APPENDIX E-1-B

STAGE 1 CONSULTATION

Email and Written Correspondence May 2020 through December 2020

From:	Kelly Kirven
To:	Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov); jeddins@achp.gov; cheetahtrk@yahoo.com; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com;
	elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org; jrader@ducks.org; jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov; jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov;
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	Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov; steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov; thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov; rphillips@gwf.org;
	<u>chaswhis1988@aol.com; chris@linksolar.net; JCE1440@yahoo.com; gwsleister@att.net; Jkboland59@me.com;</u>
	<u>Joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com;</u> LynnArnett325@gmail.com; patsimon@wctel.net; barneybimmer@gmail.com;
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	<u>david.bernhart@noaa.gov;</u> Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov; Elena@savannahriverkeeper.org;
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	Anteree An. sc. gov; modavis629@gmail.com; pgaines@scpri.com; wenonann@ccppcrarts.com;
	James.A. Sykes@usace.army.mi; katnryn.A. reingolo@usace.army.mi; Stanley.L. Simpson@usace.army.mi;
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	Jannes. winaterie usua.gov, john.kirkaldie eusua.gov, mark_caldweire fws.gov, metanie_oldsertws.gov,
•	
CC:	Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (AMY Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); ARGENTIERI, WILLIAM R; Ashley
	Holmes; blir Malshall (malshallbednir.sc.gov); blet Holman; Caleb Gaston (Caleb.gastonescala.com); CHASTANI, WILLIAMK, D. Derdick Millor (dorrighter) and us); Den tem (doradal imme@fus gast); Elizabeth
	Chastrain, witchaw Jr, benck wine (denokimieres).edus; bon min (donaid mineres); bizabeni
	Johnson neinformsonalinistate.sc.uss, neinderson, canteron r., neinforwaning, Jason Noak,
	Jason Johnson, Kally Kinger Low, Amanda: Mike Maslay (Mealay@cana.com): Outhants@uin.com),
	Jordan Johnson, Keity Kilver, Ley, Antanda, Mine Mosay (Minuseye scaraconn), PAVMOND AMMAPELL: Pop Davis
	(higron davis00@gmail.com): Pooks Whiteev: Sica Collins (Sica@savannabriverkeeper ord): Wenonah Haire
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Subject	Dequest
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	Filday, May 15, 2020 2:04:41 PM
Attachments:	Stevens Creek PAD Cover Letter 5-15.pdf

Good afternoon,

Today Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC), in accordance with the requirements of 18 CFR Sections 5 and 16, filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) the Notice of Intent (NOI), Pre-Application Document (PAD), and Request to Use the Traditional Licensing Process (TLP) for the relicensing of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535). The current license, issued by FERC on November 22, 1995, is set to expire on October 31, 2025. As provided in 18 CFR §5.3(d)(1), comments on the request to use the TLP must be filed with FERC within 30 days from today.

The PAD is available on the project website at

http://stevenscreekrelicense.com/index.php/milestone-documents/ and a copy of the cover letter is attached to this email. This email constitutes service under the Commission's regulations at 18 CFR § 385.2010(f).

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com



August 17, 2020

VIA E-FILING

Kimberly Bose, Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 888 1st Street NE Washington, DC 20426

Notice of Joint Agency Meeting and Virtual Site Visit for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (P-2535)

Dear Secretary Bose:

On May 15, 2020, Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), its Notice of Intent (NOI) to relicense the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) (Project), a Pre-Application Document (PAD), and a request to use the Traditional Licensing Process (TLP). On July 16, 2020, FERC authorized DESC to use the TLP for the Project relicensing.

On behalf of DESC, Kleinschmidt is hereby providing FERC notice of the meeting required under the regulations at 18 C.F.R. §4.38. DESC will host a Joint Agency and Public Meeting (JAM) to review the Project, discuss the relicensing process and timeline, and take any comments and discuss issues regarding the relicensing of the Project (see Attachment A- Agenda). DESC is also publishing notice in Augusta Chronicle, Edgefield Advertiser, McCormick Messenger, and North Augusta Star at least once prior to the meeting (see Attachment B – Public Notice).

Due to the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the JAM and associated site visit will occur virtually. The meeting will be held at two separate times on September 3, 2020; once from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM and again from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM via the online platform Microsoft Teams. A virtual site visit of the Project facilities will be shown during each meeting, and will be available on the Project website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>. For the purposes of ensuring stakeholder needs regarding a site visit are addressed, DESC has consulted with relicensing stakeholders on the acceptability of holding the site visit virtually. To date, stakeholder responses to this inquiry have been supportive of a virtual site visit, as documented in Attachment C.

DESC welcomes FERC's attendance at the JAM. If FERC is able to attend via conference call, please contact Ms. Amy Bresnahan at the email address below to receive the call-in information.

Please direct any questions pertaining to the Project or process to Amy Bresnahan, Relicensing Project Manager, at Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com, 803.217.9965, or to Alison Jakupca at Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com, 803.462.5628.

Sincerely,

Alison Jakupca 1, hin

Attachments: A – Joint Agency and Public Meeting Agenda B – Public Notice C – Stakeholder Consultation cc: Amy Bresnahan, DESC Distribution List

ATTACHMENT A

JOINT AGENCY AND PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA

Agenda

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535) Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.

JOINT AGENCY MEETING

SEPTEMBER 3, 2020 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

<u>Meeting Purpose</u>: Provide an overview of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project, discuss/answer questions on the PAD and/or relicensing process, provide the opportunity for a virtual site visit, and discuss/answer questions on the Project's potential effect on existing resources

- Introductions
- Project & Relicensing Review Presentation:
 - Project Overview
 - Virtual Site Visit
 - The Enhanced Traditional Licensing Process (TLP)
 - Relicensing Timeline & Major Milestones
- Opportunity for Questions and Discussions on the Project PAD, Issues, Information Needs, and Studies
- Adjourn

ATTACHMENT B

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE JOINT AGENCY AND PUBLIC MEETING STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT FERC NO. 2535

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) will host a Joint Agency and Public Meeting on September 3, 2020, to discuss the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) relicensing of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project). The Project is an existing hydroelectric generating facility located in Edgefield and McCormick counties, South Carolina and Columbia County, Georgia, at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River. The Project has an installed capacity of 17.28 megawatts. The purpose of the meeting is to: 1) provide an overview of the Project; 2) discuss and answer questions on the Pre-Application Document (PAD) and relicensing process; 3) provide the opportunity for a virtual site visit; and, 4) discuss and answer questions on the Project's potential effect on existing resources.

The meeting will be held twice on September 3, 2020: once from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM and again from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. The meeting will be held through the online platform Microsoft Teams. A virtual tour of Project facilities will be presented at each meeting. If you would like to attend the meeting, please contact Ms. Kelly Kirven at Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com to receive the call-in information.

A summary of major issues identified to date has been presented in the PAD. Please note that the PAD is available for inspection and reproduction at: 1) FERC elibrary (http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp); 2) the McCormick County Library in McCormick, South Carolina, and the Columbia County Library in Evans, Georgia; and 3) the Project website, www.stevenscreekrelicense.com.

For additional information or questions regarding this meeting or the relicensing of the Project, please contact Ms. Amy Bresnahan, Relicensing Project Manager, Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc., 803-217-9965; Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com; or Ms. Alison Jakupca, Regulatory Coordinator, Kleinschmidt Associates, 803-462-5628; Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com.

ATTACHMENT C

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Virtual will be fine.

Wenonah G. Haire, DMD

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 10, 2020, at 1:29 PM, Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@kleinschmidtgroup.com> wrote:

Good afternoon Stevens Creek Relicensing Stakeholders,

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is tentatively planning to hold afternoon and evening sessions of the Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on September 3, 2020 via teleconference. As required by FERC and specified at 18 CFR 4.38(b), the applicant must provide an opportunity for a site visit in conjunction with the JAM. During pre-PAD consultation, DESC hosted an in-person site visit at the Stevens Creek Project on May 15, 2019 with substantial attendance. DESC intended to host a second site visit in conjunction with the JAM this fall, however, due to COVID-19, DESC believes it will be best to provide a "virtual site visit" during the virtual JAM teleconference, in lieu of an in-person site visit. This will be accomplished via a video developed using Project photographs and prerecorded footage. DESC plans to show this video during the virtual JAM and will provide access to the video through the Project relicensing website at www.stevenscreekrelicense.com.

DESC has consulted with FERC staff on the proposed virtual site visit and FERC staff expressed interest in identifying whether Project stakeholders felt a virtual site visit would likely meet the need to view Project facilities at this time. **If you feel a virtual site visit is an acceptable option in lieu of an in-person site visit, <u>please confirm to</u> <u>me via email</u>, so that we can notify FERC.** DESC also notes that there will be additional opportunities for in-person site visits to the Project, as deemed necessary, throughout the relicensing process. We would greatly appreciate a response, if at all possible, by August 14th so that we may notify FERC.

Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator

<image001.gif>

Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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From:	Miller, Derrick L -FS
То:	Kelly Kirven
Subject:	RE: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit
Date:	Monday, August 10, 2020 1:31:49 PM
Attachments:	image002.png

A virtual site visit is an acceptable option in lieu of an in-person site visit.



Derrick L. Miller, Forester Special Uses Program Manager

President NFFE, Local 466 National Federation of Federal Employees Francis Marion & Sumter National Forest

p: 803-561-4056 f: 803-561-4004 derrick.miller@usda.gov

4931 Broad River Road Columbia, SC 29212 http://www.nffe-fsc.org

From: Kelly Kirven [mailto:Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com]

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:29 PM

To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net) <BISMITH44@comcast.net>; Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com) <catboyz@nctv.com>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov) <altmankc@dhec.sc.gov>; cheetahtrk@yahoo.com; Charles Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com) < chaswhis1988@aol.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov) <hightocw@dhec.sc.gov>; Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com) <JCE1440@yahoo.com>; RankinD@dnr.sc.gov; David Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov) <david.bernhart@noaa.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Miller, Derrick L -FS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Don Imm (donald_imm@fws.gov) <donald_imm@fws.gov>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) < MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net) <gwsleister@att.net>; Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov) <mixong@dnr.sc.gov>; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Rader (jrader@ducks.org) <jrader@ducks.org>; Jamie Sykes

(James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov) <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov) <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeffery Williams (jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov) <jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov) <jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Boland (jkboland59@me.com) <jkboland59@me.com>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; John Harris (john.harris@gfii.com) <john.harris@gfii.com>; Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov) <jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Josh Williford (joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com) <joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com>; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Ley, Amanda <leyah@dhec.sc.gov>; Lorianne Riggin (RigginL@dnr.sc.gov) < RigginL@dnr.sc.gov>; Lynn Arnett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com) <LynnArnett325@gmail.com>; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov) <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Mark Caldwell (mark caldwell@fws.gov) <mark_caldwell@fws.gov>; Mark Davis <mddavis629@gmail.com>; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov) <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Merrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org) <merrillm@scccl.org>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov) <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov) <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Pat and Dallas Simon (patsimon@wctel.net) <patsimon@wctel.net>; Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov) <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com)
<barneybimmer@gmail.com>; rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) < rpavey1@comcast.net>; Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org) <rphillips@gwf.org>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Davis (bigron.davis00@gmail.com)

bigron.davis00@gmail.com>; Rooks, Whitney <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil) <scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org) <Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Stan Simpson (Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil) <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov) <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; Thom Litts (thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov) <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tom McCov (thomas_mccoy@fws.gov) <thomas_mccoy@fws.gov>; Tom Proctor (proctor351@aol.com) <proctor351@aol.com>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov) <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -FS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; WILLIAM CHASTAIN <william.chastain@dominionenergy.com>; William Jabour (William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil) < William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil> Subject: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit Importance: High

Good afternoon Stevens Creek Relicensing Stakeholders,

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Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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Ms. Kirven,

Due to current circumstances, and the fact we have had access to the site in the past, we agree a virtual site visit is an acceptable option.

Regards,

Jeffery Williams East Central District Office 3525 Walton Way Ext. Augusta, GA 30909 (706) 667-4343

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com> Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:28:52 PM To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net) <BISMITH44@comcast.net>; Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com) <catboyz@nctv.com>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com <caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com>; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov) <altmankc@dhec.sc.gov>; Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com) <cheetahtrk@yahoo.com>; Charles Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com) <chaswhis1988@aol.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Nelson, Chris <Chris.Nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov) < hightocw@dhec.sc.gov>; Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com) <JCE1440@yahoo.com>; Dan Rankin (rankind@dnr.sc.gov) <rankind@dnr.sc.gov>; David Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov) <david.bernhart@noaa.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Wallsmith, Debbie <Debbie.Wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Don Imm (donald imm@fws.gov) <donald_imm@fws.gov>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; George and Diane Sleister

(gwsleister@att.net) <gwsleister@att.net>; Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov) <mixong@dnr.sc.gov>; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <iloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Rader (jrader@ducks.org) <jrader@ducks.org>; Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov) <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Darley, Jeff <Jeff.Darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Welte, Jennifer <Jennifer.Welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Boland (jkboland59@me.com) <jkboland59@me.com>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; John Harris (john.harris@gfii.com) <john.harris@gfii.com>; Ambrose, Jon <Jon.Ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Josh Williford (joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com) <joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com>; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Ley, Amanda <leyah@dhec.sc.gov>; Lorianne Riggin (RigginL@dnr.sc.gov) <RigginL@dnr.sc.gov>; Lynn Arnett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com) <LynnArnett325@gmail.com>; Banyas, Madeline <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Mark Caldwell (mark_caldwell@fws.gov) <mark caldwell@fws.gov>; Mark Davis <mddavis629@gmail.com>; Melanie Olds <melanie olds@fws.gov>; Merrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org) <merrillm@scccl.org>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov) <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov) <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Pat and Dallas Simon (patsimon@wctel.net) <patsimon@wctel.net>; Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com) <barneybimmer@gmail.com>; rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org <rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org>; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) <rpavey1@comcast.net>; Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org) <rphillips@gwf.org>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Davis (bigron.davis00@gmail.com)

bigron.davis00@gmail.com>; Rooks, Whitney <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil) <scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org) <Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Stan Simpson (Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil) <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Schleiger, Steve <Steve.Schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; Litts, Thom <Thom.Litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tom McCoy (thomas_mccoy@fws.gov) <thomas_mccoy@fws.gov>; Tom Proctor (proctor351@aol.com) <proctor351@aol.com>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov) <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -FS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; WILLIAM CHASTAIN <william.chastain@dominionenergy.com>; William Jabour (William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil) < William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil> Subject: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit

Good afternoon Stevens Creek Relicensing Stakeholders,

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is tentatively planning to hold afternoon and evening sessions of the Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on September 3, 2020 via teleconference. As required by FERC and specified at 18 CFR 4.38(b), the applicant must provide an opportunity for a site visit in conjunction with the JAM. During pre-PAD consultation, DESC hosted an in-person site visit at the Stevens Creek Project on May 15, 2019 with substantial attendance. DESC intended to host a second site visit in conjunction with the JAM this fall, however, due to COVID-19, DESC believes it will be best to provide a "virtual site visit" during the virtual JAM teleconference, in lieu of an in-person site visit. This will be accomplished via a video developed using Project photographs and pre-recorded footage. DESC plans to show this video during the virtual JAM and will provide access to the video through the Project relicensing website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>.

