ALABAMA POWER COMPANY

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

MARTIN HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

FERC NO. 349

STUDY PLAN 7 – WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

MARCH 2009

Prepared by:

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1.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) would like to understand more about the lands that are included within the project boundary of the Martin Project (*i.e.*, quantity, location, timber stands, etc.). ADCNR is especially concerned about providing habitat diversity among all Alabama Power Company (Alabama Power) lands within the project boundary to enhance native vegetation and wildlife species (such as Priority 1 and 2 species and rare, threatened, and endangered species). This would include the conservation, restoration, and management of longleaf pine systems on project lands. ADCNR would like to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alabama Power, and interested stakeholders to develop a viable wildlife management plan for the Martin Project and minimize the Project's effects on terrestrial resources.

2.0 RELEVANT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GOALS

The ADCNR manages wildlife throughout the state. Knowledge of the lands included as part of the Martin Project would allow them to work with the Alabama Power to develop strategies to enhance the public wildlife resources, protect or enhance rare, threatened, or endangered (RTE) species and offset potential impacts associated with development around the project. ADCNR will use the Alabama Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy in development of a Wildlife Management Program (WMP).

3.0 BACKGROUND AND EXISTING INFORMATION

Alabama Power includes approximately 8800 acres of land within the Martin project boundary. These lands are a mixture of both developed and undeveloped property. Alabama Power will be developing a Shoreline Management Program, which will contain GIS overlays of all lands within the project and its current use or designation. Alabama Power currently has timber management plans for its project lands. Alabama Power also has land designated as "Natural Undeveloped" that would be of interest to ADCNR for management of wildlife resources. Alabama Power is also performing RTE Surveys on specific Martin Project lands and some properties adjacent to the project.

ADCNR has management strategies and goals for wildlife resources of the state (Alabama Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy), including RTE species. A combination of Alabama Power data and ADCNR goals would be pooled to determine the best approach for development of a WMP for enhancing wildlife resources within the Martin Project.

4.0 PROJECT NEXUS

The study would result in a WMP that would enhance wildlife resources within the Martin Project. This Program would also determine management strategies to reduce impacts to and/or enhance habitat quality of RTE wildlife species within the Martin Project.

5.0 STUDY AREA AND STUDY SITES

The primary study area for this issue would include all of the Alabama Power owned lands included within the Martin project boundary.

6.0 PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The WMP will be developed in consultation with MIG 1. First, Alabama Power will develop GIS overlays and maps of:

- all lands within the project boundary;
- current land use classification;
- specific forest stand data showing cover type, composition and age for forest stands within the project boundary;
- current timber management objectives for the tracts; and
- locations of known populations of RTE species.

Based on the available information, Alabama Power will perform limited surveys of ground cover in general cover types - mature hardwood, mature longleaf, planted pine, mature loblolly pine, mixed pine hardwood, and disturbed areas. Specific collection techniques will include methodology identified by Dr. David Whetstone (Jacksonville State University). Dr. Whetstone will also oversee collection of field data to provide ground cover information for the dataset.

Alabama Power will meet with MIG 1 members to review and compare the consolidated information with ADCNR goals to develop a WMP.

Based on the ADCNR letter (February 10, 2009), the program will contain the following structure at a minimum:

- Introduction
  - Purpose of the Plan
  - Background information for Martin Project
- Broad Statement of Project Goals and Objectives
- Stand and Composition Data
  - Past History of Land Use
  - Description of the Habitat
  - Specific Timber Stand Goals – Develop Wildlife Goals
- Wildlife Management Objectives

- RTE Management Actions (red-cockaded woodpecker, bald eagle, etc.)
- Priority 1 and 2 species (refer to Alabama's Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy)
- Timber Management including herbicides, thinning, use of fire (public education may also be needed), etc.
- Habitat Management and the use of proper silvicultural systems
- Forest types in the Project Boundary
- Adjacent Lands – Management Agreements (if applicable)
- Wildlife Openings
- Opportunities for hunting lands as recreational opportunities including handicapped Hunting Areas (if applicable)
- General Wildlife Enhancements (controlling non-native invasive plant species, etc.)
- Best Management Practices to protect the watershed and address timber operations, steep slopes, and sedimentation
- Management implementation timeline schedules and information on state goals and objectives of individual forest species

7.0 CONSISTENCY WITH GENERALLY ACCEPTED SCIENTIFIC PRACTICE

This study employs generally accepted practices for evaluating wildlife habitats and will include input from Alabama's Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy document. The study methodology has been successfully used by Alabama Power, ADCNR, and the USFWS to develop Wildlife Management Plan/Programs for other hydroelectric facilities within the state of Alabama.

8.0 PRODUCTS

Data and analyses from this study will be shared periodically with the agencies and MIG 1 during the study phase. Meetings will be hosted by Alabama Power to develop a draft WMP that will be distributed for review and comment to the MIG 1 within 6 months of completion of the WMP. The Final WMP including maps and GIS overlays will be provided as part of the draft license application.

9.0 SCHEDULE

This schedule corresponds to Alabama Power's Process Plan and Schedule filed with FERC on February 16, 2009. Actual consultation meeting dates will be determined with MIG 1 members upon FERC approval of the study plan.

Alabama Power files Final Study Plan .....March 2009
FERC Approval .....April 2009
MIG 1 Consultation .....May 2009 – December 2010
Develop Stand Information .....April – June 2009
GIS overlays (percentages of present forest types)
Initial Study Report.....November 2009

Initial Study Report Meeting ..... December 2009
Draft WMP..... April 2010
Final WMP..... June 2010
FERC Updated Study Report..... September 2010
Updated Study Report Meeting ..... September 2010

10.0 LEVEL OF EFFORT AND COST

Alabama Power estimates the cost of consulting on the study plan, collecting any necessary field data, analyses, and reporting is approximately $100,000.

11.0 REFERENCES

Alabama Power Company. 2005. Wildlife Management Plan for the Coosa Hydroelectric Project.

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. 2005. Alabama Comprehensive Wildlife Management Plan.