

## **What the State's Environmental Agency says about Alcoa's Yadkin Project**

The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is the lead stewardship agency for the preservation and protection of North Carolina's outstanding natural resources. The organization, which has offices from the mountains to the coast, administers regulatory programs designed to protect air quality, water quality, and the public's health. (from [www.enr.state.nc.us](http://www.enr.state.nc.us))

The following are quotes from the Hearing Officer's Report, May 6, 2009, attached to the 401 Water Quality Certificate issued to Alcoa Power Generating, Inc. (APGI) by DENR's Division of Water Quality on May 7, 2009.

"The Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS] conducted an independent fish tissue study in Badin Lake and provided the results to DWQ [Division of Water Quality] and to the Division of Waste Management for analysis. In addition to the water quality samples provided by APGI, DWQ conducted separate analysis of water samples on the discharges from all four of the lakes in the APGI system on March 10, 22, and 31, 2009. The Division also conducted sediment sampling along transects from the cove near the Town of Badin to the Badin Lake dam on April 2, 2009.

"The water samples showed that contaminants were not present in the discharges from these dams. The sediment samples confirm that the polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) contaminants are limited to locations near the Cove where a swimming area and boat launch are located and to date have not moved toward the dam."

"The Department of Health and Human Services staff and the State Epidemiologist previously concluded that contaminated sediment in the swimming area does not pose a human health risk."

"... staff of the Division of Waste Management have reviewed the fish tissue data and information on PCB content of materials used by Alcoa and concluded that it is not possible to establish a link between Alcoa operations and the PCBs in fish tissue (memo from Rob McDaniel to Dexter Matthews, Director of the Division of Waste Management dated February 25, 2009). Although PCB types used at the Alcoa plant were found in the fish tissue samples, the samples also indicated the presence of many PCB types not found in materials used at Alcoa. Therefore, it appears that the presence of PCBs in the fish tissue is a watershed-based issue."

"DWQ has carefully reviewed the recent fish tissue study done by DHHS as well as a follow-up examination of these data by the Hazardous Waste Section of the DWM which concluded that these PCBs could not be "fingerprinted" back to the Alcoa site.... Although the Alcoa Badin Works has been a source of PCB contamination, the PCBs found in the fish in Badin Lake cannot be directly related to the Alcoa site and are not related to the operation of the hydropower project we are certifying."

"DWQ staff have reviewed those data [samples provided by Alcoa of the discharge from Badin Lake] and made certain that the laboratories that did the analysis were certified by the state. In addition to these data, in mid-late March 2009 the Division of Water Quality conducted water sampling from the tailraces of all four dams in order to compare to the APGI data. When compared to the APGI data, these new data show similar results and show no violations of water quality standards for toxic substances."

"The Division of Waste Management is working with Alcoa on assessment and remediation of contamination at the Badin Works site as well as an area of contaminated sediment in the waters below Narrows Dam."