DESC has consulted with FERC staff on the proposed virtual site visit and FERC staff expressed interest in identifying whether Project stakeholders felt a virtual site visit would likely meet the need to view Project facilities at this time. **If you feel a virtual site visit is an acceptable option in lieu of an in-person site visit, please confirm to me via email, so that we can notify FERC.** DESC also notes that there will be additional opportunities for in-person site visits to the Project, as deemed necessary, throughout the relicensing process. We would greatly appreciate a response, if at all possible, by August 14th so that we may notify FERC.

Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

From:	Marcinek, Paula
To:	Kelly Kirven
Cc:	Payne, Jason
Subject:	RE: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit
Date:	Tuesday, August 11, 2020 3:03:06 PM

Hi Kelly. I am not opposed to a virtual JAM. Thank you for setting it up!

Paula Marcinek Aquatic Biologist, Wildlife Conservation

Wildlife Resources Division M: (404) 323-7751 | O: (706) 557-3227

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GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:29 PM

To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net) <BISMITH44@comcast.net>; Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com) <catboyz@nctv.com>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov) <altmankc@dhec.sc.gov>; Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com) <cheetahtrk@yahoo.com>; Charles Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com) <chaswhis1988@aol.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Nelson, Chris <Chris.Nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov) < hightocw@dhec.sc.gov>; Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com) <JCE1440@yahoo.com>; Dan Rankin (rankind@dnr.sc.gov) <rankind@dnr.sc.gov>; David Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov) <david.bernhart@noaa.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Wallsmith, Debbie <Debbie.Wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Don Imm (donald_imm@fws.gov) <donald imm@fws.gov>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net) <gwsleister@att.net>; Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov) <mixong@dnr.sc.gov>; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Rader (jrader@ducks.org) <jrader@ducks.org>; Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov) <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Darley, Jeff

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Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

From:	Twyla Cheatwood - NOAA Federal
To:	Kelly Kirven
Cc:	Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal
Subject:	Re: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit
Date:	Monday, August 10, 2020 4:35:40 PM

Kelly,

The NMFS appreciates the option to participate virtually and finds this an acceptable option in lieu of the required in-person site visit.

Thank you for your coordination,

Twyla

On Mon, Aug 10, 2020 at 1:29 PM Kelly Kirven <<u>Kelly.Kirven@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>> wrote:

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Thanks!

Kelly

Kelly Kirven

Project Licensing Coordinator

Kleinschmidt

Office: 803.462.5633

Cell: 423.747.2660

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Twyla H Cheatwood Fishery Biologist Southeast Region, Habitat Conservation Division NOAA Fisheries Beaufort, NC 28516 Office: (252) 728-8758 Twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov

?

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Kelly:

A virtual site visit is an acceptable option during this time.

Thanks for organizing, I look forward to participating.

Thanks, Elizabeth



Elizabeth M. Johnson Director, Historical Services, D-SHPO State Historic Preservation Office SC Department of Archives & History 8301 Parklane Road Columbia, SC 29223 Ph: 803.896.6168 Fax: 803.896.6167 <u>https://scdah.sc.gov/historic-preservation</u>

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:29 PM

To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net) <BISMITH44@comcast.net>; Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com) <catboyz@nctv.com>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov) <altmankc@dhec.sc.gov>; Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com) <cheetahtrk@yahoo.com>; Charles Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com) <chaswhis1988@aol.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov) < hightocw@dhec.sc.gov>; Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com) <JCE1440@yahoo.com>; Dan Rankin (rankind@dnr.sc.gov) <rankind@dnr.sc.gov>; David Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov) <david.bernhart@noaa.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) < eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Don Imm (donald_imm@fws.gov) <donald_imm@fws.gov>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org)

<elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Johnson, Elizabeth <EJohnson@scdah.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) < MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net) < gwsleister@att.net>; Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov) <mixong@dnr.sc.gov>; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Rader (jrader@ducks.org) <jrader@ducks.org>; Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov) <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov) <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeffery Williams (jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov) <jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov) <jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Boland (jkboland59@me.com) <jkboland59@me.com>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; John Harris (john.harris@gfii.com) <john.harris@gfii.com>; Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov) <jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Josh Williford (joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com) <joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com>; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Ley, Amanda <leyah@dhec.sc.gov>; Lorianne Riggin (RigginL@dnr.sc.gov) < RigginL@dnr.sc.gov>; Lynn Arnett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com) <LynnArnett325@gmail.com>; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov) <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Mark Caldwell (mark caldwell@fws.gov) <mark_caldwell@fws.gov>; Mark Davis <mddavis629@gmail.com>; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov) <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Merrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org) <merrillm@scccl.org>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov) <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov) <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Pat and Dallas Simon (patsimon@wctel.net) <patsimon@wctel.net>; Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov) <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com)
<barneybimmer@gmail.com>; rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) < rpavey1@comcast.net>; Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org) <rphillips@gwf.org>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Davis (bigron.davis00@gmail.com)

bigron.davis00@gmail.com>; Rooks, Whitney <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil) <scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org) <Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Stan Simpson (Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil) <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov) <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; Thom Litts (thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov) <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tom McCov (thomas mccoy@fws.gov) <thomas mccoy@fws.gov>; Tom Proctor (proctor351@aol.com) <proctor351@aol.com>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov) <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -

FS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; WILLIAM CHASTAIN <william.chastain@dominionenergy.com>; William Jabour (William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil) <William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil> **Subject:** Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit **Importance:** High

Good afternoon Stevens Creek Relicensing Stakeholders,

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is tentatively planning to hold afternoon and evening sessions of the Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on September 3, 2020 via teleconference. As required by FERC and specified at 18 CFR 4.38(b), the applicant must provide an opportunity for a site visit in conjunction with the JAM. During pre-PAD consultation, DESC hosted an in-person site visit at the Stevens Creek Project on May 15, 2019 with substantial attendance. DESC intended to host a second site visit in conjunction with the JAM this fall, however, due to COVID-19, DESC believes it will be best to provide a "virtual site visit" during the virtual JAM teleconference, in lieu of an in-person site visit. This will be accomplished via a video developed using Project photographs and pre-recorded footage. DESC plans to show this video during the virtual JAM and will provide access to the video through the Project relicensing website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>.

DESC has consulted with FERC staff on the proposed virtual site visit and FERC staff expressed interest in identifying whether Project stakeholders felt a virtual site visit would likely meet the need to view Project facilities at this time. **If you feel a virtual site visit is an acceptable option in lieu of an in-person site visit, please confirm to me via email, so that we can notify FERC.** DESC also notes that there will be additional opportunities for in-person site visits to the Project, as deemed necessary, throughout the relicensing process. We would greatly appreciate a response, if at all possible, by August 14th so that we may notify FERC.

Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com Virtual visit is good. Tom Proctor

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 10, 2020, at 1:28 PM, Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@kleinschmidtgroup.com> wrote:

Good afternoon Stevens Creek Relicensing Stakeholders,

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is tentatively planning to hold afternoon and evening sessions of the Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on September 3, 2020 via teleconference. As required by FERC and specified at 18 CFR 4.38(b), the applicant must provide an opportunity for a site visit in conjunction with the JAM. During pre-PAD consultation, DESC hosted an in-person site visit at the Stevens Creek Project on May 15, 2019 with substantial attendance. DESC intended to host a second site visit in conjunction with the JAM this fall, however, due to COVID-19, DESC believes it will be best to provide a "virtual site visit" during the virtual JAM teleconference, in lieu of an in-person site visit. This will be accomplished via a video developed using Project photographs and prerecorded footage. DESC plans to show this video during the virtual JAM and will provide access to the video through the Project relicensing website at www.stevenscreekrelicense.com.

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Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator <image001.gif>

Office: 803.462.5633

Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com Virtual site visit is adequate.

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Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator <image001.gif> Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com Virtual Site Visit is good.

Stanley Simpson Water Manager USACE Savannah District Phone: 912-652-5501 Call: 912-677-6087

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:28 PM

To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net) <BISMITH44@comcast.net>; Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com) <catboyz@nctv.com>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com <caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com>; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov) <altmankc@dhec.sc.gov>; Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com) <cheetahtrk@yahoo.com>; Charles Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com) <chaswhis1988@aol.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov) < hightocw@dhec.sc.gov>; Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com) <JCE1440@yahoo.com>; Dan Rankin (rankind@dnr.sc.gov) <rankind@dnr.sc.gov>; Bernhart, David <david.bernhart@noaa.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Don Imm (donald_imm@fws.gov) <donald_imm@fws.gov>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) < MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net) <gwsleister@att.net>; Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov) <mixong@dnr.sc.gov>; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Rader (jrader@ducks.org) <jrader@ducks.org>; Sykes, James A Jr CIV USARMY CESAS (US) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov) <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov <jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov) <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeffery Williams (jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov)

<jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov) <jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Boland (jkboland59@me.com) <jkboland59@me.com>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; John Harris (john.harris@gfii.com) <john.harris@gfii.com>; Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov) <jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson < Jordan. Johnson @KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Josh Williford (joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com) <joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com>; Feingold, Kathryn A CIV USARMY CESAS (USA) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Ley, Amanda <leyah@dhec.sc.gov>; Lorianne Riggin (RigginL@dnr.sc.gov) < RigginL@dnr.sc.gov>; Lynn Arnett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com) <LynnArnett325@gmail.com>; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov) <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Mark Caldwell (mark caldwell@fws.gov) <mark caldwell@fws.gov>; Mark Davis <mddavis629@gmail.com>; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov) <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Merrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org) <merrillm@scccl.org>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov) <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov) <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Pat and Dallas Simon (patsimon@wctel.net) <patsimon@wctel.net>; Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov) <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com)

barneybimmer@gmail.com>; rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org <rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org>; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) <rpavey1@comcast.net>; Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org) <rphillips@gwf.org>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Davis (bigron.davis00@gmail.com)

bigron.davis00@gmail.com>; Rooks, Whitney <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Hyatt, Scott M CIV USARMY CESAS (USA) <Scott.M.Hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org) <Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Simpson, Stanley L CIV USARMY CESAS (USA) <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov) <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; Thom Litts (thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov) <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tom McCoy (thomas mccoy@fws.gov) <thomas_mccoy@fws.gov>; Tom Proctor (proctor351@aol.com) ctor351@aol.com>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov) <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -FS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; WILLIAM CHASTAIN <william.chastain@dominionenergy.com>; Jabour, William E CIV (USA) <William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil>

Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit

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Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 Blockedwww.KleinschmidtGroup.com

From:	<u>Olds, Melanie J</u>
To:	Kelly Kirven
Cc:	Caldwell, Mark; McCoy, Thomas; Imm, Donald
Subject:	Re: [EXTERNAL] Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit
Date:	Thursday, August 13, 2020 1:43:35 PM

Kelly,

The USFWS agrees that a virtual site visit is acceptable.

Thanks,

Melanie

Melanie Olds | Fish & Wildlife Biologist/ SC FERC CoordinatorU.S. Fish and Wildlife ServiceSouth Carolina Ecological Services Field Office176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200Charleston, SC 29407843-727-4707 ext. 205NOTE: This email correspondence and any attachments to and from this sender is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and
may be disclosed to third parties.

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com> Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:28 PM

To: Alison Jakupca < Alison. Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net) <BISMITH44@comcast.net>; Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com) <catboyz@nctv.com>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com <caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com>; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov) <altmankc@dhec.sc.gov>; Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com) <cheetahtrk@yahoo.com>; Charles Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com) <chaswhis1988@aol.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov) <hightocw@dhec.sc.gov>; Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com) <JCE1440@yahoo.com>; Dan Rankin (rankind@dnr.sc.gov) <rankind@dnr.sc.gov>; David.bernhart.noaa contact <David.bernhart@noaa.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Imm, Donald <donald imm@fws.gov>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org>; Fritz

Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net) <gwsleister@att.net>; Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov) <mixong@dnr.sc.gov>; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Rader (jrader@ducks.org) <jrader@ducks.org>; Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov) <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov <jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov) <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeffery Williams (jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov) <jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov) < jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Boland (jkboland59@me.com) <jkboland59@me.com>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; John Harris (john.harris@gfii.com) <john.harris@gfii.com>; jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov <jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Josh Williford (joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com) <joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com>; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Ley, Amanda <leyah@dhec.sc.gov>; rigginl@dnr.sc.gov <rigginl@dnr.sc.gov>; Lynn Arnett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com) <LynnArnett325@gmail.com>; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov) <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Caldwell, Mark <mark_caldwell@fws.gov>; Mark Davis <mddavis629@gmail.com>; Olds, Melanie J <melanie olds@fws.gov>; Merrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org) <merrillm@scccl.org>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov) <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov) <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Pat and Dallas Simon (patsimon@wctel.net) <patsimon@wctel.net>; Marcinek, Paula <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com) <barneybimmer@gmail.com>; rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org <rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org>; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) <rpavey1@comcast.net>; rphillips@gwf.org <rphillips@gwf.org>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Davis (bigron.davis00@gmail.com) < bigron.davis00@gmail.com>; Rooks, Whitney <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil) <scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org) <Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov) <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; thom.litts <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; McCoy, Thomas <thomas_mccoy@fws.gov>; Tom Proctor (proctor351@aol.com) <proctor351@aol.com>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; twyla.cheatwood <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -FS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; WILLIAM CHASTAIN <william.chastain@dominionenergy.com>; William Jabour (William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil) < William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil> Subject: [EXTERNAL] Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Good afternoon Stevens Creek Relicensing Stakeholders,

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is tentatively planning to hold afternoon and evening sessions of the Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on September 3, 2020 via teleconference. As required by FERC and specified at 18 CFR 4.38(b), the applicant must provide an opportunity for a site visit in conjunction with the JAM. During pre-PAD consultation, DESC hosted an in-person site visit at the Stevens Creek Project on May 15, 2019 with substantial attendance. DESC intended to host a second site visit in conjunction with the JAM this fall, however, due to COVID-19, DESC believes it will be best to provide a "virtual site visit" during the virtual JAM teleconference, in lieu of an in-person site visit. This will be accomplished via a video developed using Project photographs and pre-recorded footage. DESC plans to show this video during the virtual JAM and will provide access to the video through the Project relicensing website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>.

