



**Roanoke Valley Chapter
Cushaw Dam Project Committee**

Update as of 4/10/06

In early March the forest service rejected the road leading to the CSX culvert site for three main reasons. 1) The reluctance of CSX to allow passage through the existing culvert. 2) The steep road grade and forest disturbance that would be required to lessen the grade. 3) They felt the intersection with Route 501 was too dangerous (it should be noted that VDOT thought the intersection could be made safe).

This prompted a conference call with CSX officials, Dominion Power, DCR, FORVA, and FFV. CSX stated that they did not want to allow access to the culvert because of the chance that someone would try to use it during a very high water event and get trapped. (Later study by Dominion proved that this should not be a concern) They did suggest that a second culvert be installed beside this one. When the craziness of this was pointed out, there was discussion of finding an alternate location to install a culvert. A decision was made to look at alternate sites.

The goals for the recreational access were also agreed to and were as follows: 1) Reduce trespassing. 2) Increase user safety 3) Create recreational access that will benefit all users.

Bill Tanger and I went out to locate an alternate location Saturday 3/25. We found what seems to be a promising location at a site just upstream from "Iron Man" at the site of lock 14 on the old canal. There is room for parking, the grade is much less than the culvert site road, and the road will be less than ½ mile long.

Dominion Power held a meeting in Lexington 3/28 to specifically discuss the culvert and access issues. In this meeting Bill pointed out to the Forest Service that they should be more cooperative and forthcoming with information. We discussed the culvert site and road problems and then rolled out the new location at lock 14. There was considerable interest in this by all. Dominion asked FORVA and FFV if we would drop the culvert proposal in lieu of pursuing the lock 14 site which we agreed to.

Bob Munson of DCR brought up the land owner liability law and the possibility of getting legislation through to indemnify railroads and will specifically mention them by name. This may allow at grade crossing and save the expense of installing a culvert.

Dominion proposed \$100,000 to the access issue and we have asked for them to increase it to \$165,000. This money will be used for the takeout above the pond if a suitable location can be arranged. In the event that does not work out, the money will be used to improve the put in at confluence in Glasgow or some other part of the Upper James.

Comments to the final FERC application are due prior to 5/1/06. These comments have to be in writing and directed to Jim Thornton at Dominion Power.

We are actively working to try to determine the feasibility of the Lock 14 site. A meeting with all involved parties will be held soon on site. If you are interested in attending, please contact Bill Tanger or myself

Jeff Wold