

## Issue Action Group: E8 Lake Level Fluctuations

### Meeting Notes & Summary: APC Corporate Headquarters January 29, 2002

Finalized 03-12-02

Warrior and Coosa Relicensing Projects Combined

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#### Meeting Attendees:

##### **IAG Members:**

Dan Catchings	ADCNR
Stan Cook	ADCNR
Tom Counts	USFS
Carl Couret	USFWS
Jim Crew	APC
Henry Mealing	Kleinschmidt
Jerry Moss	ADCNR
Malcom Pierson	APC
Kelly Schaeffer	Kleinschmidt
Andy Sheppard	APC
Isabella Trussell	Logan Martin Lake Protection Association

##### **Other Attendees:**

James Austin	John Ammons
Harold Clark	Elrand Denson
John Eisenbarth	Keith Floyd
Glenn Gaines	Don Haney
Darryl Harley	Ron McKittrick
Jim Moore	Dan Murchison
Jason Moak	Nick Nichols
Christy Nix	John Peconom
Alan Peeples	

#### Action Items

- Prepare and distribute meeting notes and summary to team members.  
Jim Crew Due - February 20, 2002
- Review and comment on meeting notes and summary.  
IAG Team Members Due - February 22, 2002
- Coordinate with APC Environmental Affairs regarding Weiss Lake and Logan-Martin Lake proposals.  
Jim Crew Due - February 26, 2002
- APC and USFS meeting to discuss Smith Lake issues.  
Jim Crew Due - March 4, 2002

#### Meeting Notes

*These notes summarize the major items discussed during the meeting and are not intended to serve as a transcript or analysis of the meeting.*

**Welcome and Review of Last IAG Meeting** - Jim Crew thanked team members for their continued participation in this IAG's efforts. Before moving on with the agenda, the IAG approved the meeting notes and summary from its last meeting held in December 2001.

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**Status of Stakeholder Discussions** - Several stakeholders have been involved in discussions pertaining to E8 Lake Level Fluctuations issues. Henry Mealing asked these team members to share with the group a summary of their discussions occurring outside of these IAG meetings.

Stan Cook (ADCNR) reiterated ADCNR's cooperative efforts with the Auburn University in assessing crappie populations and storage lake levels. In accordance with ADCNR's crappie management concerns, storage lakes represent the best opportunity for management modifications. Together, ADCNR and Auburn have prepared detailed management recommendations for Weiss Lake, which they have submitted, to APC's Environmental Affairs Division for consideration. Currently, ADCNR, APC and the USACOE are working together to evaluate ADCNR's recommendations.

Similar to the Weiss Lake management recommendations, ADCNR has also prepared lake level fluctuation recommendations for Logan-Martin Lake.

The IAG posed several questions to ADCNR that, provided the following answers:

- ADCNR views their recommended operating regime as an opportunity for adaptive management.
- ADCNR can sample in the fall to determine whether a strong crappie class has been established and if its efforts were successful.
- ADCNR is working with APC's Environmental Affairs but would also like to work within the relicensing process.
- ADCNR's priority is Weiss Lake.
- There may still be time to implement changes this year.
- Preliminary analysis suggests that there will not be any negative impacts to Logan-Martin Lake.

To obtain copies of ADCNR's recommendations please contact either Jim Crew or an ADCNR representative.

On January 16, 2002 representatives from the US Forest Service, ADCNR and the US Fish and Wildlife Service met to discuss issues, concerns, and positions. Team members from each agency reported to the IAG that this information exchange was an informal opportunity for these agencies to discuss several issues including:

- Ecological issues
- Habitat enhancement projects
- The effects of lake level fluctuations
- Recreation concerns, beach maintenance and drift wood removal
- Water quality issues
- Fisheries and aquatic resources
- Wetlands
- Erosion, rip rap placements
- Planting/Seeding Program

APC and all the agencies agreed to continue to communicate on these and other issues.

### **Conclusion and Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the E8 IAG will be held on either March 12th or 13th, 2002. APC will send meeting materials (an agenda and work products as well as meeting logistics) to IAG members in advance of the next meeting.

IAG documents and materials are posted on the Internet at [www.southerncompany.com/alpower/hydro](http://www.southerncompany.com/alpower/hydro).