DESC has consulted with FERC staff on the proposed virtual site visit and FERC staff expressed interest in identifying whether Project stakeholders felt a virtual site visit would likely meet the need to view Project facilities at this time. **If you feel a virtual site visit is an acceptable option in lieu of an in-person site visit, please confirm to me via email, so that we can notify FERC.** DESC also notes that there will be additional opportunities for in-person site visits to the Project, as deemed necessary, throughout the relicensing process. We would greatly appreciate a response, if at all possible, by August 14th so that we may notify FERC.

Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

From:	Whalen, James -FS
To:	Kelly Kirven
Subject:	RE: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit
Date:	Wednesday, August 12, 2020 8:51:11 AM
Attachments:	image002.png
	image003.png
	image004.png
	image005 ppg

I have no issue with a virtual site visit.



J. Keith Whalen Forest Fish Biologist Forest Service Francis Marion & Sumter National Forests - Supervisor's Office

p: 803-561-4076 james.whalen@usda.gov 4931 Broad River Road Columbia, SC 29212 www.fs.fed.us

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com> Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:29 PM To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net) <BISMITH44@comcast.net>; Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com) <catboyz@nctv.com>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov) <altmankc@dhec.sc.gov>; cheetahtrk@yahoo.com; Charles Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com) < chaswhis1988@aol.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov) <hightocw@dhec.sc.gov>; Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com) <JCE1440@yahoo.com>; RankinD@dnr.sc.gov; David Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov) <david.bernhart@noaa.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Miller, Derrick L -FS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Don Imm (donald imm@fws.gov) <donald imm@fws.gov>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) < MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net) < gwsleister@att.net>; Greg Mixon

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<barneybimmer@gmail.com>; rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) < rpavey1@comcast.net>; Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org) <rphillips@gwf.org>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Davis (bigron.davis00@gmail.com)

 <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil) <scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org) <Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Stan Simpson (Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil) <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov) <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; Thom Litts (thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov) <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tom McCov (thomas mccoy@fws.gov) <thomas mccoy@fws.gov>; Tom Proctor (proctor351@aol.com) <proctor351@aol.com>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov) <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -FS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; WILLIAM CHASTAIN <william.chastain@dominionenergy.com>; William Jabour (William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil) < William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil> Subject: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit Importance: High
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Thanks! Kelly

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From:	Elizabeth Miller
To:	Kelly Kirven
Cc:	Lorianne Riggin; Greg Mixon; Jason Bettinger; Ron Ahle; Chris Thomason; Morgan Kern; Mark Scott
Subject:	RE: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit
Date:	Tuesday, August 11, 2020 4:16:45 PM

Kelly,

SCDNR finds your proposal to host a virtual Joint Agency Meeting for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project to be an acceptable option due Covid-19 concerns and current travel restrictions for state agencies.

Thank you,

Elizabeth

Elizabeth C. Miller SCDNR Office: (843) 953-3881 Cell: (843) 729-4636

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:29 PM

To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall <MarshallB@dnr.sc.gov>; Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net) <BISMITH44@comcast.net>; Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com) <catboyz@nctv.com>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov) <altmankc@dhec.sc.gov>; Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com) <cheetahtrk@yahoo.com>; Charles Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com) <chaswhis1988@aol.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason <ThomasonC@dnr.sc.gov>; Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov) <hightocw@dhec.sc.gov>; Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com) <JCE1440@yahoo.com>; Dan Rankin <RankinD@dnr.sc.gov>; David Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov) <david.bernhart@noaa.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Don Imm (donald imm@fws.gov) <donald imm@fws.gov>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabethtoombs@cherokee.org>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net) <gwsleister@att.net>; Greg Mixon <MixonG@dnr.sc.gov>; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Rader (jrader@ducks.org) <jrader@ducks.org>; Jamie Sykes

(James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger <BettingerJ@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov) <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeffery Williams (jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov) <jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov) <jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Boland (jkboland59@me.com) <jkboland59@me.com>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; John Harris (john.harris@gfii.com) <john.harris@gfii.com>; Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov) <jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Josh Williford (joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com) <joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com>; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Ley, Amanda <leyah@dhec.sc.gov>; Lorianne Riggin <RigginL@dnr.sc.gov>; Lynn Arnett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com) <LynnArnett325@gmail.com>; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov) <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Mark Caldwell (mark caldwell@fws.gov) < mark caldwell@fws.gov>; Mark Davis < mddavis629@gmail.com>; Melanie Olds (melanie olds@fws.gov) <melanie olds@fws.gov>; Merrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org) <merrillm@scccl.org>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Morgan Kern <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov) <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Pat and Dallas Simon (patsimon@wctel.net) cpatsimon@wctel.net; Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov) <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com) <barneybimmer@gmail.com>; rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) <rpavey1@comcast.net>; Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org) <rphillips@gwf.org>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Davis (bigron.davis00@gmail.com) < bigron.davis00@gmail.com>; Rooks, Whitney <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil) <scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org) <Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Stan Simpson (Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil) <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov) <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; Thom Litts (thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov) <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tom McCoy (thomas mccoy@fws.gov) <thomas mccoy@fws.gov>; Tom Proctor (proctor351@aol.com) <proctor351@aol.com>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov) <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -FS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; WILLIAM CHASTAIN <william.chastain@dominionenergy.com>; William Jabour (William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil) < William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil> Subject: Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit **Importance:** High

Good afternoon Stevens Creek Relicensing Stakeholders,

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is tentatively planning to hold afternoon and evening

sessions of the Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on September 3, 2020 via teleconference. As required by FERC and specified at 18 CFR 4.38(b), the applicant must provide an opportunity for a site visit in conjunction with the JAM. During pre-PAD consultation, DESC hosted an in-person site visit at the Stevens Creek Project on May 15, 2019 with substantial attendance. DESC intended to host a second site visit in conjunction with the JAM this fall, however, due to COVID-19, DESC believes it will be best to provide a "virtual site visit" during the virtual JAM teleconference, in lieu of an in-person site visit. This will be accomplished via a video developed using Project photographs and pre-recorded footage. DESC plans to show this video during the virtual JAM and will provide access to the video through the Project relicensing website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>.

DESC has consulted with FERC staff on the proposed virtual site visit and FERC staff expressed interest in identifying whether Project stakeholders felt a virtual site visit would likely meet the need to view Project facilities at this time. **If you feel a virtual site visit is an acceptable option in lieu of an in-person site visit, please confirm to me via email, so that we can notify FERC.** DESC also notes that there will be additional opportunities for in-person site visits to the Project, as deemed necessary, throughout the relicensing process. We would greatly appreciate a response, if at all possible, by August 14th so that we may notify FERC.

Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Alison Jakupca

Subject: Location:	Stevens Creek Eel Study Discussion Microsoft Teams Meeting
Start: End:	Tue 6/23/2020 1:00 PM Tue 6/23/2020 3:00 PM
Recurrence:	(none)
Meeting Status:	Accepted
Organizer: Required Attendees:	Kelly Kirven Kelly Kirven; BRESNAHAN, AMY; Ray Ammarell; Alison Jakupca; Henry Mealing; Jason Moak; Jordan Johnson; Caleb Gaston; Twyla Cheatwood; Elizabeth Miller; Paula Marcinek; Melanie Olds; Jay Payne
Optional Attendees:	Ellen Waldrop; Bill Post; Peter M Sturke; Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov)
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SchedulingServiceMeetingOptio	nsUrl:
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SchedulingServiceUpdateUrl:	
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Conference ID: 571 291 242#



From:	Kelly Kirven
To:	<u>Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); Andy Herndon</u>
	(Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov); Ashley Holmes; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov); Bill Smith
	(BISMITH44@comcast.net); Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com); Bret Hoffman; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB
	GASTON; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov); Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com); Charles
	Whisenant (chaswhis1988@aol.com); Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net); Chris Nelson
	<u>(chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov);</u>
	(hightocw@dhec.sc.gov); Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com); Dan Rankin (rankind@dnr.sc.gov); David
	<u>Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov); David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov); Debbie Wallsmith</u>
	(debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov); Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us); Don Imm (donald imm@fws.gov); Elena
	<u>Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org);</u> Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us); Elizabeth Miller
	(MillerE@dnr.sc.gov); Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org); Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov);
	<u>George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net); Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov); Henderson, Cameron T.;</u>
	Henry Mealing; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov); Jamie Rader (jrader@ducks.org); Jamie Sykes
	(James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil); Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov); Jason Moak;
	Jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeft Darley (Jeft.darley@dnr.ga.gov); Jeftery Williams (Jeftery.williams@dnr.ga.gov);
	Jennifer Weite (jennifer.weite@dnr.ga.gov): John Boland (jkboland59@me.com); John Eddins
	(jedans@acnp.gov); Jonn Harris (jonn.narris@gtil.com); Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov); Jordan
	Jonnson; Josn Willitora (Josnua.paul. Willitora@gmanl.com); Katryn Feingola
	(<u>katinryn.k.reingolo@usace.army.mii); keily kirven; Ley, Amanda; Lorianne kiggin (kigginL@dnr.sc.gov); Lynn</u>
	Arnett (cynnamettassegmain.com); Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyasegmain.ga.gov); Mark Caldweir
	(mark_caldwellews.gov); Mark Davis, Metalle Olds (metalle Oldsews.gov); Methilm (Geodor (metrillews.gov); Methel MOSLEV; Metalle Olds (metalle Oldse os gov); Outhern (McGeodor
	(Internative Static 10), WITCHAEL WORKER, WORKER (Retrieve Witch and), David Marcinak, Face Witch
	<u>Trace.wilderendad.upvi</u> , real and Danas Sinibi (patsinibilewite), radia Watches
	padua.maicinexeduii.ga.govy, K. A. (Totiy) micks (banegonime) eginai.com, tadeconeset natanive keeper.org, randy mahan (mahan@sec rr.com): PAVMOND AMMAPETL: Pob Payley (mayayi adoconeset nat): Pobart Philling
	(rubillins@gwf.org): Robinson Scott: Ron Alle: Ron Davis (bigron davis00@gmail.com): Rooks (Whitney: Rusty
	Wenerick (weneriwr@dbec.sc.gov): Scott Hvatt (scott m byatt2@usace army mil): Siza Collias
	(Sica@sayannahriverkeener.org), Stan Simpson (Stanley L Simpson@usace army mil), Steve Schleiger
	(steve schleiger@dpr ga gov): Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com): Thom Litts (thom litts@dpr ga gov): Tom
	McCov (thomas mccov@fws.gov): Tom Proctor (proctor 351@aol.com): Tony Hornbuckle
	(thornbuckle61@gmail.com): Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@sayannahriverkeeper.org): Twyla Cheatwood
	(twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov); Wenonah Haire; Whalen, James -FS; WILLIAM CHASTAIN; William Jabour
	(William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil)
Subject:	Stevens Creek Relicensing JAM - Virtual Site Visit
Date:	Monday, August 10, 2020 1:28:56 PM
Importance:	High

Good afternoon Stevens Creek Relicensing Stakeholders,

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is tentatively planning to hold afternoon and evening sessions of the Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on September 3, 2020 via teleconference. As required by FERC and specified at 18 CFR 4.38(b), the applicant must provide an opportunity for a site visit in conjunction with the JAM. During pre-PAD consultation, DESC hosted an in-person site visit at the Stevens Creek Project on May 15, 2019 with substantial attendance. DESC intended to host a second site visit in conjunction with the JAM this fall, however, due to COVID-19, DESC believes it will be best to provide a "virtual site visit" during the virtual JAM teleconference, in lieu of an in-person site visit. This will be accomplished via a video developed using Project photographs and pre-recorded footage. DESC plans to show this video during the virtual JAM and will provide access to the video through the Project relicensing website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>.

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Thanks! Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633

Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

Alison Jakupca

Subject:	Stevens Creek Project - Discussion with GADNR
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting
Start:	Wed 9/2/2020 9:00 AM
End:	Wed 9/2/2020 10:00 AM
Recurrence:	(none)
Meeting Status:	Accepted
Organizer:	Kelly Kirven
Required Attendees:	Paula Marcinek; Jay Payne; Jason Moak; Alison Jakupca; BRESNAHAN, AMY

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Conference ID: 846 280 547#



Alison Jakupca

Subject: Location:	Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) - Joint Agency Meeting Microsoft Teams Meeting
Start: End:	Thu 9/3/2020 6:00 PM Thu 9/3/2020 8:00 PM
Recurrence:	(none)
Meeting Status:	Accepted
Organizer: Required Attendees:	Kelly Kirven Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy,Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); Andy Hemdon (Andrew,Herndon@noaa.gov); Ashley Holmes; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov); Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net); Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com); Bret Hoffman; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov); Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com); Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net); Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov); Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov); Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov); Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com); Dan Rankin (rankind@dnr.sc.gov); David Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov); David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov); Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov); Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us); Don Imm (donald_imm@fws.gov); Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org); Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us); Elizabeth Miller (Miller£@dnr.sc.gov); Beizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org); Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov); George and Diane Sleister (gwsleister@att.net); Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov); Jason Moak; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov); John Boland (jkboland59@me.com); John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov); John Harris (john.harris@gfii.com); John Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov); Jordan Johnson; Josh Williford (joshua.paul.willford@gmail.com); Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil); Ley, Amanda; Lorianne Riggin (Riggin.@dnr.sc.gov); Jenn Amett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com); Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov); Mark Caldwell (mark_caldwell@fws.gov); Mark Davis; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov); Verrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org); MICHAEL MOSLEY, Morgan Kem (KemM@dnr.sc.gov); Outdor Augusta; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov); Pat. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com); rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com); RAYMOND AMMARELL; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net); Robet Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org); Robinson, Scott; Ron Ahle; Ron Davis (bigron.davis0@gmail.com

Required Attendees:	Sarah Salazar; Allan Creamer; Matt Long; wcbwaldo@aol.com; JAMES MILLER; ROBERT MCMILLAN; JACK BROCK; John Craun
Optional Attendees:	Johnson, Elizabeth; Miller, Derrick L -FS; Caitlin Rogers; tbonitatibus@gmail.com; bjorn.lake@noaa.gov
OnlineMeetingConfLink:	conf:sip:Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com;gruu;opaque=app:conf:focus:id:teams:2:0! 19:meeting_N2FmYmQ2ZTItOTQxMy00MjAzLWFjOWMtYmIzZmEyNGViZjZk-thread.v2! 24e949ca28564b9e9062d7db5442ec58!adc6e70cc57540a4967624da4a1fdce9
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All,

The Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) and virtual site visit is scheduled for Thursday, September 3, 2020. There are two sessions planned for your convenience: one from 2:00-4:00pm and one from 6:00-8:00pm. The material presented will be the same, so you only need to plan on attending one session.

