## KEOWEE-TOXAWAY TALKS GET SERIOUS

Duke Energy is approaching a key point in its effort to get a new federal license for its Keowee-Toxaway hydroelectric facility. A working agreement between the company and several local, state and federal agencies, as well as citizens' groups, is expected by late spring of this year.

Several hundred Lake Keowee homeowners have signed petitions protesting a "trial balloon" proposal from Duke to raise the reservoir's minimum depth and drop the average pool up to 5 feet. They fear their shorelines will look like Lake Hartwell, a U.S. Corps of Engineers reservoir that has suffered lower lake levels during recent droughts.

Stakeholders involved in the Duke talks have said both privately and publicly that it is too soon to assume such a dire fate for Lake Keowee residents and their property values.

Duke hopes to have its new federal license approved by 2016.