

Meeting Notes & Summary: Meeting – October 25, 2001

Warrior River Project

www.southerncompany.com/alpower/hydro

Meeting Attendees:

Bill Campbell	EPRO	wcampbell@eproconsulting.com
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Darryl Harley	USFS	dmharley@fs.fed.us
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Jay Malone	USFS	jmalone@fs.fed.us
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Bob Pasquill	USFS	bpasquill@fs.fed.us
Doug Powell	APC	DHPOWELL@southernco.com
Andy Sheppard	APC	ARSHEPPA@southernco.com
Bill Sim	APC	WASIM@southernco.com
Sheila Smith	APC	SCSMITH@southernco.com
Stephanie White	APC	SKWHITE@southernco.com
Bill Young	USFWS	bill_young@fws.gov

Action Items

The following action item was agreed upon by the meeting attendees:

- All Meeting Attendees: Tentatively plan to meet during the next relicensing meeting on January 29th or 30th to further discuss the items below.

Meeting Notes

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

1. USFS is having difficulty keeping up with maintenance at existing recreational facilities.
2. At the Clear Creek and Houston Facilities, high lake levels in the spring flood beaches, impacting use. Beaches were designed for water levels less than 510'. Situation may be corrected by design modifications.
3. Maintenance costs are increased due to debris settling on beach areas at Clear Creek and Houston.

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4. Clear Creek boat ramps (2) - at winter pool launching can become difficult as gravel at the end of the ramps develops holes.
5. PWCs are traveling up the Sipsey Fork from the Smith reservoir into the Wild and Scenic River north of the Highway 33 bridge. USFS would prefer to promote non-motorized use.
6. There are shoreline erosion issues at Clear Creek near day use ramp and near playground.

The USFS also provided a meeting summary for the October 25th meeting, which is attached to this document.

Next Steps

This meeting summary will be distributed to meeting attendees and the WCRT prior the January meetings and posted on the Internet at www.southerncompany.com/alpower/hydro.

The next meeting will be held on January 29th or 30th. An agenda for these meetings are to be distributed.

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**USFS
Bankhead Field Trip Notes**

Agenda
Bankhead Field trip
10/25/01

0900 - 0945

- All parties meet at Oak Leaf Shelter at Clear Creek
- Forest Service presents overview of FS recreation on Smith Lake
- Overview of Meaningful Measures process.

0945 – 1100

- Group tours Clear Creek swimming beach, boat ramp, shoreline at playground, and bank-fishing opportunities.

1100 – 1200

- Group visits areas of recreation user conflicts and resource damage (illegal OHV use, dispersed camping, etc) in the general forest area around Clear Creek.
- Discuss law enforcement, erosion, water quality and etc.

1200 - 1300

- Lunch (Paw Paws Restaurant)

1300 – 1430

- Group travels to Houston Rec. Area
- Tour site and discuss deferred maintenance needs.
- Effects of lake levels on flood debris cleanup, vegetation, archeology and etc.

1430 – 1600

- Group travels to Corinth
- Meet with concessionaire and discuss operations, needed improvements at Corinth, bank-fishing opportunities, etc.

1600

- End of the Field Trip

The discussion topics and site visits where as follows:

WR9 Federal Lands & Waters – Potential impact of the project on federal lands including, but not limited to designations, such as Wilderness area and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

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Description of Issue:

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) operates several facilities within or adjacent to the project that may be supporting project recreation and/or impacted by project operations. In addition, adjacent federal lands may be potentially impacted by recreational activities associated with the project. USFS is concerned about the need to repair and/or upgrade several facilities to accommodate current use (also see WR1). The USFS has also expressed concern regarding increased demands for shoreline development and requests for additional private access across public land to access the shoreline (see WR6).

Specific issues or requests identified that were discussed include:

- Increased demand on USFS land and facilities as a result of lake cumulative impact.
- Recreational conflicts occurring on USFS lands.
- Concern about more access and more use leading to the potential for impacts.
** Discussed the large number of encroachments and trespass cases that have occurred from landowners around the Lake.*
- Continued operation of USFS facilities require that they remain economically viable for operating concessionaires.
** It was noted that we have lost one concessionaire and the new concessionaire is a non-profit and has a few more benefits with the new change in the Forest Service policy to maintain and repair large infrastructure components with the 6.5 percent that the FS receives back from the operator.*
- USFS facilities are behind on O&M. Consequently, there has been a steady decline in the quality of services/facilities, including increased closures, which result in less use and less revenue for upkeep.
** Talked about meaningful Measures process.*
- Residential development and request for access and infrastructure across federal lands is impacting USFS staffing.
** It was brought up that the Forest Service has a huge burden to provide access across NF's lands for developments around the lake. Also, it was made known that our road systems were not designed to handle the level of traffic that are being placed on them!*
- Potential impact to the West Fork and the Sipsey Fork Wild and Scenic River.
** It was noted that there are affects on the Wild & Scenic River from the varying fluctuations in the lake*
- Potential impacts to water resources and aquatic habitat, due to increased levels of recreation use due to the presence of Smith Lake.
** This topic was tabled for later discussion in one or all of the ecological Issue Action Groups (IAG's).*
- Potential impact to the scenery resource on federal lands due to transmission lines.
 - *This was discussed and could be dropped because of no project transmission lines across NF's lands.*
- **Potential impacts of project operations on lake and tributary fisheries and associated fishing activity.**

