



ALABAMA POWER COMPANY

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

MARTIN HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

FERC NO. 349

STUDY PLAN 7 – WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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Prepared by:



**ALABAMA POWER COMPANY
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA**

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STUDY PLAN 7 – WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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 APC 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 Alabama Power Company (APC) 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 any program.

3.0 BACKGROUND AND EXISTING INFORMATION

APC includes approximately 8800 acres of land within the Martin project boundary. These lands are a mixture of both developed and undeveloped property. APC will be developing a Shoreline Management Program, which will contain GIS overlays of all lands within the project and its current use or designation. APC currently has timber management plans for its project lands. APC also has land designated as "Natural Undeveloped" that would be of interest to ADCNR for management of wildlife resources. APC is also performing RTE Surveys on the 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 APC data and ADCNR goals would be pooled to determine the best approach for development of a Wildlife Management Program (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 APC owned lands included within the Martin project boundary.

6.0 PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The WMP will be developed in consultation with MIG 1. First, APC 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 plan and future forest and wildlife management objectives for the tracts; and
- locations of known populations of RTE species.

Based on the GIS overlays, APC will perform limited wildlife (amphibians, reptiles, and mammals) use assessments in APC/ADCNR specified areas of riparian habitats on Lake Martin.

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

The program will contain the following structure at a minimum:

- Introduction
- Purpose of the Plan
- Wildlife Management Objectives
- Waterfowl Management Actions (if applicable)
- 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 APC, 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 APC 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 is draft and APC intends to develop a formal schedule with MIG 1 members upon final FERC approval of the study.

APC files Final Study Plan	November 2008
Anticipated FERC Approval.....	May 2009
Develop base information	May – December 2009
GIS overlays (percentages of present forest types)	
MIG 1 Consultation	May 2009 – December 2010
Draft WMP.....	June 2010
Final WMP.....	November 2010

10.0 LEVEL OF EFFORT AND COST

APC 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.