If you have any questions regarding Microsoft Teams, or any other concerns, please contact me at <u>Kelly.Kirven@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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Conference ID: 144 577 035#



Alison Jakupca

Subject: Location:	Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) - Joint Agency Meeting Microsoft Teams Meeting
Start: End:	Thu 9/3/2020 2:00 PM Thu 9/3/2020 4:00 PM
Recurrence:	(none)
Meeting Status:	Accepted
Organizer: Required Attendees:	Kelly Kirven Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov); Ashley Holmes; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov); Bill Smith (BISMITH44@comcast.net); Bill Stringer (catboyz@nctv.com); Bret Hoffman; catilindecppcrafts.com; CALBB GASTON; Chad Altman (altmankc@dhec.sc.gov); Charlene Coleman (cheetahtrk@yahoo.com); Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net); Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov); Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov); Chuck Hightower (hightocw@dhec.sc.gov); Cory Eubanks (JCE1440@yahoo.com); Dan Rankin (rankind@dnr.sc.gov); David Bernhart (david.bernhart@noaa.gov); David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov); Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov); Derick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us); Don Imm (donald_imm@fws.gov); Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org); Elizabeth Johnson (ernjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us); Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov); Bizabeth Johnson (ernjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us); Elizabeth Miller (Miller@dnr.sc.gov); Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil); Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov); Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil); Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov); Jason Moak; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov); Jordan Johnson; Josh Williford (joshua.paul.williford@gmail.com); Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil); Ley, Amanda; Lorianne Riggin (Rigginl.@dnr.sc.gov); Lynn Arnett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com); Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov); Mark Caldwell (mark_caldwell@fws.gov); Mark Davis; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov); Mortrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org); MICHAEL MOSLEY; Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov); Cottdor Augusta; Pace Wilber (Pace Wilber@noaa.gov); R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimme@gmail.com); rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org); Stott Hyatt (scott.m.hyat2@usace.army.mil); Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org); Stott Hyatt (scott.m.hyat2@usace.army.mil); Sica Collins (Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org); Stott Hyatt (scott.m.hyat2@usace.army.mil); Si

Required Attendees:	Allan Creamer; Jim Landreth; Matt Long; wcbwaldo@aol.com; JAMES MILLER; ROBERT MCMILLAN; JACK BROCK; John Craun
Optional Attendees:	Johnson, Elizabeth; Miller, Derrick L -FS; Caitlin Rogers; Dustin Wilson
OnlineMeetingConfLink:	conf:sip:Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com;gruu;opaque=app:conf:focus:id:teams:2:0! 19:meeting_YTc1NzUwZWEtNzdhYy00ZjBkLTIINGYtNzE1ZDkyNGUwZDJk-thread.v2! 24e949ca28564b9e9062d7db5442ec58!adc6e70cc57540a4967624da4a1fdce9
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	https://teams.microsoft.com/meetingOptions/?organizerId=24e949ca-2856-4b9e-9062- d7db5442ec58&tenantId=adc6e70c-c575-40a4-9676-24da4a1fdce9&threadId=19 _meeting_YTc1NzUwZWEtNzdhYy00ZjBkLTIINGYtNzE1ZDkyNGUwZDJk@thread.v2 &messageId=0&language=en-US
SchedulingServiceUpdateUrl:	
5	https://scheduler.teams.microsoft.com/teams/adc6e70c-
	c575-40a4-9676-24da4a1fdce9/24e949ca-2856-4b9e-9062-d7db5442ec58/19 _meeting_YTc1NzUwZWEtNzdhYy00ZjBkLTllNGYtNzE1ZDkyNGUwZDJk@thread.v2/0
SkypeTeamsMeetingUrl:	https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%
	3ameeting_YTc1NzUwZWEtNzdhYy00ZjBkLTllNGYtNzE1ZDkyNGUwZDJk%
	40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22adc6e70c-
	c575-40a4-9676-24da4a1fdce9%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%
	2224e949ca-2856-4b9e-9062-d7db5442ec58%22%7d
SkypeTeamsProperties:	{"cid":"19:meeting_YTc1NzUwZWEtNzdhYy00ZjBkLTIINGYtNzE1ZDkyNGUwZDJk@thread .v2","private":true,"type":0,"mid":0,"rid":0,"uid":null}

All,

The Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) and virtual site visit is scheduled for Thursday, September 3, 2020. There are two sessions planned for your convenience: one from 2:00-4:00pm and one from 6:00-8:00pm. The material presented will be the same, so you only need to plan on attending one session.

If you have any questions regarding Microsoft Teams, or any other concerns, please contact me at Kelly.Kirven@kleinschmidtgroup.com.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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Conference ID: 743 832 547#



From:	Marcinek, Paula
To:	Kelly Kirven; Payne, Jason
Cc:	Alison Jakupca
Subject:	RE: Stevens Creek - Revised Mussel Study Plan and Recreation Survey
Date:	Tuesday, September 8, 2020 2:40:23 PM
Bute	

Per the mussel surveys, the revised study plan to include Uchee and Little Kiokee Creek is acceptable. It would be beneficial to include the area downstream of the dam, but we are not taking a strong stance on it (e.g. brownie points if you include it, lol).

Paula Marcinek

Aquatic Biologist, Wildlife Conservation

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From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Thursday, September 3, 2020 3:16 PM

To: Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>

Cc: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Subject: Stevens Creek - Revised Mussel Study Plan and Recreation Survey

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Paula and Jay!

As promised, attached are the revised mussel study plan and the revised recreation survey form. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator

<u>Kleinschmidt</u>

Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

Prepared for:

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina

Prepared by:

Kleinschmidt

Lexington, South Carolina www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

May-September 2020

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

Prepared for:

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina

Prepared by:



Lexington, South Carolina www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

May September 2020

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA, INC.

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STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA, INC.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is the licensee of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) (Project). The Project, which has an installed capacity of 17.28 megawatts (MW), is located in Edgefield and McCormick counties, South Carolina and Columbia County, Georgia, at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River. The Project's dam is located approximately one mile upstream of the Augusta Diversion Dam, and approximately 13 miles downstream of the J. Strom Thurmond Dam (Thurmond Dam). The Stevens Creek Reservoir is approximately 25 miles long, extending upstream to the Thurmond Dam and 12 miles up Stevens Creek. The Project occupies approximately 104 acres of federal lands within the Sumter National Forest.

On November 22, 1995, FERC issued a 30-year license which is scheduled to expire on October 31, 2025. DESC intends to file an application for a new license with FERC on or before October 31, 2023. The Project is currently involved in a relicensing process which involves cooperation and collaboration between DESC, as licensee, and a variety of stakeholders including state and federal resource agencies, state and local government, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and interested individuals. DESC established a Water Quality, Fish and Wildlife Resource Conservation Group (RCG), with interested stakeholders to address Project issues related to aquatic and terrestrial resources. During an RCG meeting on November 13, 2019, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) formally requested a <u>freshwater</u> mussel study at the Project, particularly in the Stevens Creek arm of the Project reservoir. In a letter dated June 10, 2020, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR) requested that the large tributaries on the Georgia side of the Savannah River be included in the study. This study plan was developed in consultation with the USFWS, GADNR, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) and the RCG.

2.0 RELEVANT SPECIES INFORMATION

2.1 FEDERAL-PROTECTED SPECIES

As part of relicensing, DESC developed a Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE) Species Whitepaper for the Project. The whitepaper included a comprehensive list of federal-protected and Forest Service Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) mussel species that may occur in the Project boundary (<u>Table 2-1Table 2-1</u>) (Kleinschmidt 2020). In order to identify <u>possible</u> federally protected federally protected mussel species in the Project area, the USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) online system was reviewed. Forest Service TES species that may occur in the Project area were also identified. The Forest Service provided a list of their Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) Species for the Long Cane Ranger District of the Sumter National Forest on January 15, 2020. These mussel species are included in <u>Table 2-1Table 2-1</u>. After identification of federal protected and Forest Service TES species to occur within the Project boundary.

TABLE 2-1FEDERAL-PROTECTED AND FOREST SERVICE TES MUSSEL SPECIES THAT MAY
OCCUR IN THE STEVENS CREEK PROJECT AREA

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	FEDERAL	FOREST SERVICE
		PROTECTION	TES SPECIES - SNF
Atlantic Spike	Elliptio producta		Sensitive
Brook Floater	Alasmidonta varicosa		Sensitive
Carolina Heelsplitter	Lasmigona decorata	Endangered	Endangered
Roanoke Slabshell	Elliptio roanokensis		Sensitive
Yellow Lampmussel	Lampsilis cariosa		Sensitive

ATLANTIC SPIKE

The Atlantic spike is found throughout South Carolina and prefers streams or rivers with sandy, rocky, and/or muddy bottoms in sections where the current is <u>not too rapidmoderate</u>. This species is found throughout Maryland, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina, although it has been extirpated from some reaches where it was previously found, possibly due to environmental factors including decreased water quality associated with sedimentation and pollution. The host fish for this species is not known.

BROOK FLOATER

The brook floater is a freshwater mussel species that is usually found in high gradient, consistently flowing reaches of rivers and streams. Preferred substrates are characterized by sand and gravel, often with adjacent boulders. This species is sensitive to habitat degradation, including excessive silt and nutrient inputs, and is also sensitive to hypoxia. Potential host fish include blacknose dace, longnose dace, golden shiner, pumpkinseed, slimy sculpin, yellow perch, and margined madtom. This species is known to occur in Edgefield and McCormick counties in SC. Specifically, it has been documented in several streams in the Stevens Creek basin.

CAROLINA HEELSPLITTER

The Carolina heelsplitter is found in cool, well-oxygenated reaches of rivers and streams. The current range of this species is limited as compared to its historic range. These declines and loss of populations are associated with factors including pollutants from municipal and industrial wastewater releases. The species is sensitive to silt and is generally found in silt-free areas with banks that are stabilized and shaded by trees and shrubs. One of the <u>eight_ten</u> surviving <u>South</u> <u>Carolina</u> populations of Carolina heelsplitter is found in Turkey Creek and its tributaries <u>upstream</u> of the project boundary. The Turkey Creek Carolina heelsplitter population was stocked by the Forest Service, USFWS and SCDNR in 2019. These creeks are part of the Savannah River drainage, located in Edgefield County, SC.

ROANOKE SLABSHELL

The Roanoke slabshell is typically found in large rivers and occasionally in small creeks. The mussel tolerates large variations in flow levels and higher water temperatures, making it able to survive in some locations near dams and hydroelectric plants. In South Carolina, the mussel is found in the Pee Dee River and the Catawba, Congaree and Savannah River basins. Although it has the potential to be found in watersheds on the Long Cane Ranger District in the Savannah River basin, no known records in the Sumter National Forest exist.

YELLOW LAMPMUSSEL

The yellow lampmussel is a freshwater mussel species found primarily in medium to large rivers and streams with a variety of substrates including silt or sand, gravel bars and bedrock cracks. Distribution in South Carolina spans the Savannah, Broad, Wateree, Congaree, and Pee Dee River basins. The species is found in the Long Cane Ranger District in the Lower Stevens Creek and Turkey Creek-Stevens Creek watersheds with the potential to also occur in the Upper Stevens Creek watershed.

2.2 STATE PROTECTED SPECIES

In addition to federal-protected and Forest Service TES species, the RTE Whitepaper listed stateprotected mussel species that may occur in the Project vicinity (Kleinschmidt 2020). These species are listed in <u>Table 2-2</u> and <u>Table 2-3</u> and <u>Table 2-3</u>.

TABLE 2-2GEORGIA STATE-PROTECTED MUSSEL SPECIES THAT MAY OCCUR IN THE
STEVENS CREEK PROJECT VICINITY

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Atlantic Pigtoe	Fusconaia masoni
Brother Spike	Elliptio fraterna
Carolina Slabshell	Elliptio congaraea
Delicate Spike	Elliptio arctata
Roanoke Slabshell	Elliptio roanokensis
Savannah Lilliput	Toxolasma pullus
Yellow Lampmussel	Lampsilis cariosa

TABLE 2-3SOUTH CAROLINA STATE-PROTECTED MUSSEL SPECIES THAT MAY OCCUR IN
THE STEVENS CREEK PROJECT VICINITY

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Atlantic Spike	Elliptio producta
Eastern Creekshell	Villosa delumbis
Eastern Elliptio	Elliptio complanate
Florida Pondhorn	Uniomerus caroliniana
Yellow Lampmussel	Lampsilis cariosa

3.0 STUDY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the diversity, spatial distribution and relative abundance (density) of the mussel fauna inhabiting <u>the-portions</u> of Stevens Creek, <u>Little Kiokee Creek</u>, and <u>Uchee Creek</u> included within the Stevens Creek Project boundary.⁺

4.0 GEOGRAPHIC AND TEMPORAL SCOPE

Hypolimnetic releases from J.S. Thurmond Reservoir are both low in oxygen and much colder than southeastern river typical temperatures. Therefore, mussel surveys will focus on selected habitats within the Stevens Creek Project boundary that are more likely to support populations of native freshwater mussels. Due to the accumulation of silt in the lower portions of Stevens Creek, a majority of the surveys will take place in the upper portion of Stevens Creek within the Project boundary. USFWS requested that <u>surveys include</u> the reach between the upstream extent of the Stevens Creek reservoir to the confluence with Horn Creek be surveyed (Figure 4-1Figure 4-1). In addition, GADNR requested that surveys include representative sites in the portions of Little Kiokee Creek and Uchee Creek within the Project boundary. Specific survey points will be identified in the field by the lead malacologist performing the study. Surveys will be conducted between late March and late October September in 2021. Surveys will be focused during non-rainy periods when water clarity and temperatures are sufficiently high to support wading, snorkeling, and other in-water survey methods. We do not anticipate that scuba will be needed to perform surveys in the identified areas.



FIGURE 4-1 MUSSEL STUDY AREA

5.0 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Freshwater mussel surveys in Stevens Creek, Little Kiokee Creek, and Uchee Creek will involve timed visual (qualitative) and tactile inspections (quantitative) of suitable habitat for presence of live freshwater mussels and/or shell material. Prior to sampling, we will review existing mussel distribution data provided by SCDNR, GADNR, and the Forest Service to prioritize areas that should be surveyed or resurveyed. This will aid in identifying established populations of mussels within the project boundary that may be influenced by project operations.

Field Ssurvey methods will follow freshwater mussel survey standard operating procedures (SOP) established by the SC DNR (Appendix A) and will be conducted by a qualified malacologist with expertise in Savannah River fauna. Although the number and specific location of qualitative survey points will likely be refined in the field based on professional judgement of the lead malacologist, it is expected that a range of 5 to 10 representative sites, of approximately 100 meters per site, will be distributed along the creek Stevens Creek. The number of representative sites surveyed in Little Kiokee Creek and Uchee Creek will be determined by the lead malacologist following discussions with the GADNR malacologist.