**Issue Action Group: E8 Lake Level Fluctuations**

**Meeting Summary: Sheraton Perimeter Park South Hotel March 12, 2002**

Final 05-01-02

**Warrior and Coosa Relicensing Projects Combined**

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**Meeting Attendees**

**IAG Members:**

Dan Catchings	ADCNR
Sara Chubb	USFS
Stan Cook	ADCNR
Carl Couret	USFWS
Jim Crew	APC
Henry Mealing	Kleinschmidt
Jerry Moss	ADCNR
Malcom Pierson	APC
Andy Sheppard	APC
Isabella Trussell	Logan Martin Lake Protection Association

**Other Attendees:**

Mike Akridge	John Ammons
Mike Eubanks	Keith Floyd
Tom Groce	Don Haney
Jason Moak	David Moore
Dan Murchison	John Peconom
Alan Peeples	Bert Thaxton
Danny Tignor	

**Action Items**

- Post finalized work plan and January meeting notes on APC's hydro relicensing web page.  
Jason Moak Due - March 29, 2002
- Prepare and distribute meeting notes and summary to IAG members.  
John Peconom & Jim Crew Due - March 29, 2002
- Contact Sara Chubb (USFS) about the Clear Creek "Pilot Study".  
Henry Mealing Due - March 29, 2002
- Add lake elevation contour lines to GIS overlays of project storage reservoirs  
Bill Sim Due - May 1, 2002
- Review lake fluctuation information for identified FERC projects.  
John Peconom Due May 21, 2002

## Issue Action Group: E8 Lake Level Fluctuations

### Meeting Summary: Sheraton Perimeter Park South Hotel March 12, 2002

#### Meeting Notes

*These notes summarize the major items discussed during the meeting and are not intended to be a transcript or analysis of the meeting.*

**Introductions** – Jim Crew and Henry Mealing welcomed the group and thanked them for their ongoing participation in the process. After distributing the agenda, Henry informed the group that a computer with internet access was available for anyone needing a short tutorial on the APC relicensing web site.

**Review Meeting Minutes** – The January meeting minutes were approved with two corrections concerning the proper identification of Auburn University.

**Status of ADCNR's Crappie Spawning Proposals** – Andy Shepherd updated the IAG on the status of ADCNR's crappie spawning proposals. Discussions between APC, ADCNR and the USACOE are ongoing and will now also include the ADCNR's Logan Martin proposal. For the purposes of this IAG, these lake level investigations proposals will be tabled while APC, ADCNR and the USACOE investigate their feasibility. The results of these crappie-spawning proposals will be shared with this IAG once APC, ADCNR and the USACOE have finished their final analyses and negotiations.

**USFS Smith Field Observations** – Sara Chubb gave the IAG a quick update on the Forest Service's efforts to formulate their issues and interests. The USFS is continuing to observe conditions near their forest boundaries and is in the process of developing positions and topics for consideration. USFS personnel will also be going into the field this spring to assess lake level effects on tributaries leading into the systems.

**Other Lake Level Fluctuations Issues** – The IAG discussed several other issues pertaining to lake level fluctuations.

#### *Draw Down of Lay Lake*

FERC has required APC to lower Lay Lake during the spring and fall to measure the leakage flow from under Logan Martin Dam. Since the spring draw down can potentially impact fish spawning, the IAG asked if this draw down could be shifted to later in the year. Andy Sheppard informed the group that the FERC has revised its drawn down requirement. APC is only required to lower lake levels in Lay once a year for the dam inspection and usually limits this draw down to the fall period. The IAG agreed that shifting the draw down to the fall was a good solution.

#### *Clear Creek*

The FS expressed some concern about the effects of lake level fluctuations on tributaries within Forest Service lands specifically, the Clear Creek recreation area. Increased water levels in some of the tributaries may influence TE&S species and wetlands. There was no consensus within the IAG on whether a problem existed or not, only that this issue merits further

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**Meeting Summary: Sheraton Perimeter Park South Hotel March 12, 2002**

investigation. Henry will share erosion survey information from the Clear Creek area with the IAG during future meetings.

*Rule Curve Changes*

Stakeholders representing Weiss, Lay and Logan Martin Lakes have requested rule curve changes which, are currently under consideration within this relicensing process.

*Bass Spawning Agreement*

APC and ADCNR have an existing agreement whereby lake levels are held constant for a 14-day period during the spring to enhance bass spawning. Both parties are very happy with the agreement and will maintain the arrangement in the years to come. ADCNR would like to tie this agreement to the preferred alternative and license articles.

**Conclusion**

The next meeting of the E8 IAG will be held on either May 20th or 21st, 2002. APC will send meeting materials (agenda, work products, and meeting logistics) to IAG members in advance of the next meeting.

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## Issue Action Group: E8 Lake Level Fluctuations

### Meeting Summary: APC Headquarters – Birmingham, AL – November 14, 2002

Draft 11-25-02

#### Warrior and Coosa Relicensing Projects Combined

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#### IAG Members

Jim Crew	APC	Dan Catchings	ADCNR
Stan Cook	ADCNR	Carl Couret	USFWS
Tom Counts	USFS	Sara Chubb	USFS
Jerry Moss	ADCNR	Henry Mealing	Kleinschmidt
Andy Sheppard	APC	Isabella Trussell	LMLPA
Kelly Schaeffer	Kleinschmidt		

