growing in the Chowan do not have a significant impact on algae production," the study says.

It is pointed out in the study that

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Postal Rate Increases Set

The cost of mailing a letter will advance to 15 cents Monday, May 29, the first increase in two and one-half years, it was announced today by the Postal Service's Governors.

At a special meeting today, the Governors considered and approved higher rates for letters and other classes of mail that were recommended May 12 by the Postal Rate Commission.

The new rates and fees, effective at 12:01 A.M. (Local Time) May 29, are expected to increase Postal Service revenues by \$1.9 billion per year.

The Governors expressed concern that the sharp increase in parcel-post rates (fourth-class) recommended by the Postal Rate Commission could "threaten the survival" of this class of mail. The Commission had recommended

rates 35 per cent higher, on the average, then the current rates.

Chairman M.A. Wright said as a result of the fourth-class rates going into effect May 29 the Postal Service will "not be as competitive as it should be. We need a restructuring of rates." The Governors directed the Postal Service to prepare a new parcel rate proposal for consideration by September.

Concurrently with the domestic rates, international surface rates will go up 10 per cent, on the average. There is no increase in postage for international air mail or air parcel post.

Highlights in the rate package include:

- Presorted first-class rate of 13 cents.
- Priority mail rates (first-

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