Particular attention will be placed upon the examination of potential Carolina heelsplitter (*Lasmigona decorata*) (federal-endangered species and South Carolina state-endangered species) habitat within areas of Stevens Creek, as well as habitat for the Forest Service TES species and state-protected species listed in Section 2.0. If key species are detected during the qualitative survey, quantitative surveys will be performed to determine relative abundance.

Exact methods for conducting visual and tactile searches will vary depending on water depth and survey method. Daily and weekly fluctuations of the Stevens Creek reservoir within a 4.5-foot band to accommodate flow releases from Thurmond Dam result in routine changes to the water surface elevation, microhabitat characteristics (e.g., water depth and water velocity), and change water levels along shoreline habitats. The maximum reservoir drawdown of 4.5-feet exposes approximately 575 acres of littoral zone habitat (FERC 1995). Because of this, mussel surveys will focus primarily on those areas below the 4.5-foot depth contour where mussels are likely to become established.

Specific sampling protocols, using the SC DNR methods, for both qualitative and quantitative surveys to be employed during this study are included below (Appendix A) (SCDNR 2020).

Qualitative

Qualitative surveys should consist of tactile and visual searches of all habitats (not just suitable habitats) within the survey area to be searched, or "prescribed search area" (PSA). When delineating the PSA, every attempt should be made to not disturb the sediment. Shells should be collected from along all exposed areas in the PSA including banks and midchannel bars. The visual search on the bank(s) should be conducted in addition to hand grubbing (probing substrate with hands 1-2 inches into substrate) search and a visual search for individuals within the water (SCDNR 2020).

Recommended survey equipment will vary with stream condition. Mask and snorkel with hand grubbing should be used in areas with water depth less than an arm's length. When habitat type or turbidity preclude the use of a mask and snorkel, only hand grubbing would be sufficient. View buckets/bathyscopes may be used as a supplemental method. (SCDNR 2020).

Surveys should be conducted from downstream to upstream to maximize visibility and should cover the stream from bank to bank using a single pass and multiple observers. A minimum search rate of $10 \text{ m}^2/\text{min}$ (Smith et al. 2001) should be employed to ensure adequate coverage. Individuals of a native mussel species should be identified and counted, up to the first 100 individuals of each species found. One representative color photograph should be taken of each native mussel species found. If live, federally or state protected species are located, they should be identified, counted, measured for length, and photographed. If more than 100 live individuals of a single federally or state protected species, measure lengths for the first 100 individuals and count the remaining individuals. When measuring length of a mussel, calipers should be used to record the greatest distance from the anterior to the posterior shell margin to the nearest 0.1 mm (SCDNR 2020).

Quantitative

Quadrat surveys are used to estimate recruitment and the density or relative species abundance at a fixed site. Because mussels are typically non-uniformly distributed throughout a site, reach, or river, large sample sizes are required (SCDNR 2020). This method is not as effective for documenting species richness or the presence of rare species due to a smaller total search area but

does provide higher detection rates for juvenile mussels. This method is not recommended for monitoring mussels at a watershed or range wide scale but can be extremely useful for monitoring specific sites or meta-populations of interest (SCDNR 2020).

This method involves a fixed site location. The site is divided into a 0.25 m² grid and excavation quadrats are chosen using systematic sampling. To reduce time in water, multiple observers use snorkeling to excavate the 0.25 m² quadrat to 6 inches in depth. A minimum of 3 percent of the survey area should be surveyed when using this method (SCDNR 2020).

Live and fresh dead mussels collected during the survey will be identified to species, enumerated and returned to their habitat consistent with SCDNR SOP (Appendix A), although some shell material and/or live specimens may be preserved and returned to the laboratory for taxonomic confirmation. All sampling stations, as well as any significant mussel beds found during sampling, will be documented using a GPS receiver. Mussel habitat and substrate surveyed at each sample location, as well as the species collected during the survey, will also be noted and photo documented. Basic water quality parameters (temperature, dissolved oxygen and conductivity) will be collected near the substrate at representative sample areas. Any equipment used as part of the sampling will be cleaned before and after sampling in each area.

6.0 SCHEDULE

Field surveys will be conducted from late March to <u>late Slate September</u> of 2021 over 2-3 days. Study methodology, timing and duration may be adjusted based on consultation with resource agencies and interested stakeholders. A final report will be issued to the RCG within four months of the completion of field work.

7.0 **REFERENCES**

- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). 1995. Final Environmental Assessment for Hydropower License. Filed November 7, 1995. Kleinschmidt. 2020. Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project FERC No. 2535: Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species Whitepaper. February 2020.
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR). 2020. Freshwater Mussel Survey Protocol. March 2020.

APPENDIX A

SCDNR FRESHWATER MUSSEL SURVEY PROTOCOL

Alison Jakupca

Subject: Location:	Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Microsoft Teams Meeting
Start: End:	Tue 9/15/2020 9:30 AM Tue 9/15/2020 12:00 PM
Recurrence:	(none)
Meeting Status:	Accepted
Organizer: Required Attendees:	Kelly Kirven Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); Ashley Holmes; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov); caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net); Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov); Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov); Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us); Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org); Elizabeth Johnson (enjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us); Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov); Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@chenckee.org); Henderson, Cameron T.; Henry Mealing; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov); Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil); jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov); Johncraun@att.net; Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov); Jordan Johnson; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil); Mark Scott; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov); Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov); MICHAEL MOSLEY; Outdoor Augusta; Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov); R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com); rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com); RAYMOND AMMARELL; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net); Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org); Robin Goodloe (robin_goodloe@fws.gov); Robinson, Scott; Rooks, Whitney; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil); Stan Simpson (Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil); Atev Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov); Thom Litts (thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov); Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org); Wenonah Haire; Whalen, James -FS; William Jabour (William E.Jabour@usace.army.mil); Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov); Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov); Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov); Jason Moak; Jeffery Williams (jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov); Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov); Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov); Ron Ahle; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov); Scott Glassmeyer; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com); Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov); Zapata, Martha: Ret Hoffman: Sus
Optional Attendees:	Miller, Derrick L -FS

Good morning all,

The next Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15th from 9:30 AM-12:00 PM. At this meeting, we will discuss revisions made to the Mussel Study Plan, Recreation Study Plan, and Water Quality Study Plan with the goal of finalizing these plans prior to the start of field season in January 2021. Additional information will be sent out prior to the meeting.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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Alison Jakupca

From:	Kelly Kirven
Sent:	Monday, September 28, 2020 11:09 AM
То:	Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); 'Bill Post'; Bjorn Lake - NOAA Federal; Bret Hoffman; CALEB GASTON; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov); Ellen Waldrop; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov); Henry
	Mealing; Jason Moak; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jordan Johnson; Kelly Kirven; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov); Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov); Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov); RAYMOND AMMARELL; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov)
Subject:	Stevens Creek Fish Passage TC Meeting
Attachments:	American Eel Sampling Locations.pdf

Good morning all,

Tomorrow is our next meeting of the Stevens Creek Fish Passage Technical Committee. We will review existing American Eel data collected by GADNR And SCDNR. Attached is a figure that shows where American Eels have been collected in the Savannah River Basin. We can discuss further tomorrow.

Talk to you all tomorrow! Thanks.

Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

Eel Collection Locations


Eel Collection Locations



Eel Collection Locations



Alison Jakupca

Subject: Location:	Stevens Creek Fish Passage TWC Meeting Microsoft Teams Meeting	
Start: End:	Tue 9/29/2020 9:30 AM Tue 9/29/2020 12:00 PM	
Recurrence:	(none)	
Meeting Status:	Accepted	
Organizer: Required Attendees:	Kelly Kirven Kelly Kirven; Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); 'Bill Post'; CALEB GASTON; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov); Ellen Waldrop; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov); Henry Mealing; Jason Moak; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jordan Johnson; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov); Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov); Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov); RAYMOND AMMARELL; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov); Bjorn Lake - NOAA Federal	
Optional Attendees:	Glassmeyer, Scott T; Bret Hoffman; Jason Bettinger	

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+1 207-248-8024 United States, Portland (Toll)

Conference ID: 935 181 430#



Alison Jakupca

From:	Elizabeth Miller <millere@dnr.sc.gov></millere@dnr.sc.gov>	
Sent:	Tuesday, October 6, 2020 1:38 PM	
То:	Marcinek, Paula; Kelly Kirven; Alison Jakupca	
Cc:	Schleiger, Steve; Payne, Jason	
Subject:	RE: Draft Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020	

Hi Paula,

I reached out to Andy Wicker, SCDNR's Chief Engineer for Boating Access. He plans to attend and provide input on site feasibility. Thanks for pointing out that comment in the meeting notes.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth C. Miller SCDNR Office: (843) 953-3881 Cell: (843) 729-4636

From: Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 1:29 PM
To: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>
Cc: Schleiger, Steve <Steve.Schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Elizabeth Miller
<MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>
Subject: RE: Draft Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020

Hi. Just one comment regarding the following sentence: "Additional representatives from GADNR and SCDNR boating access crews will attend the site visit."

Neither SCDNR nor GADNR committed to having their crews attend, but representatives of both said they would reach out to the crews and see if they are available.

And a follow up is that it is highly unlikely that GADNR boating access crew will be available to evaluate the launch on the SC side. Hopefully SCDNR's crew will be available for that site visit.

I also think it would be advantageous to invite the GA River Network's water trails coordinator to the site visit. Gwyneth Moody, <u>gwyneth@garivers.org</u>, has extensive experience with developing access points for canoes and kayaks. She may not have the engineering insight of the boating access crew, but probably could provide a good opinion on feasibility. I've worked with her and can extend the invitation once you have a date or poll set up.

Best, Paula Marcinek Aquatic Biologist, Wildlife Conservation

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From: Kelly Kirven <<u>Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com</u>> Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 2:35 PM To: Marcinek, Paula <<u>Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov</u>>; Schleiger, Steve <<u>Steve.Schleiger@dnr.ga.gov</u>>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <<u>weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov</u>>; Elizabeth Miller (<u>MillerE@dnr.sc.gov</u>) <<u>MillerE@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Jason Bettinger (<u>bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov</u>) <<u>bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Morgan Kern (<u>KernM@dnr.sc.gov</u>) <<u>KernM@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Mark Scott <<u>ScottM@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Melanie Olds <<u>melanie_olds@fws.gov</u>>; Whalen, James -FS <<u>james.whalen@usda.gov</u>>; Twyla Cheatwood (<u>twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>) <<u>twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>>; Frank Carl <<u>frankcarl@knology.net</u>>; Dave Mewborn <<u>dave@savannahriverkeeper.org</u>>; FrankHolleman@NaturalandTrust.org **Cc:** AMY BRESNAHAN (<u>Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u>) <<u>Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u>>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <<u>raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com</u>>; CALEB GASTON <<u>caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com</u>>; Alison Jakupca <<u>Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com</u>>; Bret Hoffman <<u>Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com</u>>; Jason Moak <<u>Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>>; Bret Hoffman <<u>Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com</u>> **Subject:** Draft Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020

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Good afternoon all,

Attached are the draft notes from the Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting, held on September 15th. Please review and provide any comments or edits by October 9th.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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Alison Jakupca

Olds, Melanie J <melanie_olds@fws.gov></melanie_olds@fws.gov>	
Wednesday, October 14, 2020 10:48 AM	
Kelly Kirven	
Alison Jakupca	
Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: Final Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020	

Kelly,

The Service does not have any additional edits to the plans.

Thanks,

Melanie

Melanie Olds | Fish & Wildlife Biologist/ SC FERC Coordinator U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office 176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200 Charleston, SC 29407 843-727-4707 ext. 205 NOTE: This email correspondence and any attachments to and from this sender is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com> Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 9:34 AM To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com <caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com>; CALEB GASTON (Services - 6) <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) < chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Dave Mewborn < dave@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabethtoombs@cherokee.org>; Frank Carl <frankcarl@knology.net>; FrankHolleman@NaturalandTrust.org <FrankHolleman@NaturalandTrust.org>; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov <jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov) <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov) <jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; johncraun@att.net <johncraun@att.net>; jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov <jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov) <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Mark Scott <ScottM@dnr.sc.gov>; Olds, Melanie J <melanie olds@fws.gov>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Marcinek, Paula <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com) <barneybimmer@gmail.com>;

rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org <rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org>; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) <rpavey1@comcast.net>; rphillips@gwf.org <rphillips@gwf.org>; Goodloe, Robin <robin goodloe@fws.gov>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Rooks, Whitney <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil) <scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov) <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Thom Litts (thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov) <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -FS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; William Jabour (William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil) <William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov) <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; twyla.cheatwood<twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Imm, Donald <donald imm@fws.gov>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov) <mixong@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov) <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jeffery Williams (jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov) <jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov) <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Glassmeyer, Scott T <scott_glassmeyer@fws.gov>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Zapata, Martha J <martha zapata@fws.gov> Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Final Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020

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Good morning all!

Since our last Stevens Creek Joint RCG meeting on September 15th, several of you have contacted me to let me know you are okay with the study plan edits or sent a few additional minor edits. I wanted to put out one "last call" for any additional edits before we finalize the study plans prior to the start of field season in 2021. Please let me know if you have any additional study plan edits by next Wednesday, October 21st. The final study plans will then be emailed to you and posted to the Project relicensing website.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt

Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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Good morning all,

The final notes from the Stevens Creek Joint RCG meeting held on September 15th are attached. These notes are also available on the Project website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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	Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com); Zapata, Martha
Subject:	RE: Final Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020
Date:	Wednesday, October 14, 2020 9:34:37 AM

Good morning all!

Since our last Stevens Creek Joint RCG meeting on September 15th, several of you have contacted me to let me know you are okay with the study plan edits or sent a few additional minor edits. I wanted to put out one "last call" for any additional edits before we finalize the study plans prior to the start of field season in 2021. Please let me know if you have any additional study plan edits by next Wednesday, October 21st. The final study plans will then be emailed to you and posted to the Project relicensing website.