#### Other Attendees

Mike Akridge	APC	Rick Allums	APC
Hap Bryant	NHLA	Dave Cunningham	Lay Lake HOBO
Lynn Cunningham	Lay Lake HOBO	Elrand Denson	USFS
John Eisenbarth	TU	John Eisenbarth II	
Keith Floyd	ADCNR	Joel Gardner	USFS
Daryl Harley	USFS	Patric Harper	USFWS
Jon Hornsby	ADCNR	Janet Hutzell	FERC
Chuck Jensen	Lay Lake HOBO	Patti Lepert	FERC
Pam McDaniel	APC	Jim McHugh	ADCNR
Diana McLemore	ADECA OWR	Dan Murchison	Lake Mitchell HOBO
Bill O'Brien	WLIA	Abner Patton	Malcolm Pirnie
John Peconom	Kleinschmidt	Alan Peeples	APC
Bill Sim	APC	Bert Thaxton	Lay Lake HOBO
Ralph Thompson	USFWS	Danny Tignor	APC

#### Action Items

- Finalize and post March 12, 2002 IAG meeting notes summary to APC's hydro relicensing website.  
Jim Crew Due – November 29, 2002
- Draft and distribute November 14, 2002 IAG meeting notes summary.  
Jim Crew Due – November 25, 2002
- Review and consolidate previous ecological lake level fluctuation requests and comments (Weiss, Neely Henry and Logan Martin).  
Jim Crew Due – December 09, 2002
- Follow up with USFS regarding lake level fluctuations on Smith.  
Jim Crew & Henry Mealing Due – December 09, 2002

#### Agreements & Resolutions

## **Issue Action Group: E8 Lake Level Fluctuations**

### **Meeting Summary: APC Headquarters – Birmingham, AL – November 14, 2002**

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- 1) APC and the ADCNR have agreed in principal to a strategy that manipulates lake levels at Weiss and Logan Martin Reservoirs in the winter to benefit crappie spawning during the spring. It was also noted that the appropriate consultation will take place with the USACOE.

### **Meeting Notes**

*These notes summarize the major items discussed during the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcript or analysis of the meeting.*

### **IAG Review**

The IAG approved the March 12, 2002 meeting summary from the last meeting with no additional comments. Since the March meeting, APC staff has been focused on analyzing the ADCNR's request to manipulate lake levels on Weiss and Logan Martin Lakes to benefit crappie spawning.

Stan Cook provided the IAG with a brief presentation of the crappie spawning strategy pointing out that these adaptive management efforts are based on the work of Dr. Maceina of Auburn University. Dr. Maceina has identified water level manipulations that seem to correlate with increased crappie spawning and recruitment (see meeting notes of March 12, 2002).

### **Lake Level Fluctuations Request at Lay Lake**

Lay Lake is a run-of-river project with a 1-ft. daily fluctuation. At the March 12, 2002 IAG meeting, Don Haney (Lay Lake homeowner) requested that the IAG consider a four-inch lake level fluctuation restriction on Lay Lake. He submitted a list of projects where the FERC has required similar lake level restrictions.

Subsequently, Kleinschmidt was asked to research this request and present a memorandum to the IAG on their findings. This memo was sent to IAG members prior to the meeting and will be posted on the APC Website. Kleinschmidt researched the information and found that there are a handful of hydro projects where FERC has required a four-inch lake level fluctuation restriction. However, all of the FERC projects having the aforementioned lake level restrictions were very small and none were even close in reservoir size or hydraulic capacity as Lay Lake.

Andy Sheppard responded to discussion of the memo and added that it would be practically impossible to restrict lake level fluctuations on Lay Lake to four-inches.

### **Ecological Lake Level Fluctuation Issues & Processes**

Throughout the meeting, several attendees expressed a concern that their lake level fluctuation issues were not being adequately addressed. Specifically, representatives from Weiss, Neely Henry and Logan Martin reservoirs reviewed their lake level fluctuation issues and requested that they be addressed in the relicensing process. Many of their requests were submitted to the

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Recreation IAGs, but there was confusion why their requests weren't being addressed by the Ecological IAG.

Since there seemed to be some miscommunication and misunderstanding amongst meeting attendees, Kelly Schaeffer reviewed the process for how issues are addressed. Kelly noted that stakeholders concerns may be unfounded since their issue(s) are potentially being addressed through recreation IAGs and not in the E8 Ecological IAG. Jim Crew agreed to review the requests/recommendations (Weiss, Neely Henry and Logan Martin) to determine how and where they were being addressed in this relicensing process.

Jim Crew thanked all the meeting attendees for expressing their concerns and pointed out that this process works best when people attend regularly and participate actively in meeting discussions. Jim also mentioned that APC understands that even though they worked very hard to identify and elicit stakeholder issues and concerns at the beginning of this relicensing process, new requests, issues and concerns will undoubtedly come up and that they (APC and the IAGs) will do their best to address them.

### **Conclusion**

The next meeting of the E8 IAG will be scheduled by the Jim Crew after consulting with IAG members. APC will distribute all meeting materials via email in advance of the next meeting.

IAG documents and materials are posted on the Internet at [www.southerncompany.com/alpower/hydro](http://www.southerncompany.com/alpower/hydro).