

MEETING NOTES

**ALABAMA POWER COMPANY
MARTIN RELICENSING
Agency Meeting**

**APC Southern Division Office Library
Calera, AL
August 6, 2008**

ATTENDEES:

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Jim Crew	APC	Fred Leslie	ADEM
John Grogan	APC	Jeff Powell	U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ashley McVicar	APC	Nick Nichols	ADCNR
Charles Stover	APC	Rick Claybrook	ADCNR
Angie Segars	APC	Ericha Nix	ADCNR
Alan Peeples	APC	Gary Moody	ADCNR
Andy Sheppard	APC	Chris Greene	ADCNR
Jim Lochamy	APC	J. Brian Atkins	OWR
Steve Krotzer	APC	Dow Johnston	OWR
Henry Mealing	Kleinschmidt	Lee Emery	FERC
Dave Anderson	Kleinschmidt	Alyson Connor	FERC
Amanda Fleming	Kleinschmidt	Jennifer Adams	FERC
Kelly Schaeffer	Kleinschmidt	Bob Allen	USACE
Lynn Sisk	ADEM		

GENERAL ACTION ITEMS:

- Review and continue to revise study plan/programs including changing the wording of study plans (plan to program, remove Coosa/Warrior wording and provide a detailed description of methodology) - APC
- Review Yadkin Project for ideas about drought management - APC
- Prepare for September Scoping Meeting, include an emphasis on the importance of reviewing the PAD to those attending the meeting - All

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

Jim Crew opened the meeting and gave everyone the opportunity to introduce themselves to the group. The goal of the meeting was to work toward a final version of the Lake Martin study plans. Beginning with the handout, "Current Status of Study Plans" which was derived from the study

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plans presented in the June 2008 Martin PAD, the attendees were encouraged to engage in a candid discussion and clarify some details of the study plans.

The discussions on individual study plan/programs are summarized below.

MIG 1 Study Plans

Migratory Fish- Tallapoosa Basin Literature Review

- Jeff Powell requested that the proposed methodology include investigating how Martin Dam releases affect fish passage below Thurlow Dam.
- Jeff Powell also requested enhancing the species list in the study plan (Table 2.1 Anadromous, Catadromous, and Diadromous fish species collected in the Alabama River).
- **Action Item:** APC will make changes and send to Jeff Powell for review.

Lake Martin Assessment of Fish Density and Species Composition Associated with Various Shoreline Types

- Changes have been made to this plan since the PAD. The wording of the proposal from Dr. Dennis R. DeVries (Professor) was added to the plan.
- Nick Nichols requested that ADCNR help pick the sample site locations and that the study be conducted when the lakes were full.
- **Action Item:** APC will send revised study plan to agencies for review.

Evaluation of Minimum Flows Downstream of Martin Dam

- Nick Nichols requested that APC examine the potential for aquatic habitat enhancement with a minimum continuous flow downstream of Martin (especially for invertebrates such as unioids and snails).
- There was some discussion on the extent of the riverine habitat available downstream of Martin Dam (less than one mile, to the “islands”). Study should include field methods for gathering information (habitat survey/morphometry, onsite survey, LIDAR data review) and should examine the available biological information for the Martin Dam tailrace.
- Jim Lochamy reminded the group that APC has been studying the area below Thurlow Dam since 1992 and habitat and biological data below Thurlow are available.
- Lee Emery reminded the group that FERC is looking especially for quantitative data and not qualitative data and also that all studies needed to have a direct nexus to the project.
- **Action Items:** APC will distribute Thurlow studies to the group (on CD) for review and further discussion. Lee suggested that the group review the procedure and documents regarding FERC Project No. 2197 Yadkin for drought management ideas. APC will review

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LIDAR data below Martin and Thurlow and will investigate how ADROP drought planning may affect this study.

Fish Entrainment and Turbine Mortality

- All present agreed that Part 1 of the study plan/program is complete.
- There was some discussion on the potential methods to use for field verification of the desktop study results: hydroacoustic sampling, oxytetracycline (OTC), striped bass marking.
- There was a discussion of whether hydroacoustic sampling was a reliable method for verifying the entrainment estimate. Lee Emery indicated that he is not advocating hydroacoustic sampling. Henry Mealing pointed out the DIDSON acoustic system has the potential to distinguish between some species of fish
- Nick Nichols requested hydroacoustic sampling with the DIDSON system or design of a striped bass mark recapture study using oxytetracycline in order to gather information on the loss of fish (either from entrainment or impingement) that the ADCNR stock into Lake Martin (i.e., striped bass) in order to adjust (i.e., better manage) stocking rates.
- Lee reminded the group that all studies should utilize a one year time frame and that any second season of studies would undergo a higher degree of scrutiny from FERC.
- **Action Items:** Add details to study to replace, “as on the Coosa Project” with specific study details. The field methods will include a mark recapture study and an acoustic study using the DIDSON system, with the option to drop the DIDSON portion if the results are not reliable.

Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species

- Jeff Powell requested a few more study areas and collection of fish from those areas.
- Jennifer Adams asked Jeff Powell if he had a more up to date species list than the list presented in the Martin PAD, especially plants (Table 5.6-1: Federally Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species in Alabama Counties Occupied by the Martin Project (Source: United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 2006a)). Jeff Powell did not but offered to compile more data from Auburn University.
- Jennifer Adams reminded the group that FERC needed quantitative data and a literature search would not provide sufficient information.
- Lee Emery wanted to know how many sites Jeff Powell wanted to consider in the study. Jeff confirmed one site for each of the 12 to 15 major tributaries of Lake Martin.
- Henry Mealing reminded the group that Dr. David Whetstone, Jacksonville State University Botanist, surveyed Lake Martin for potential habitat types for RTE plants. Other APC contractors have been surveying specific areas for unionids present.
- **Action Items:** APC will add more specific details to the study plan and delete “as on the Coosa Project”. APC will coordinate with Jeff Powell to identify additional areas and types

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of collections needed. APC will present the study results as a Biological Assessment (BA) and Biological Opinion (BO).

FERC Review of Scoping Meeting

- Lee Emery informed the group that the Scoping Document was issued on August 5, 2008 and could be found on the FERC eLibrary under “Letter discussing the Pre-Application Document” (August 5, 2008), although he was going to change the title to Martin Scoping Document.
- Lee Emery reminded the group the importance of timelines in the ILP process, the dates of the Scoping Meeting (September 10 and 11), and the purpose of the Scoping Meeting (gather comments and feedback from the agencies and the public).

Striped Bass Tagging- Hydroacoustic Collections

- The group discussed the need for the Expert Panel as part of the study plan. Several names were offered for members of the Expert Panel - Wes Wood (Professor of Environmental Soil Science), Ben Walker (striped bass fisherman),). Jim Paramore, Professional Fishing Guide, is also to be considered for the panel. Nick Nichols stated that he wants the panel to discuss trends in the Lake over time, frequency of die offs, and that the panel include average fisherman.
- Lee Emery asked how this study related to the nexus of the project and if this same information could be gathered from local fishing clubs. Nick Nichols suggested that the study was relevant to the rule curve change, management of stocking in Lake Martin, and modifying operations.
- Kelly Schaeffer asked if the two step process- using the Expert Panel to determine the telemetry study parameters would work given the one year timeline FERC requires. There was some discussion on starting the panel early (before FERC approval) and Nick Nichols mentioned that he did not want the expert panel to control the telemetry study, he wanted the two parts of the study to be separate.
- Kelly suggested that the Expert Panel be conducted “off site” (separate from relicensing) and use the FERC ILP study plan to focus on telemetry.
- Dave Anderson asked if the same goals of the expert panel could be accomplished by adding a questionnaire to the Creel survey.
- Discussion moved to the telemetry study. Henry suggested using an Auburn University student to conduct the study. Jim Lochamy suggested asking Dr. DeVries or Steve Sammon to help put a study plan together.
- **Action Items:** APC will conduct the Striped Bass Expert Panel meeting separate from the ILP study plan process to gather anecdotal information on the striped bass fishery in Lake Martin. APC will revise the study plan to reflect a telemetry study. APC will begin discussions with Auburn Univ. for developing a study plan and develop a proposal for

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Auburn graduate student to conduct the field work. APC will get a copy of the striped bass study that Phil Betolli (Tennessee Tech) did on Lake Normandy.