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From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Monday, October 12, 2020 9:28 AM

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<barneybimmer@gmail.com>; rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com) <rmahan@sc.rr.com>; RAYMOND AMMARELL <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net) < rpavey1@comcast.net>; Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org) <rphillips@gwf.org>; Robin Goodloe (robin_goodloe@fws.gov) <robin_goodloe@fws.gov>; Robinson, Scott <Scott.Robinson@dnr.ga.gov>; Rooks, Whitney <Whitney.Rooks@dnr.ga.gov>; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil) < scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Stan Simpson (Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil) <Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov) <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; Thom Litts (thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov) <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org) <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Wenonah Haire <wenonah.haire@catawba.com>; Whalen, James -FS < james.whalen@usda.gov>; William Jabour (William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil) <William.E.Jabour@usace.army.mil>; Andy Herndon (Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov) <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Bret Hoffman <Bret.Hoffman@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@Kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov) <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Rusty Wenerick (weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov) <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Susan Barrett (sdbarrit@gmail.com) <sdbarrit@gmail.com>; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov) <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Chris Thomason (thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov) <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; David Eargle (eargleda@dhec.sc.gov) <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Don Imm (donald_imm@fws.gov) <donald_imm@fws.gov>; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov) <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; Greg Mixon (mixong@dnr.sc.gov) <mixong@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Bettinger (bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov) <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jeffery Williams (jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov) <jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Morgan Kern (KernM@dnr.sc.gov) <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Ron Ahle <AhleR@dnr.sc.gov>; Scott Glassmeyer <scott glassmeyer@fws.gov>; Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle61@gmail.com) <thornbuckle61@gmail.com>; Zapata, Martha <martha_zapata@fws.gov>

Subject: Final Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020

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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE 176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200 Charleston, South Carolina 29407



October 28, 2020

Ms. Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 12225 Wilkins Avenue Rockville, Maryland 20852

Re: COMMENTS on Notice of Intent to File License Application; Filing of Pre-Application Document; and Approval of Use of the Traditional Licensing Process for Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) Edgefield and McCormick Counties, South Carolina and Columbia County, Georgia. FWS Log No. 2020-CPA-0014

Dear Ms. Bose:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (Commission) July 16, 2020, Notice of Intent (NOI) to File License Application, Filing of Pre-Application Document (PAD), and Approving Use of the Traditional Licensing Process (TLP) for the above-referenced hydroelectric project. The following comments are submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 661-667e) and the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 803(a) and (j)).

The Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project) is located in Edgefield and McCormick counties, South Carolina and Columbia County, Georgia, at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River. It is approximately one mile upstream of the Augusta Diversion Dam and approximately 13 miles downstream of the J. Strom Thurmond Dam. The Project occupies 104 acres of Federal lands within the Sumter National Forest. The 17.28-megawatts (MW) Project consists of the 2,400 acre reservoir, a 2,000-foot spillway, a concrete gravity navigation lock, and the powerhouse. The lock is located between the powerhouse and the spillway.

By letter dated May 15, 2020, Dominion Energy South Carolina (DESC) filed a PAD and NOI for a new license for the Project. The current Project license was issued November 22, 1995 and is set to expire on October 31, 2025. Although not required by the Commission, DESC began early consultation (pre-PAD) with natural resource agencies and to date has made substantial efforts to ensure the relicensing of the Project before the current license expires. During this early investment, DESC began collecting information and developing study plans to address information needs and to assess impacts to natural resources, in which the Service requested a mussel survey, which DESC has agreed to perform. Additionally, the Service in a letter dated April 28, 2020, expressed our support of DESC's request of the TLP for this Project.

The Service has reviewed and provided comments on a draft PAD for the Project as well as attended the in-person Agency and Stakeholder site visit on May 15, 2019 and the virtual Joint Agency Meeting on September 3, 2020. The applicant has committed time and resources in

advance to early coordination with the Service and other stakeholders toward the relicensing of this Project. We believe that applicant has set a high standard for cooperation and communication among stakeholders to address potential issues.

As noted in the PAD, the current license for the Project requires upstream passage for diadromous fish species. The Section 18 prescription filed on October 28, 1994 and subsequently accepted into the Project's license, includes a requirement to refurbish the navigation lock, which would be operated using attraction flows or other fish attraction mechanisms. This prescription was primarily focused on the American shad and only included upstream passage. At that time, the Department of Interior reserved their right to amend their prescriptions to include an alternative downstream passage.

Since that time, further research and better technologies have been developed for the passage of fish species and the Service no longer feels the navigation lock, which is more centrally located on the river as opposed to being located on or near one of the banks, is appropriate or adequate to provide safe, timely, and effective fish passage. To date, DESC has formed a Fish Passage Technical Committee and held several meetings. The Service will continue to work with DESC, along with other natural resource agencies, to develop fish passage at Stevens Creek that better meets the needs of the Service's trust resources. The Service plans to file with FERC a new Section 18 Fishway Prescription for the relicensing of this Project. Additionally, the Service would like to request DESC further study effective downstream passage at Stevens Creek, including more species than previous entrainment studies for the Project. The Service will work with DESC to identify additional species to be included. This additional information will be used to inform future decisions regarding downstream passage to be included in a new Section 18 fishway prescription.

The Service appreciates the opportunity to participate in the relicensing of the Project and looks forward to working with DESC throughout the process to meet our collective goals. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Melanie Olds at (843) 727-4707 ext. 205 or at <u>melanie olds@fws.gov</u>, and reference FWS No. 2020-CPA-0014.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. McCoy Thomas D. McCoy

Thomas D. McCoy Field Supervisor

ec: Amy Bresnahan, DESC Alison Jakupca, Kleinschmidt Twyla Cheatwood, NOAA-NMFS Elizabeth Miller, SCDNR Paula Marcinek, GADNR



WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION

MARK WILLIAMS COMMISSIONER RUSTY GARRISON DIRECTOR

November 2, 2020

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 888 First Street, N.E. Room 1A Washington, DC 20426

RE: Comments on Pre-Application Document and Study Plans Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (P-2535)

Dear Secretary Bose:

We appreciate the opportunity to review the Pre-Application Document (PAD) and Proposed Study Plans (PSP) filed on May 15, 2020 by Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.'s (DESC) to relicense the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (P-2535) located on the Savannah River. We recognize that this project has impacts to the water quality, aquatic habitat and species, and recreational opportunities within, upstream, and downstream of the project area and have been in consultation with DESC through public meetings and formal comments.

The DESC has invested significant time and effort into early coordination and continues to solicit agency feedback regarding potential project impacts and community needs. DESC initiated consultation to address some of the topics identified in the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division's (WRD) June 10, 2020 comments. Updates were made to study plans after the Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) on September 3, 2020 and consultation continues with state and federal agencies through technical working committees (TWC), such as the Fish Passage TWC.

Again, we appreciate the efforts of DESC to consult and address WRD concerns through ongoing dialogue and updates to the study plans. After review of the updated study plans emailed to agencies on September 17, 2020, we find that most recommendations and requests expressed during consultations were addressed or continue to be discussed and considered through TWCs. Our comments on the PAD and PSP are provided in the attached document.

Sincerely,

Rusty Garrison

Georgia Wildlife Resources Division (WRD): Comments on PAD, White Papers, Study Plans Stevens Creek Hydropower Project (P-2535)

Pre-Application Document

Project Location, Facilities, and Operations (PAD 3.0)

A map of the land adjacent to the project showing Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.'s (DESC) land holdings with distinct representation for leased and non-leased lands would be useful in assessing study results.

Fish and Aquatic Resources (PAD 3.7, 4.3, 4.5)

Fish Passage – Fish passage is an important issue to WRD. We will remain engaged in the established Fish Passage Technical Working Committee (FPTWC) to ensure that fish passage design is able to pass all migratory species of concern including American Shad, Atlantic and Shortnose Sturgeon, Robust Redhorse, Striped Bass, and American Eel.

Fish Entrainment and Turbine-Induced Mortality – The PAD states that DESC is not proposing mitigation or enhancement measures related to fish and aquatic resources at this time. However, DESC recognizes from previous studies that fish entrainment occurs at the project resulting in in the loss of approximately 15,000 fish annually with impacts to 16 or 17 species including Threadfin Shad, Bluegill, American Eel and others. Under the SCHPs current license, Article 406 requires annual payments to fund resource-based enhancements in the Savannah River basin in coordination with the Department of Interior, South Carolina DNR and Georgia DNR. WRD will continue to engage with DESC and other stakeholders to identify fisheries resource mitigation strategies for the upcoming license term.

Aquatic Non-native Invasive Species – Impacts of invasive species (both plant and animal) have direct effects on native flora and fauna within and downstream of the project boundary. As part of the relicensing process, DESC is developing an Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper. We recommend this document include a Section on invasive aquatic vegetation, as well as an evaluation of measures, beyond signage (e.g. installation of boat cleaning stations at project ramps), to prevent potential movement of aquatic invasive plants found in SCHP's reservoir to other waterbodies.

Recreation/Access (PAD 3.7, 3.8, 4.3, 5.1)

The PAD refers to a six-year recreational plan update that includes a study ruling out the viability of providing a recreational site, including a year-round accessible boat launch, on the Georgia side of the reservoir. No further information is provided as to how the study was conducted or the results. WRD respectfully requests that a copy of the study design and results be made available to stakeholders for review and reference during the relicensing process.

Available public boating and fishing access sites up- and downstream of the dam do not adequately provide Georgia residents with recreational access to the project. WRD recommends DESC evaluate the following enhancements:

Downstream River Access – The one-mile reach between Stevens Creek Dam and the Augusta Diversion Dam is currently a popular destination for paddling, fishing, and outdoor recreation despite inadequate

access. Numerous local businesses offer guided tours to this area. The area's popularity is likely to grow as Columbia County Convention and Visitors Bureau is actively promoting paddling in this area as part of their "Serene 18 Paddle Trail" marketing campaign. Currently, boating access to this area is only possible via a primitive canoe-launch just above the Augusta Diversion Dam, requiring users to paddle upstream and float back down to the same launch. A canoe portage at Stevens Creek Dam (a canoe/kayak launch downstream of the dam in conjunction with added reservoir access) would be extremely beneficial for outdoor recreation in the Stevens Creek area. The portage would allow for the upstream expansion of the Augusta Canal Water Trail already established below the Augusta Diversion Dam and connect most of the Serene 18 paddle trails currently disconnected by the Stevens Creek Dam. Since the downstream Augusta Diversion Dam facilitates portaging into either the Augusta Canal or the Savannah River, the portage at Stevens Creek Dam would connect all upstream recreation sites to the Savannah River downstream, creating the opportunity to paddle from Clarks Hill Dam to downtown Augusta.

Reservoir Access – Currently the only fishing and boating access on the Georgia side of the project is near the upper end of the reservoir at Bettys Branch, more than five river miles upstream of the dam. A boat launch near the lower section of the reservoir was identified as a need by WRD in the previous relicensing process and is still recognized as a need.

Tailrace Fishing Pier – Article 413 (5) of SCHP's current license required DESC to construct a tailrace fishing platform on the Georgia side of the project. DESC cites potential vandalism of Stallings Island, a National Historic Landmark, as the reason for not fulfilling its license requirement to install and maintain the tailrace fishing platform and the provision was removed from Article 413. WRD does not agree with the determination that a fishing platform itself would provide additional access to the center channel and Stallings Island. In fact, having more "eyes on the river" from bank angling may discourage looters and as stated by DESC in the PAD; access to Stallings Island is already established.

Proposed Study Plans

In the PAD that FERC published in May of 2020, DESC proposed three study plans: 1. a Mollusk Study Plan, 2. a Recreation Study Plan, and 3. a Water Quality Study Plan. WRD reviewed these plans and developed a series of comments, which were provided to DESC during subsequent meetings and other direct consultations. DESC has addressed many of WRD recommendations based on the updated study plans presented at during a joint agency meeting on September 15, 2020 and distributed to stakeholders via email on September 17, 2020.

Mollusk Study Plan

WRD requested that the study area include large tributaries on the Georgia side of the reservoir, including, but not limited to, Kiokee Creek, Little River, Uchee Creek, and the area downstream of the dam. WRD concurs with the updated study plan, which had not yet been filed with FERC or posted on the project website at the time WRD's comment letter was written.

Recreation Study Plan

WRD requested that the recreation survey include questions addressing WRD's concerns and that the survey be more broadly conducted/distributed. WRD concurs with the updated study plan, which had not been filed with FERC or posted on the project website at the time WRD's comment letter was written.

Water Quality Study Plan

WRD requested that nutrients be added to water quality monitoring both upstream and downstream of the dam. WRD concurs with the updated study plan, which had not been filed with FERC or posted on the project website at the time WRD's comment letter was written. However, WRD continues to recommend that WRD requests a two-year study instead of the proposed one-year to account for temporal variation in weather patterns.

Administrative/Editorial Comments on PAD and Appendices

Section 4.2 Water Resources

Section 4.2.1 Drainage Area (pp 4-14 – 4-15 & Figure 4-7): Drainage area delineation excludes the upper Savannah River

• The drainage area outlined on the map is not representative of the typical definition of drainage area, which is the total surface area upstream of a point on a river. This deviation should be corrected or clearly defined.

4.3 Fish and Aquatic Resources

Section 4.3.1.2 Resident Fish Species (p 4-35): Redeye Bass is considered a separate species throughout the document.

 Redeye Bass in the Savannah has been genetically shown to be a species distinct from Redeye Bass (type locality from Coosa River). The Savannah Redeye Bass is now recognized as Bartram's Bass, and there are no known records of Redeye Bass being introduced.

Section 4.3.1.2 Resident Fish Species (p 4-35): Robust Redhorse... Repeated broodstock collection indicates...

• Broodstock has not been collected from the Savannah River in quite some time. More accurate to say "recent spawning surveys indicate..."

Section 4.3.1.2 Resident Fish Species (p 4-37): "Numerous recreation areas, fishing piers, and bank fishing areas... over 30 public fishing areas near project... Fishing access to the Savannah River is also provided at Savannah Rapids Park in Augusta, and at three Project recreation sites."

• "PFA" or "public fishing areas" means something very specific to WRD. Please define or reword to avoid potential confusion (e.g. public fishing sites, public fishing locations, etc.)

Section 4.3.1.2 Resident Fish Species Table 4-4 (p 4-39): Both *Micropterus coosae* and *M*. sp. cf *cataractae* are listed in table.

• Table should be updated to reflect more recent literature finding that *M. coosae* is restricted to the Coosa Drainage in Georgia. Any records of *M. coosae* from the Savannah Drainage should be considered Bartram's Bass (*M.* sp. cf *cataractae*).

Section 4.3.15 Freshwater Mussels: Common names are not capitalized throughout document, but those of fishes are capitalized.

• The scientific community capitalizes mollusk common names.

Section 4.3.2 Temporal and Spatial Distribution of Fish and Aquatic Communities (p 4-43): states Robust Redhorse spawning habitat 8 miles below NSBLD.

- More recent citation would be the latest report on the RRCC website.
- Robust spawning habitat is located directly below NSBLD as well as historical spawning in Augusta Shoals.

Section 4.3.2 Temporal and Spatial Distribution of Fish and Aquatic Communities (p 4-44): in Striped Bass and Herring discussions, states that fish pass during operation of NSBLD

• As stated earlier in the document and on p 4-43, NSBLD is not currently operated.

