



**PRESS RELEASE**

16 October 2015

## **INAUGURATION OF THE LANDING STAGE OF LA VOULTE SUR RHONE: NEW FACILITIES FOR TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Today, Philippe Armand, Regional Director of CNR Valence and Bernard Brottes, Mayor of La Voulte sur Rhône, inaugurated the municipality's new landing stage. Part of CNR's Missions in the General Interest and bearing the Rhone Plan label, this construction contributes to boosting the development of tourism on the river and in the municipality.**

### **A new landing stage for river tourism**

CNR included the project to build a landing stage for river cruisers at La Voulte in its 3<sup>rd</sup> MGI plan. Indeed, in the framework of its MGIs, CNR enhances the land of the concession by equipping sites with strong tourism and economic potential with river infrastructures adapted to these boats. These vessels can only moor alongside dedicated structures due to their length, draught and the need to ensure the safety of the passengers (when embarking and disembarking).

Located on the right bank of the Rhone, downstream of the hydropower plant of Beauchastel, the landing stage permits river cruise liners to moor in total safety relatively close to the confluence of the River Eyrieux and the Rhone. This landing stage bears the Rhone Plan label in the Tourism section in view to contributing to creating a "Rhone Valley" destination. It comprises:

- a river facility dedicated to pleasure boats on the one hand and to river cruise liners on the other;
- the rehabilitation of the existing wharf and a facility on land composed of a dedicated bus lane, tourist signalling and urban furniture to revitalize the wharf.

**With 110,000 passengers forecast in 2015, this new facility is capable of receiving commercial barges, in particular push-tow convoys.**

After the call for tenders in August 2012, works started in November 2014. Seven dolphins were installed, in fact an alignment of pile-driven tubes to provide a mooring facility for push-tow convoys exceeding 180 meters.

This construction is part of a development plan carried out by the municipality of La Voulte sur Rhône in close collaboration with CNR and its financial partners (Europe – FEDER, ETAT – FNADT and the Rhône- Alpes Region in the framework of the CDRA Valdac, Intercommunal Authority of Drôme-Ardèche).

**Total amount of the project: €635 k**

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## A major infrastructure for boosting the touristic attraction of La Voulte-sur-Rhône

This new landing stage is linked to the creation of itineraries for soft transport modes in Ardèche, especially the ViaRhôna and the Dolce Via. *These 3 tourist routes are located only a stone's throw from the old village characteristic of the Medieval Gothic period and built spiralling snail-like around a rocky outcrop.* Interlinked alleys and small renovated squares lead to a church and, finally, a castle at the summit from where one can look over the whole valley. The constant sentinel of the town and the valley, the castle will soon witness the return of cultural activities with, in particular, the organisation of painting exhibitions and evenings dedicated to music and theatre.

## Supporting the growth of river tourism

Through its **Missions in the General Interest**, CNR, the concessionary of the Rhone, has been voluntarily committed for more than ten years in favour of the population of the Rhone Valley, in addition to its historic missions of river manager. The result of consultation organised with the local authorities, the users of the river and the local populations, the projects are performed to fulfil a vision of economic development and the creation of value not only for the territories but also so that future generations can enjoy a living river.

Committed to promoting river tourism, CNR creates or participates in the construction of a large number of infrastructures adapted to the needs of river cruisers and pleasure boating. In the framework of its 3<sup>rd</sup> plan of Missions in the General Interest (2014-2018), CNR is investing €38 M for the construction of specific landing stages for river cruisers and studying the development of locks for pleasure craft. The landing stage of La Voulte is the 16<sup>th</sup> built by the company in the framework of its Missions in the General Interest.

### The figures for river cruising on the Rhone and the Saone (2014)

**24** river cruise liners (9 in 2005, and 4 in 1999): **110,000** passengers a year

**16** barge hotels

**55** excursion boats: **414,000** passengers transported

**21** bases for hiring habitable boats: **34,000** passengers transported

A total of **€189 M** estimated in economic spinoffs.

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## The municipality of La Voulte sur Rhône

At the entrance of the valley of the River Eyrieux, less than 20 km from Privas and Valence, La Voulte-sur-Rhône is a small town with a population of 5,064 hemmed between the mountains and the Rhone. The town was built on the foothills of the Boutières mountains, on the right bank of the Rhone. Its name stems from the “Voltas”, meaning the meanders of the Rhone at the foot of the outcrop.

The history of La Voulte-sur-Rhône was marked by the forges once installed there (19<sup>th</sup> century). Iron ore was extracted from the high ground above and then transformed in the forges in the town. The 4 blast furnaces (now listed monuments) of the Baboin Park testify to this noble industrial history.

Nowadays, other companies have taken over, and new industries now occupy the old workshops, while others have set up in the recently created enterprise zones. The town is now recognised for its dynamic industrial core with national and international links.

## CNR

CNR is France’s leading producer of 100% renewable electricity (water, wind and sun) and the operator of the multipurpose concession of the River Rhone from the Swiss border to the Mediterranean: hydroelectricity production, the deployment of navigation and port sites, and providing water for irrigation and other agricultural uses. It has 18 multimodal industrial platforms located on the Rhone from Lyon to the Mediterranean that receive 230 clients, industrial and logistics companies, and a network of public wharves that mesh the territory and which privilege goods transport on the river. CNR privileges inter-modal transport by upgrading its historic industrial and port sites, to adapt the supply of services to current business needs and by building new infrastructures in partnership with local actors.

A joint stock company in the public interest, CNR stands out due to its industrial model based on territorial development and its unique system of sharing the value created locally with its stakeholders. Over the last 10 years, its Missions in the General Interest, drawn up in collaboration with the stakeholders, strengthen this close link with the territories.

A total of more than €290 million has already been invested by CNR to develop renewable energies, build new infrastructures for river transport and tourism, act in favour of environmental preservation and promote local initiatives, whether cultural, educational or for sports, thereby further enriching the heritage of the Rhone Valley.

CNR is a mostly publicly owned company (local authorities, Caisse des Dépôts). Its main private industrial shareholder is the ENGIE Group (formerly GDF SUEZ).

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