
LAKE LURE HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

The vision of a resort community in Western North Carolina was the vision of Dr. Lucius B. Morse. Poor health brought Dr. Morse to the Gorge and it was from Chimney Rock in the early nineteen hundreds that the vision of a lake and a resort development was spawned. The resort was to be developed by Chimney Rock Mountains, Inc. The centerpiece of this resort was to be a lake created by impounding the Rocky Broad River at Tumbling Shoals. This lake was to become Lake Lure. The lake was named Lake Lure by Dr. Morse's wife, Elizabeth Parkenson. He conceived the idea of building a dam on the Rocky Broad River to create a lake and the possibility of a year-round resort.

Carolina Mountain Power Company, all of whose common stock was owned by Chimney Rock Mountains Inc., was formed and the construction of the dam began by it in 1925. In return for this stock, Chimney Rock Mountains, Inc. deeded to the power company the land and easements for the site of the dam and powerhouse, all of the inundated area of Lake Lure and ground for transmission lines to Turner's Dam.

The dam was completed in September 1926 and the creation of the lake began. The full impoundment of Lake Lure was completed in 1927. At ordinary water levels, Lake Lure covers approximately 720 acres and has a shoreline of approximately 27 miles.

The power plant began operations in 1928 with the sale of electricity under a 10-year contract to Blue Ridge Power Co., the predecessor of Duke Power Co. The town continues even today to contract with Duke Energy for the sale of electricity.

The Town of Lake Lure was incorporated in 1927. As incorporated, the boundaries of the town included the entirety of the body of water known as Lake Lure. The North Carolina General Assembly has authorized the Town of Lake Lure to acquire and hold real property. The Town has express authority to regulate activities occurring on Lake Lure. The Town also has significant discretion in the exercise of its authority to protect or promote the health, morals, order, safety and general welfare of the Town of Lake Lure.

Property that once belonged to the Carolina Mountain Corporation was now the property of the Town of Lake Lure. This included all of the property which has been, or at any time hereafter may be, submerged by the dam erected across the Broad River at the site known as Tumbling Shoals, Chimney Rock Township, Rutherford County, North Carolina, lying below 995 feet above sea level, as based upon the official bench marks of the United States Geological Survey. This property, which comprises the bed of Lake Lure, lies within the limits of the Town of Lake Lure.

As both commercial and noncommercial use of the lake by residents and visitors has increased over the years, the issues surrounding how the lake - as a limited resource - is managed has become increasingly important.