Section 4.3.4.2 Reservoir Fluctuation (p 4-47): "Fisheries sampling in Project waters demonstrates good reproductive success, regardless of the reservoir fluctuations (FERC 1995)."

• Outdated citation. The SCDNR FISHERY ENCHANCEMENT POTENTIAL OF STEVENS CREEK RESERVOIR, SOUTH CAROLINA - GEORGIA (2019) is a more recent reference.

4.6 Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species

Introduction (p 4-61; Table 4-8): Moxostoma robustum is misspelled as "robustrum".

• Correct spelling throughout document(s).

Section 4.6.2 Forest Service Sensitive Species (p 4-68 – 4-69; Table 4-11): Incorrect common and scientific name for Bartram's Bass; *Distocambarus crockeri* is not known from GA; *Moxostoma robustum* misspelled again.

- Make sure names are accurate throughout document based on the latest accepted scientific literature.
- WRD is unaware of the records of *D. crockeri* from the Georgia side. We would appreciate citations for these.
- Check the GADNR data portal and relevant, recent publications for appropriate distributions.

4.7 Recreation and Land Use

Section 4.7.3 Existing Shoreline Buffer Zones Within the Project Boundary (p 4-79): describes SCDNR buffer recommendations.

• Why are Georgia buffer requirements & discussion not included? Please add them or explain why they are not cited.

4.8 Aesthetic Resources

Section 4.8.3 Visual Character of Project Lands and Waters (p 4-92): area below the dam is described as both riverine and impounded in two consecutive paragraphs.

• Conflicting descriptions. Elaborate on the locations being described.

Section 4.12.4 Tributary Rivers and Streams (p 4-117): lists only Stevens Creek as "major tributary" with "other smaller, feeder tributaries in the Project Area".

 Define "major tributary". Why were Kiokee Creek, Uchee Creek, and Little River on the Georgia side not listed as major tributaries?

5.1 Issues Pertaining to the Identified Resources

Section 5.1.3 Fish and Aquatic Resources (p 5-2): "Fisheries sampling in Project waters demonstrates good reproductive success, regardless of reservoir fluctuations".

• FERC 1995 studies are dated and WRD requests updating with more current information such as the SCDNR 2019 or others.

Appendix A Consultation Record (PDF p 578)

Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive (TES) Species, Sumter National Forest (Table; PDF p 579)

- Bartram's Bass common and scientific name incorrect.
- Robust Redhorse scientific name misspelled.

Appendix H: RTE White Paper (starts on PDF p 543)

Section 3.0 Methodology (p 3): study area did not include downstream of dam?

• Though project area does not extend past dam, discharge does affect water quality, water quantity, and habitat below the dam.

Section 4.3.4 Brook Floater (p 17): slimy sculpin is listed as potential host fish.

 Slimy Sculpin does not occur in the Savannah Drainage. Either clarify that this description is range-wide or include only species pertinent to project area.

Section 4.3.6 Piedmont Prairie Burrowing Crayfish (p 18):

• As stated in comments for PAD Section 4.6.2, WRD is unaware of the records of *D. crockeri* from the Georgia side. We would appreciate citations for these or update the information with current distribution.

Section 4.3.8 Robust Redhorse (p 19): "Continued Project operations are not expected to adversely affect the species since the Project reregulates large pulses from Thurmond Dam, providing increased flow and associated habitat stability in the Augusta Shoals and further downstream."

- range description is incorrect; the Santee Basin in SC should be included
- Provide citation for statement... also applies to same statement for Bartram's Bass.

Section 4.3.11 Yellow Lampmussel (p 20-21): did not include range description for GA

- GA not listed, but is considered a SWAP high priority species
- Include GA range description
- Species information can be readily located on the GADNR Data Portal

Appendix I Mussel Study Plan (starts on PDF p 615):

• "Elliptio complanata" is misspelled in table 2-3 (PDF page 621, Mussel Study Plan Pg. 4)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE Southeast Regional Office 263 13th Avenue South St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505 https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/southeast

November 3, 2020

F/SER47:TC/pw

(Sent via Electronic Mail)

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 888 First Street, NE Washington, DC 20426

> Re: Comments on the Pre-Application Document for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No.2535)

Dear Secretary Bose:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reviewed the Pre-Application Document (PAD) prepared by Dominion Energy South Carolina (Dominion) for the proposed relicensing of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project, FERC Project No. 2535 (hereafter referred to as "Stevens Creek Project" or "Project"). The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approved Dominion's request to use the Traditional Licensing Process (TLP), and that process requires the NMFS to submit comments and study requests within 60 days of the Joint Agency Meeting, which Dominion conducted virtually on September 3, 2020. The following comments are submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Power Act (FPA, 16 U.S.C. 803(a); the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 661-667e); the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C.1531-1543); the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et. seq.); and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et. seq.).

The Stevens Creek Project is located in Edgefield and McCormick Counties, South Carolina, and Columbia County, Georgia, at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River at river mile 209.1 of the Savannah River. The Project's dam is located approximately one mile upstream of the Augusta Diversion Dam and approximately 13 miles downstream of the J. Strom Thurmond Dam (Thurmond), and the Project occupies 104 acres of federal lands within Sumter National Forest. The Stevens Creek Project consists of a three-level powerhouse structure; a concrete gravity-lock between the powerhouse and spillway; a spillway; a concrete non-overflow section; a reservoir with a surface area of approximately 2,400 acres; and transmission and appurtenant facilities. The reservoir's gross storage capacity is 23,600 acre-feet with usable storage at 7,800 acre-feet. Normal reservoir fluctuations between 183.0 feet and 187.5 feet are seen as the Project re-regulates flow releases from Thurmond. The Stevens Creek Project has a total maximum rated capacity of 17.28 megawatts and generates using available inflows up to the maximum station hydraulic capacity of 8,300 cubic feet per second.



The current license for the Stevens Creek Project includes a FPA Section 18 prescription requiring upstream passage for diadromous fish species following the construction of a fishway at the Augusta Diversion Dam. As noted in the PAD, the existing fishway prescription includes a requirement for upstream passage facilitated by the refurbishment of the navigation lock and operated using attraction flows or other fish attraction mechanisms to provide a minimum of thirty lockages during the shad migration season. In more recent communications with Dominion, the NMFS indicated the 1994 prescription with required refurbishment of the navigation lock would not be the preferred passage approach for the Project. More recent research and improved technologies indicate the centrally located navigation lock would not provide adequate safe, timely, and effective passage for diadromous species in the Project area (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2019).

Dominion has formed a Fish Passage Technical Committee to discuss study needs and passage recommendations for the new license. The NMFS will continue to participate in the Technical Committee and work closely with Dominion and resource agencies to develop effective fish passage at the Stevens Creek Project. The following requested studies will allow resource agencies to evaluate better passage needs for emigrating adult diadromous species not identified in the Project's past entrainment studies and determine upstream and downstream fishway alternatives to inform safe, timely, and effective passage measures for incorporation into the potential FPA Section 18 prescription and new license.

Additional Study Requests

The NMFS supports the additional information needs requested by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the NMFS makes the following additional requests:

REQUESTED STUDY #1: PROJECT SURVIVAL STUDY

The Savannah River is a migratory corridor for diadromous fish species including American eel, American shad, and blueback herring. These species must be able to pass the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project without significant mortality. The Project has five I.P. Morris Francis and three S. Morgan Smith Francis vertical-shaft turbine units. These turbine passage routes represent a risk of mortality from blade-strike, particularly because there is no entrainment prevention at the Project intakes and the Project rarely spills. We request a study to determine Project survival by quantifying turbine mortality and injury under multiple operating conditions to inform safe, timely, and effective downstream passage measures at the Project.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this study is to estimate Project survival for emigrating adult diadromous species that pass through Project turbines. The objective of the study is to conduct a desktop turbine survival study for adult blueback herring and American eel through the Project's units.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GOALS

The NMFS is a federal resource agency with a mandate to protect and conserve fisheries resources and associated habitat. Regulatory statutes codify our resource management goals and plans. We rely on the best available data to support conservation recommendations and

management decisions. Data sought in this study request are not available. This study is an appropriate request for the pre-application period.

PUBLIC INTEREST

The requestor, NMFS, is a federal resource agency.

EXISTING INFORMATION AND NEED FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Turbine mortality is a well-documented effect of hydroelectric facility operation on fisheries resources (Pracheil et al. 2016). In the last half-century, dozens of previous licensing studies quantified the effects of many types of turbines. Industry professionals have compiled much of this information in a database (EPRI 1992). In general, American eels have higher survival passing Francis turbines, and alosines have higher survival passing Kaplan turbines (Pracheil 2016). However, the extent of turbine mortality relates to the species, life stage, and the specifications of the turbine, which result in dramatic differences in turbine survival. Fish length, runner rotational speed, and the number of runner blades are key variables determining turbine mortality.

Turbine mortality at the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project was evaluated with tag and recapture studies completed by RMC Environmental, Inc., in 1994. The results of that study were used in the effects analysis of the Environmental Assessment conducted by the Commission (Accession No. 19951128-0046). For diadromous species, the mortality rate was five percent for American eel and six percent for juvenile blueback herring greater than 8.0 centimeters in length. For juvenile American shad and blueback herring, the results from the tag/recapture study suggest turbine-induced mortality is low enough that Project operations will not significantly affect the restoration of alosines. However, additional information is needed to understand the potential Project effects on adult blueback herring and American eel. Blueback herring are iteroparous species that migrate from freshwater habitats back to the sea after spawning. The previous tag/recapture study is not valid for adult blueback herring that are on average 27.5 centimeters in length. Adult American eel can grow to over a meter in length and it is unclear from the tag/recapture study how the mortality rate of five percent was determined.

PROJECT NEXUS

Operation of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project will have a direct effect on the survival of emigrating diadromous fish through turbine passage. None of the turbines have entrainment prevention leading to the potential for high turbine mortality at the Project. Information gained from this study will greatly increase our understanding of Project effects. This study will contribute to the development of an administrative record in support of potential FPA Section 18 fishway prescriptions or FPA Section 10(j) recommendations.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The turbine survival portion of this study request should evaluate adult American eel and blueback herring. The desktop turbine survival study should use standard methodology appropriate for the type of turbine and empirical information available (Franke et al. 1997). The study should use published average length values for each species and life stage in the calculations. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has developed a user-friendly turbine blade strike model (link below) that can be utilized to determine blade strike probabilities at each of the Project turbines. This model is only valid for alosines. For American eel, Dominion should use

multiple linear regression models and results from other studies at hydroelectric projects with similar turbines to estimate American eel mortality through the turbines (Amaral 2017).

After determining estimates for turbine mortality, Dominion will derive overall Project survival estimates using typical operating curves and expected flows (i.e., the flow duration curve) during the downstream migration season for each species. Dominion should use the general rule that fish will emigrate proportionally with flow to estimate overall Project survival. When model assumptions are necessary, we recommend following the methods and assumptions used in a study commissioned by the NMFS of downstream survival on the Penobscot River in Maine (Amaral et al. 2012).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service turbine blade strike model can be downloaded here:

(https://www.fws.gov/northeast/fisheries/fishpassageengineering.html)

LEVEL OF EFFORT AND COST

The level of cost and effort for the Project survival study is low. The study will likely take less than one year. Dominion will calculate the turbine survival estimates, estimate overall Project survival, and report the results. We estimate the cost will be less than \$25,000 for the study. As an alternative study, Dominion may conduct balloon tag studies with target species test specimens at significantly more cost.

REQUESTED STUDY #2: UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM FISH PASSAGE FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Savannah River is a migratory corridor for alosines and American eel. These species must be able to pass the Project without undue harm or delay to complete their life cycle. Poor or no passage at the Project limits access to freshwater spawning habitats and marine habitats harming resilience within the population and ecosystem benefits to other trophic levels. The Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project presents a barrier to upstream migrating diadromous fish and, pending the results of the Project survival study, a source of mortality for downstream migrating diadromous fish. We request a fish-passage feasibility study to determine upstream and downstream fishway alternatives at the Project to inform safe, timely, and effective passage measures for incorporation into the new license.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this study is to identify potential, cost-effective fishway alternatives at the Project for alosines and American eel in the Savannah River that meet our fishery management goals. Ineffective fishways can result in delay, mortality, or injury during migration and result in an imbalance between energy production and the fisheries resource (Brown et al. 2013). We need to understand the feasible upstream and downstream fishway alternatives that will meet our management goals to determine measures and recommendations that increase survival and improve fish passage at the Project.

The objectives of this study are:

- Evaluate upstream fishway alternatives that provide safe, timely, and effective passage for alosines and American eel.
- Evaluate downstream fishway alternatives that provide safe, timely, and effective passage for alosines and American eel.

• Propose at least one alternative for upstream and downstream fishways at each of the Project.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GOALS

The NMFS is a federal resource agency with a mandate to protect and conserve fisheries resources and associated habitat. Regulatory statutes codify our resource management goals and plans. We rely on the best available data to support conservation recommendations and management decisions. We have developed an interagency management plan for the Savannah River that includes fish passage at the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project. The analyses and Project-specific data sought in this study are not available. This study is an appropriate request for the pre-application period.

PUBLIC INTEREST

The requestor, NMFS, is a federal resource agency.

EXISTING INFORMATION AND NEED FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Article 408 of the current license states:

The licensee shall provide for the construction, maintenance, and operation of up-stream fish passage facilities at its own expense as prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Commerce.

Up-stream fish passage facilities shall consist of a refurbished navigation lock at the Stevens Creek dam, which shall be operated using attraction flows or other fish attraction mechanisms to provide a minimum of 30 lockages during the American shad migration season. The up-stream fish passage facilities must be designed in cooperation and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Fish and Wildlife Service), Georgia Department of Natural Resources (Georgia DNR), and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (South Carolina DNR). The licensee shall complete design of the up-stream fish passage facilities at the Stevens Creek Project if and when up-stream fish passage facilities are installed at the Augusta Diversion Dam down-stream of the Stevens Creek Project.

Actual construction and operation of the Fish & Wildlife Service-approved final design will be required within two years after fish passage facilities are in place at the Augusta diversion dam, unless the licensee can effectively document that up-stream fish passage facilities at the Augusta diversion dam are not successfully passing anadromous fish species upstream to the Stevens Creek Dam. In such cases, the licensee shall provide up-stream fish passage facilities within two years after the fish passage facilities are successfully operating at the Augusta Diversion Dam.

The Commission reserves the authority to require the construction, maintenance, and operation of downstream fish passage facilities, or the modification of the up-stream fish passage facilities, by the licensee at its own expense as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Commerce.

