

STATEMENT BY WILLIAM A. GORDON TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SUB-
COMMITTEE HEARING ON THE PROPOSED SALEM CHURCH DAM

As one who has long enjoyed the natural beauty of the Rappahannock River above Fredericksburg, I have followed the proposed Salem Dam project for the past several years. I feel this project is not only unnecessary, but destructive and an expense to the taxpayers.

The first advantage of the project listed by the Corps of Engineers is flood control. It would provide flood control for a few miles along the River at Fredericksburg, and none for the thirty miles above Fredericksburg. There has been but one major flood at Fredericksburg since colonial times and this was caused largely by local flash flooding. Since flood control represents only 2.15% of the benefits it does not seem very important.

The second advantage of the project is listed as water supply. The Salem Dam reservoir would contain over 3,000 times the daily use of the project 50 years from now. There are several projects which will be started in the near future, which will provide adequate water supply for our area, and at less cost to our area, than would be our portion of the Salem Dam.

The next benefit listed is power. The Hydroelectric Power from this project is not in any way needed, as VEPCO is capable of providing power. Also the government would lose millions in taxes that VEPCO pays on power it sells to the Co-ops. This portion of the project would only be a subsidy to the now overly subsidized Co-ops.

The next benefit is listed as water quality control. The only answer to water quality control is the proper treatment of waste. The Salem Dam is simply not the answer to water quality control.

The next so called benefit is recreation. This mud surrounded reservoir would be only 15 miles from the Potomac with its sandy beaches. Also soon to be built is an 11,000 acre VEPCO owned lake only 20 miles away, which will be open to the public for recreation free of charge, and will not have the draw-down of the Salem Dam. There are several other projects to be built such as the Ni River project, the Potomac Run project, the Aquina Creek project and the Motts Run project. Yet the Engineers claim it is necessary to build another flat water project. Not only is this project not needed for recreation, but it would destroy a river, rich in history, rare in beauty and now providing recreation that the Salem Dam could never equal. To add to the absurdity, the Engineers have the nerve to claim 41.02% of the Salem Dam benefits are recreation, or that it will be worth nearly 3 million dollars a year to the public, for recreation.

Then to top it all, the Engineers claim 20.44% of the benefits would be salinity control, or that it would be worth nearly one and a half million dollars a year to the oysters. It should also be noted that the oyster industry is doing so well now that the take of oysters is being kept down to keep the prices up.

Then there are some things which the Engineers are having a hard time trying to hide, such as the higher interest rate than they estimated, which would have to be charged for the project. Also the much greater cost of land and construction, than they estimated. This would cut the cost benefit ratio to probably something less than 1 to 1, because the Engineers figures on cost are now outdated, yet the figures on benefits are based on predictions of future use or are set figures such as the sole of power, which cannot be changed. So the benefits will not increase as the cost increases as the Engineers have said.

I could go into great detail about the beauty, the recreational value and the history of the Rappahannock River but I am sure others will do so in much detail, as I will only ask that you be very aware of what you are doing before you destroy, unnecessarily, the God given natural beauty of the Rappahannock River.

STATEMENT OF THE WARRENTON GARDEN CLUB, FAUQUIER COUNTY, VA., IN
OPPOSITION TO THE SALEM CHURCH DAM

My name is Mrs. Henry J. Kaltenbach and I am appearing as an officer and representative of the Warrenton Garden Club to oppose this wasteful and destructive project as sought by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The Warrenton Garden Club is among the many conservation organizations in the State of Virginia which are concerned by the threat of a 240 foot dam at Salem Church just above Fredericksburg.

At a time when the "Virginia Outdoors Plan" is leading the way in preserving our irreplaceable heritage of open land and wild rivers, the Army Engineers