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- *This was a new concern that was discussed and later voiced that it would need to be addressed as one of the issues. This was not on the original WR-9 Issue Sheet.*

Also, the Forest Service beaches were discussed and it was noted that some of the spring high water time was our most productive swimming days. APC noted that they could help with the redesign of the swimming beaches.

The debris clean up would start back and the Forest Service would only have to identify the areas and APC would have them cleaned before the swimming season.

Boat launching areas could be improved using one of the methods discussed by Bill Campbell.

THE MEANINGFUL MEASURES PROCESS

The objective of the Recreation Meaningful Measures process is to:

- Define the recreation program of work in terms that are measurable, attainable, realistic, and concrete, while clearly showing tradeoffs, accomplishments, and shortfalls.
- Make customer preference and quality service an integral part management.
- Provide consistency among Forests in measuring and defining recreation services.
- Provide a rational, consistent basis for distribution of limited operating funds.
- Provide a concrete basis for evaluating and rewarding achievement in day-to-day management.
- Provide a communication tool within the agency, to Congress, publics, partners, and other agencies.

The six steps to the process are:

- Identify measurable components (recreation inventory).
- Establish measurable standards of quality (see below).
- Determine and “level” realistic costs.
- Prioritize work to be accomplished.
- Allocate the program of work and agree to management attainment targets.
- Monitor, measure, and report actual management attainment.

The Forest Service nationally is in step 3 of the process – leveling costs for similar tasks to accomplish the standards described below.

DEVELOPED RECREATION – National Quality Standards

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Developed recreation sites: Managed to enhance opportunities for recreation, at sites with relatively high visitor use, that serve as portals into a range of experiences with the natural environment. Delivery of appropriate recreational experiences, visitor safety and comfort, and resource protection are factors in site design and management.

Elements of the Developed Recreation component include facilities such as campgrounds, day use areas, trailheads, improved boat ramps, sewage or solid waste disposal facilities and visitor centers (physical or facility operation only).

Critical national standards are identified with an asterisk (*). If these standards are not met, the resulting conditions pose a high probability of immediate or permanent loss to people or property. If they cannot be met, due to budget or other constraints, immediate action must be taken to correct or mitigate the problem. Immediate action may include closing to public use the site or affected portions of the site.

HEALTH AND CLEANLINESS

1. ***Visitors and workers are not exposed to human waste**
2. ***Water, wastewater, and sewage treatment systems meet local, state and federal water quality regulations.**
3. Garbage does not exceed the capacity of the garbage containers.
4. Individual units and common areas are free of litter including domestic animal waste.
5. Facilities are free of graffiti.
6. Restrooms and garbage locations are free of objectionable odor.
7. Constructed features are clean.

RESOURCE SETTING

1. ***Effects from recreation use do not conflict with environmental laws (ESA, NHPA, Clean Water, TES, etc.).**
2. Recreation opportunities, site development, and site management are consistent with Recreation management system (ROS, SMS, BBM) objectives, development scale, and the Forest land management plan.
3. Landscape character at the developed recreation site is consistent with the Forest scenic integrity objectives.
4. Numbers of visitors and vehicles do not exceed site capacity.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

1. ***High-risk conditions do not exist in developed recreation sites.**
2. ***Forest Service personnel and their representatives have dependable communications.**
3. Activities prohibited under the 36 CFR261 sections pertinent to recreation use of developed sites are dealt with appropriately.
4. Forest Service presence is sufficient to provide visitors a sense of security.

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RESPONSIVENESS

1. * **When signed as accessible, constructed features meet accessibility requirements as stipulated in the Access Board’s proposed interim Accessibility Guidelines for developed sites.**
2. The developed recreation site entrance is well marked, easily found, and the visitor feels welcome.
3. Information boards are posted in a user-friendly and professional manner.
4. Forest Service personnel and their representatives demonstrate good customer service practices.
5. Site manage is responsive to visitor input, needs, and satisfactions; identified needs are based on measurement of trends and user satisfaction.
6. Visitor center are staffed appropriately during seasons of use and current information is available.
7. Recreation site information is accurate and available from a variety of sources and outlets.

CONDITION OF FACILITIES

1. * Inspections meet federal, state, and local requirements
2. Constructed features are in good condition throughout their service life.
3. Constructed features not in good condition, or beyond their life, are replaced or decommissioned.
4. Constructed features meet current Forest Service design standards and are placed in accordance with FSM and FSH guidelines and consistent with current Site Plans.
5. Constructed features are free of vandalism.