Lake Martin- Wildlife Management Plan/Program

- Rick Claybrook requested more information on individual timber tracts/stands within Project lands in order to help recommend management strategies and timelines for the plan implementation. Jim Lochamy informed the group that selected tract information (cuttings and management) is available as well as real estate overlays. Ericha Nix requested information delineating longleaf pine areas (vs. loblolly pine).
- Jeff Powell informed the group that Eric Spadgenske (USFWS) was working to develop a protection plan for the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW). Jim Lochamy mentioned that APC foresters have not seen any active RCW colonies around Lake Martin in about two years.
- Gary Moody discussed using fire or herbicides for maintaining the understory needed for RCW habitat. Jim Lochamy agreed that warm season burns would likely be a problem for homeowners on the Lake.
- **Action Items:** APC will provide Ericha with forestry data on GIS maps for the timber management recommendations. APC will include an educational component on fire use as part of the study. APC will also add specific edits from Rick Claybrook to the Wildlife Management Program Study Plan.

MIG 2 Study Plans

Location of NPDES Permits on Lake Martin

- NPDES permit information has already been compiled by APC and will be updated in 2009 prior to distribution to the MIGs.
- Lynn Sisk offered to give Angie Segars information on 319 Nonpoint source pollutants. Lynn confirmed to Lee Emery that there were no 303 D listed impaired waterbodies on Lake Martin.

Erosion and Sedimentation

- Jim Crew explained that stakeholders have offered several sites for erosion “hotspot” investigation.
- Jim Lochamy noted that aquatic vegetation has become a problem with the drought conditions.
- Lee Emery asked about all the islands in Lake Martin and Jim Crew explained that not all of the islands are owned by APC.

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- Jennifer Adams asked about the 1.36 acres of unconsolidated Federal lands within the project boundary. Jim Crew said he thought those lands had been removed during the existing license term.
- **Action Items:** Jim Crew will confirm the status of Federal lands within the project boundary. APC will provide a detailed methodology for the plan/program and include past aquatic management actions into the plan/program.

Water Quantity, Water Use, and Water Withdrawals

- Henry Mealing explained to the group that APC has developed a “white paper” that details how water withdrawals from Lake Martin are permitted.
- Lee Emery asked how water use at Lake Martin effects navigation downstream. Charles Stover explained that APC normally maintains a minimum water flow of 4,640 cubic feet per second from its dams on the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers, which merge near Wetumpka to form the Alabama River (and this affects four individual dam licenses). Currently this number is reduced by 10% because of drought conditions. Andy Sheppard pointed out that this is part of the rule curve operation issue.
- **Action Item:** APC will incorporate Tom Littlepage’s (Office of Water Resources) comments into the plan/program if this has not been done previously.

Lake Martin- Water Quality

- Henry Mealing explained that APC envisioned two parts to this study: provide adequate information to address the requirements of the 401 permit and perform a nutrient analysis requested by LMHOBO (Lake Martin Home Owners and Boat Owners).
- Lynn Sisk expressed concern over the effects of the rule curve change and the strict timeline of the ILP. He suggested filing the 401 six months ahead of the license filing. Jim Crew confirmed that APC could file the 401 with ADEM in mid to late 2009.
- Angie Segars asked if there were any nutrient issues under current operating conditions and Jim Lochamy confirmed there may be nutrient issues in certain embayments.
- **Action Items:** John Grogan and Angie Segars will send ADEM a list of the information APC currently has in order for ADEM to confirm that this list incorporates the information they need to complete 401 certification. APC will meet with John Glasier and LMHOBO as soon as possible to discuss the nutrient issues and how that will be incorporated into the Study Plan analysis.

MIG 3 Study Plans

Lake Martin Rule Curve Change Analysis

- Jim Crew explained that this is the homeowners primary issue and as such APC has discussed several possibilities of examining this issue with FERC. APC meet with Mark

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Pawlowski (FERC) to discuss using Adaptive Management to study the effects of a rule curve change. Mark informed them that this was not possible and the only way to enact the rule curve change would be to model proposed rule curve changes and study the effects. This means conducting the studies in the Martin PAD that were previously dependent upon modeling the rule curve change. APC will incorporate all of these studies (expected to be 8-10 additional studies) under the Lake Martin Rule Curve Change Analysis.

