

Federal Judge Looks To North Carolina History In Alcoa Dam Case

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (AP) — Colonial-era land grants and settlement patterns on North Carolina's frontier are among the evidence a federal judge will consider at a trial determining who owns the riverbed under four Alcoa dams.

U.S. District Judge Terrance Boyle starts a non-jury trial Tuesday in a lawsuit in which North Carolina officials challenged whether Alcoa Inc. ever had property rights to build the dams. The earliest dam has been operating for nearly a century.

Boyle first will sort through ancient descriptions of the Yadkin River to decide whether boats could navigate it when America gained independence. That will be followed by whether Alcoa's predecessor bought property that included the riverbed.

The dams previously powered an aluminum smelter the Pittsburgh-based company closed in 2007. Alcoa has sold the electricity since then.