

**MEETING NOTES**  
**Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2353)**

**SOUTH CAROLINA ELECTRIC & GAS COMPANY**  
**Agency and NGO Outreach Meeting**

**March 27, 2019**

Final KMK 4-29-19

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**ATTENDEES:**

Amy Bresnahan (SCE&G)	Melanie Olds (USFWS)
Bill Argentieri (SCE&G)	Derrick Miller (USFS)
Randy Mahan (SCANA)	Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt)
Pace Wilber (NOAA Fisheries)	Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt)
Twyla Cheatwood (NOAA Fisheries)	Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt)
Andy Herndon (NOAA Fisheries)	

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*These notes are a summary of the major points presented during the meeting and are not intended to be a transcript or analysis of the meeting.*

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project and its operations, the upcoming relicensing process and potential resource issues at the Project. SCE&G hosted an agency/NGO outreach meeting on January 10, 2019, however several federal agency representatives were not able to attend due to the government shutdown. SCE&G convened a conference call to accommodate those representatives not able to attend the January meeting. The PowerPoint presentation from the meeting is attached to the end of these notes and is available on the Project website at [www.stevenscreekrelicense.com](http://www.stevenscreekrelicense.com).

Alison opened the meeting with introductions and then gave a brief overview of the relicensing process, the public meetings held in November 2018, and the agency/NGO outreach meeting in January 2019. Amy provided a brief overview of Project operations and explained that the Stevens Creek Project re-regulates flows released from the upstream U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Thurmond Dam. Amy said that each day the USACE provides SCE&G with daily average flow targets and SCE&G then releases flows from Stevens Creek Dam continuously to meet that daily average.

Amy said that there is a large amount of existing water quality data for the Project, including forebay and tailrace data from the upstream Thurmond Project. SCE&G has to assemble and file with FERC an annual water quality report that primarily summarizes temperature and dissolved oxygen (DO) data. Dissolved oxygen enhancements installed at the Thurmond Project seem to have improved water quality in the area. Pace said that after review, it appears that the last 5-10 years of water quality reports didn't seem to show an instance of DO below 5 mg/L in the tailrace. He asked if SCE&G has ever considered installing a data sonde to collect continuous water quality data. Amy said that hadn't been considered at this time, but it can be considered during relicensing.

The group discussed land and shoreline management at the Project. Amy said that SCE&G doesn't own a significant amount of land around the river but have flowage easements instead. SCE&G may need to discuss dock and other permitting with the US Army Corps of Engineers. Derrick mentioned that the USFS doesn't allow the public to put docks on USFS land and they won't sell any land for private development.

Alison told the group that the Pre-Application Document (PAD) is due to be filed with FERC in 2020. She said that SCE&G will distribute a draft PAD to the agencies to review prior to filing with FERC. In the meantime, SCE&G is requesting that agencies provide them with any existing information they may have on the Project that can be incorporated into the PAD. Alison noted that Kleinschmidt received a great response to the PAD Questionnaires that were distributed to stakeholders in January. SCE&G also wants to scope out potential studies and submit study plans to FERC with the PAD. Meetings will be held throughout 2019 and early 2020 to develop these study plans.

The group discussed existing information on the various resource areas. The group discussed the potential for continuous data collection through a data sonde in more detail. Pace noted that visitors of the Stevens Creek and Thurmond Project areas have a perception of low DO in that stretch of river, however the data collected and presented in the annual reports doesn't support this. He said that the more data that exists, the easier SCE&G can combat this negative public perception. High amounts of siltation and run-off from farms located along Stevens Creek may be contributing to low DOs in the Project area. Henry said that data gaps will be identified in the PAD, and these data gaps will be used to determine what type of studies may need to be completed during relicensing. Bill A. also said that stakeholders can try to identify areas where they would like to see continuous data monitoring, through the installation of a data sonde, and SCE&G can consider contracting with USGS to get these monitors installed. This continuous data collection may also eliminate the need for an annual report with FERC.

Melanie mentioned the Lower Savannah River Watershed Initiative Longleaf Alliance and said the program overlaps with the Project boundary and USFS land. She said that the purpose of this alliance is to improve water quality within the watershed and they may be able to provide additional water quality information. Derrick said he would check within USFS to determine input on the water quality issue.

Henry mentioned that the Stevens Creek Project does a lot to soften the peak flow release from upstream at Thurmond. This is seen as a Project benefit by SCE&G and the USACE, however, some members of the public would rather see the Stevens Creek reservoir held stable and the Stevens Creek Project send the peak flow downstream. Pace said it might be good to show how unnatural Thurmond's peak flow would make the river downstream if the Stevens Creek Project didn't re-regulate. Pace asked that the PAD be very clear about the physical constraints regarding water manipulation at the Stevens Creek Project due to the Thurmond Project upstream. Alison said that USACE has developed a flow model for the Savannah River system and that SCE&G will hopefully utilize this model during relicensing.

The next meeting will likely occur in the spring of 2019. During this meeting, the group will develop Resource Conservation Groups and begin developing study plans. A site visit to the Stevens Creek Project is scheduled for May 15, 2019. Action items from this meeting are listed below.

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*ACTION ITEMS:*

- Kleinschmidt will schedule a meeting to develop Resource Conservation Groups and begin discussion of the PAD and study plans.