- Jim Crew also explained that APC will incorporate current project operations at Harris Dam in the modeling for the Martin rule curve change analysis. This does not mean there will be a change in Harris operations and does not effect the current Harris license. John Grogan confirmed that the studies would be done regardless of the results of the modeling for the rule curve change. Jim Crew agreed and explained that should be helpful to explain to the homeowners if the rule curve does not change.
- The group expressed concerns on quantifying results of a proposed rule curve change prior to it actually occurring and then studying the effects. Jim Crew mentioned that the stakeholders may want another temporary variance in order to reach full pool, due to the drought conditions this year. He confirmed the proposed rule curve change would be to raise the winter pool one to three feet and begin raising the lake one month earlier than normal. Nick Nichols said the ADCNR's main concerns were sedimentation, proliferation of nuisance aquatic vegetation, submerged aquatic vegetation and the effect the reduction in winter pool may have on those issues. The effect would show up first in the tributaries of the Lake and may be very localized in scope. Lynn Sisk noted the change in residence time and change in productivity was a large concern for ADEM. Jeff Powell was also concerned about retention time and downstream flooding. Lee Emery was especially concerned about downstream flooding.
- Henry Mealing asked the agencies if they were concerned about how the rule curve change would change the delivery of downstream flows by Season. There was a general concern by the agencies on changes to downstream flows.
- The group attempted to present solutions for quantifying study results (LIDAR data, soil sampling) and again there was some concern over the amount of study time (one year) available in the ILP.
- **Action Items:** The studies will be developed and implemented according to FERC specifications (one year time frame) and results will be quantified to the greatest extent possible. Incremental evaluations of elevation changes will be important.

MIG 4 Study Plan

Shoreline Management Plan/Program

- Jim Crew explained that APC has no flood easements on public lands on Lake Martin; however, they do own almost 8,000 acres of project lands. Best Management Practices



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(BMPs) are used on all project lands. This plan/program will involve a reclassification of project lands but the net result will be more natural/undeveloped land. The APC proposed reclassification has already been presented to stakeholders.

- Lee Emery asked if APC was proposing any new recreation sites on the lake. Jim Crew acknowledged some groups were asking for more boating access near the Kowaliga area; however, there has been no demand for more public recreation sites and the stakeholders seem more interested in maintaining a large natural/undeveloped area.
- Alyson Connor asked APC what percent of the shoreline was developed. Jim Crew explained that APC and Russell Lands were the largest landowners on the Lake. Jim Crew also agreed to give copies of the proposed Shoreline Reclassification Map to FERC and reminded them that this was only the initial proposal by APC and they plan to negotiate further with stakeholders. For example, the Cherokee Ridge Alpine Trail Association is negotiating for additional lands to be included in the project boundary for hiking.
- Gary Moody asked about shoreline development around the Lake. He requested more of a buffer zone (from the lake to the owner's property and/or seawalls, etc.) for shorebirds, herps, and furbearing animals. Jim Crew explained that when APC lands were removed from the project a 30 ft. control strip is maintained; however, APC has no control over private land use. APC does encourage voluntary BMPs through education and that BMP education did seem to have an effect on the Coosa projects.
- **Action Items:** APC will analyze the prospect of having a more aggressive control strip policy on lands removed from the project boundary (more than 30 ft on all APC lands and those APC lands that are sold). APC will add details regarding the process into the Wildlife Management plan/program. Jim Crew will send copies of the Shoreline Reclassification Map to FERC.

MIG 5 Study Plan

Recreation Plan

- Dave Anderson explained that despite the drought, the recreation use numbers for 2007 were comparable to the most recent Form 80 (2.9 million recreation days; the actual data collected was extrapolated based on past use, business owners, and Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa and Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Comprehensive Study: Recreation Demand Element Draft Report) and that the homeowners had previously expressed an interest in gathering more data in a non-drought year. Dave explained to the group that he thought the number was valid and would be in everyone's best interest to use 2.9 million recreation days as the value for the socioeconomic study, but wanted to have agency input.

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- Nick Nichols lives on the Lake and said that in his opinion the recreation use is back to pre-drought use levels despite high gas prices. He acknowledged that the Lake has changed tremendously since 2003 (when the last Form 80 was conducted).
- As a separate recreation issue, Rick Claybrook requested a public access area designated for hunting on or near Lake Martin. Jim Crew affirmed that a bullet would be added to the Wildlife Management Plan/Program to look into this issue (possible site could be near Jaybird Landing); however, the natural undeveloped lands on Lake Martin would not be designated as public hunting lands as this could potentially create a conflict between the hunters and primitive campers and/or hikers that use those lands.
- **Action Item:** The group felt that 2.9 million recreation days was a valid use estimate for Lake Martin in 2007. APC will add the hunting issue to the wildlife management plan/program.

End of meeting notes.