In January of 2021, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will break ground on the removal and replacement of the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam with a nature-like fishway that will pass alosines and American eel. In addition, NMFS expects to file a modified prescription for the

Augusta Canal Project (FERC No. 11810) in 2021 requiring construction of a fishway at the Augusta Diversion Dam for passing alosines and American eel. The timeline for expected for that condition is within three migratory seasons after completion of the fishway at New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam. Therefore, unlike the current license, the construction of an upstream fishway at the Stevens Creek Project is eminent and will likely occur within a few years of the new license issuance.

At the time of licensure, the existing lock structure at the Stevens Creek Project may have been an attractive option for upstream fish passage at the Project, but over the length of the current license, the lock structure has degraded to the point that it no longer may be a feasible upstream passage option. In addition, fish passage research has questioned the efficacy of locking fish as a suitable means of upstream fish passage (Bailey et al. 2004, Moser et al. 2000, Smith and Hightower 2012, Vergeynst et al. 2019). For proper conditioning of the new license, there is a need to determine feasible approaches to upstream passage and, potentially, downstream passage measures at the Project. The study phase of the licensing procedure is an opportune time to develop these concepts. To date, no study of fish passage feasibility has been formally conducted at the Project.

PROJECT NEXUS

The Stevens Creek Project blocks important upstream spawning habitats and has no anadromous upstream fishways to facilitate attainment of diadromous species management goals for the Savannah River watershed. No fishway measures for American eel have been developed at the Project either. The Project does not have entrainment prevention at any of the turbine intakes. In addition, Project operations produce a myriad of migratory routes, both upstream and downstream, that can lead to delay, increased predation, and mortality. Information gained from this study will greatly increase our understanding of the appropriate cost-effective measures that will mitigate Project effects. This study will contribute to the development of an administrative record and alternative analyses in support of potential FPA Section 18 fishway prescriptions or FPA Section 10(j) recommendations.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

We recommend the Dominion initiate the study by organizing a meeting with resource agency technical experts and Dominion's representatives. During this meeting, the technical team will brainstorm alternatives for upstream and downstream fish passage measures that will meet agency goals for diadromous fishes in the Savannah River watershed. Dominion will take this list of alternatives and conduct site-specific analyses to determine the feasibility of the fish passage measure. At a minimum, Dominion should evaluate the following factors:

- 1. Ability to meet agency fishway criteria and guidance including, but not limited to:
 - Fishway capacity
 - Design flows and operating range
 - Fishway hydraulics
 - Attraction and internal efficiency
- 2. Site constraints including construction access and interferences with hydropower operations
- 3. Permitting constraints including cultural and historic resources, recreational facilities, and other natural resource considerations

- 4. Operations and maintenance concerns
- 5. Capital investment and life-cycle costs

To evaluate those factors, Dominion should rely on agency guidance documents; contemporary fish passage literature; collected resource, engineering and survey data as necessary; analogous fish passage projects; and standard cost indices. Dominion will prepare a draft technical memorandum with conceptual-level drawings for agency staff to review and provide feedback. Dominion will then finalize the technical memorandum incorporating agency comments. We recommend conducting this study after completing the other requested studies to incorporate information obtained in the downstream survival studies for American eel and alosines.

LEVEL OF EFFORT AND COST

The level of cost and effort for the upstream and downstream fish passage feasibility study is moderate. Dominion will organize meetings, correspondence, collect data, conduct engineering analyses, and report the results in a concise study report. We estimate the cost will be approximately \$75,000 for the study. No alternatives are proposed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Please direct related questions or comments to the attention of Ms. Twyla Cheatwood at our Beaufort Field Office, 101 Pivers Island Road, Beaufort, North Carolina 28516-9722, or at (252) 728-8758.

Sincerely,

/ for

Virginia M. Fay Assistant Regional Administrator Habitat Conservation Division

cc: DESC, Amy.Bresnahan@scana.com Kleinschmidt, Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com SCDNR, MarshallB@dnr.sc.gov, MillerE@dnr.sc.gov USFWS, Melanie_Olds@fws.gov F/SER47, Twyla.Cheatwood@noaa.gov

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From:	Elizabeth Miller	
To:	Kelly Kirven	
Cc:	AMY BRESNAHAN; RAYMOND AMMARELL; Alison Jakupca; Henry Mealing; Jason Moak; Jason Bettinger; Mark	
	Scott	
Subject:	RE: Final Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020	
Date:	Wednesday, October 14, 2020 4:22:10 PM	

Hi Kelly,

As SCDNR mentioned in the September 15th meeting, we're moving forward and planning to formally submit study request for a Bartram's Bass study to Water Quality, Fish and Wildlife Resource Conservation Group for consideration. Is there a schedule that we should be keeping in mind while developing the criteria?

Thank you,

Elizabeth

Elizabeth C. Miller SCDNR Office: (843) 953-3881 Cell: (843) 729-4636

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Monday, October 12, 2020 9:28 AM

To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) < Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall <MarshallB@dnr.sc.gov>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Dave Mewborn <dave@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabethtoombs@cherokee.org>; Frank Carl <frankcarl@knology.net>; FrankHolleman@NaturalandTrust.org; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov) <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov) <jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; johncraun@att.net; Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov) <jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov) <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Mark Scott <ScottM@dnr.sc.gov>; Olds, Melanie J <melanie olds@fws.gov>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Paula

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Good morning all,

The final notes from the Stevens Creek Joint RCG meeting held on September 15th are attached. These notes are also available on the Project website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources



1000 Assembly Street PO Box 167 Columbia, SC 29202 843-953-3881 Office millere@dnr.sc.gov

Robert H. Boyles, Jr Director

Lorianne Riggin Director, Office of Environmental Programs

November 2, 2020

Electronic Transmission

Hon. Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 888 First Street, NE Washington, DC 20426

REFERENCE: COMMENTS on the Pre-Application Document and study requests for Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (P-2535-126).

Dear Secretary Bose:

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) has reviewed the Preapplication Document (PAD) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project), which was submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) on May 15, 2020. The Project is owned by Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (Licensee). The Project is located in Edgefield and McCormick counties, South Carolina and Columbia County, Georgia, at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River. The current license expires on October 31, 2025. The SCDNR submits these comments, opinions, and recommendations in accordance with provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. Sec. 661-667); the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. Sec. 791 et seq.); the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321 et seq.); and the Electric Consumers Protection Act of 1986 (Pub. L. No. 99-495, 100 Stat. 1243).

SCDNR Responsibilities and Objectives

The SCDNR is the state agency charged by state law with the management, protection, and enhancement of wildlife, fisheries, and marine resources in South Carolina. The SCDNR is responsible for formulating comprehensive policies for water resources through a State Water Plan to address issues affecting water supply, water quality, navigation, hydroelectric power, outdoor recreation, fish and wildlife needs, and other water resource interests. The SCDNR is also charged with the statewide responsibilities for regulating watercraft operation and associated

recreation on state waters, conducting geological surveys and mapping, promoting soil and water conservation, management of invasive aquatic plants, flood mitigation, drought response planning and coordination, and the state scenic rivers program. The SCDNR's mission is to serve as the principal advocate for and steward of South Carolina's natural resources. The SCDNR authorities and responsibilities are described in Titles 48, 49, and 50, South Carolina Code of Laws (1976), as amended.

The SCDNR management objectives for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project and the Savannah River include the protection, enhancement, and restoration of natural resources and their associated values. Specific objectives are to:

- Ensure the FERC license recognizes that the Savannah River and tributaries are an important public trust resource, and that the Project is managed to achieve public benefits.
- Maintain and/or enhance the water quality conditions in the Savannah River to meet state standards and current use classifications that protect and provide for fish and wildlife habitat, contact recreation, and public water supply.
- Ensure the implementation of appropriate instream flows in the Savannah River to be consistent with the South Carolina Water Plan so as to protect water quality, provide for reasonable navigation, protect fish and wildlife resources, and meet present and future water supply demands (municipal, industrial, agricultural).
- Protect and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat. Minimize entrainment mortality for fish. Protect and enhance shoreline and littoral habitats for aquatic species. Implement long-term monitoring strategies to ensure protection of key aquatic species and to appraise restoration and enhancement efforts. Reduce negative effects to stream fish populations caused by habitat fragmentation resulting from the dams and lakes; and monitor viability of key conservation species potentially impacted by fragmentation. Minimize spread of exotic, invasive species.
- Protect and enhance rare, threatened, and endangered (RTE) species; and species of conservation concern.
- Protect and enhance wildlife and botanical resources and related habitat. Protect and enhance environmentally sensitive areas and natural communities of concern. Protect and enhance riparian vegetation and habitat areas on shorelines. Minimize habitat losses from shoreline erosion and development. Increase the acreage of protected natural areas. Minimize spread of exotic, invasive species.
- Protect and enhance public opportunities for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, boating, and other outdoor recreation. Expand and improve existing areas and facilities to meet user needs. Develop and locate new areas/facilities based on user needs and carrying capacity. Increase land areas designated for outdoor recreation and wildlife conservation. Design and manage access facilities to minimize crowding and safety problems. Design facilities to be

ADA accessible. Improve safety and law enforcement among recreational users. Protect aesthetic resources at the Project.

• Protect any significant archaeological and historic sites and resources from human and natural impacts.

SCDNR Comments

The SCDNR is pleased to provide the following comments regarding the PAD, additional information needs, and study requests:

Section 2 of the PAD acknowledges the Applicant will be using the Traditional FERC Licensing Process (TLP) and discusses the process plan and schedule. The SCDNR supports the Applicant in the use of the TLP, as expressed in our April 29, 2020 letter to the Licensee.

Section 3.2 of the PAD should be corrected to state the Project is located in Edgefield and McCormick counties, SC.

The SCDNR requests additional information regarding the Project generation and operational procedures described in Section 3.3.3. Further detail would be useful to help understand how the Project re-regulates downstream flows from J. Strom Thurmond Dam (Thurmond Dam) and achieves the water management goals for the Project. The SCDNR requests the flow ratings of each turbine and how are they operated concurrently to re-regulate downstream flows from Thurmond Dam. The PAD states the estimated total hydraulic capacity is approximately 8,300 cfs at a head EL of 28 feet. The PAD consistently references the pond's 1929 NGVD elevation when describing Project operations; however, it is unclear how the head elevation in this reference is compared to the 1929 NGVD elevation given throughout the rest of the document.

Section 3.4 discusses Project operations in relation to the Thurmond Dam. The SCDNR agrees that the Stevens Creek Project provides an important service to downstream resources in its function as a re-regulating facility.

Section 4.2 describes the intent of the Project's operating plan as follow: "to develop minimum flows for Stevens Creek under various operating conditions, improve operational efficiency, minimize reservoir fluctuations (particularly during March through June spawning periods), provide more uniform downstream flows, and to address planned storage under different Thurmond Dam operating scenarios." The SCDNR is interested in further understanding the implementation of the operating plan and how these multiple intentions are being addressed and balanced particularly when potentially conflicting objectives such as minimizing reservoir fluctuations and providing uniform downstream flows cannot be met at the same time under limited inflow conditions at the Project.

Table 4-2 should be corrected to state, "Monthly Minimum, Mean, <u>Median</u>, and Maximum River Flows at USGS Gage #02197000".

Section 4.2.8 discusses potential adverse effects and issues at the Project and proposed studies that will involve additional water quality data collection. The SCDNR notes that in the

freshwater mussel survey standard operating procedures provided by SCDNR's malacologist recommends collecting turbidity data near each of the sampling locations.

Table 4-7 in Section 4.5.2 should be corrected as follows:

Common Name	Scientific Name	State Priority for Conservation
prothontary warbler	Protonaria citrea	Moderate
Spotted turtle	Clemmys guttata	High
common snapping turtle	Chelydra serpentina	Moderate

The first paragraph of Section 4.6 should be corrected to state that Atlantic and Shortnose Sturgeon are both federally endangered species.

Table 4-9 in Section 4.6 and Table 3-2 in Appendix H should be corrected as follows:

Common Name	South Carolina Protected Species
Atlantic Pigtoe	Highest
Atlantic Sturgeon	Highest
Brother Spike	Highest
Ironcolor Shiner	Moderate
Roanoke Slabshell	High
Savannah Lilliput	Highest
Shortnose Sturgeon	Highest
Spotted Turtle	High
Georgia Plume	High
Wingpod Purslane	Moderate

Section 4.7.11 discusses stakeholder concerns regarding recreational opportunities at the Project. The SCDNR notes that several stakeholders, including GADNR and SCDNR, have expressed interest in the Licensee providing a publicly accessible canoe portage around the Project dam. A site visit is being planned for early 2021 for agency engineers to evaluate site feasibility on either side of the dam.

The SCDNR understands that some stakeholders have interests in maintaining a higher pool elevation in order to enhance boating opportunities in the Project reservoir; however, SCDNR finds that current Project operations, which can affect pool elevations also serve to re-regulate and reduce fluctuation of downstream flows from Thurmond Dam to the Savannah River. SCDNR recommends that any consideration of operational changes should place a higher priority on the interests of delivering flows to protect and enhance downstream aquatic resources in the river over or above recreational boating on the reservoir.

Summary: Additional Information and Study Requests

1. The SCDNR requests further information on Project generation and operational procedures when passing varying downstream flows.

- 2. The SCDNR requests clarification on the 1929 NGVD of a reservoir head elevation of 28 feet.
- 3. The SCDNR requests information regarding flow ratings of all Project turbines.
- 4. The SCDNR request information about how the Project's operating plan is being implemented when plan objectives may be in conflict (reservoir levels vs. downstream flows).
- 5. The SCDNR requests a study to assess the population status and distribution of Bartram's Redeye Bass in the vicinity of the Project (See attached Study Request).

The SCDNR supports the Licensees' development of study plans to address information needs at the Project with regards to freshwater mussels, water quality, and recreation needs. The SCDNR has participated in several consultation meetings and appreciates the Licensees' collaborative approach to the development of the proposed study plans.

The SCDNR appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments and recommendations regarding the PAD for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project, and to request additional information and studies needed for the licensing of the Project. If you have any questions or need additional information please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 843-953-3881 or email at millere@dnr.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

alizatettas C Miller

Elizabeth C. Miller FERC Coordinator, SCDNR

cc: Amy Bresnahan, DESC Alison Jakupca, Kleinschmidt Twyla Cheatwood, NMFS Melanie Olds, USFWS Paula Marcinek, GADNR

ATTACHMENT

Study Request of South Carolina Department of Natural Resources for Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project Relicensing

Bartram's Bass Study Request - Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project

Study Objectives

Assess population status and distribution of endemic Bartram's Redeye Bass and invasive Alabama Bass in the vicinity of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project).

Why this information is needed

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) is the State Agency charged with the protection and management of aquatic resources within South Carolina; and SCDNR objectives include the protection and enhancement of fish populations at the Project. The endemic riverine black basses of the southeastern United States are among the most important 'umbrella species' for rallying public support for whole-ecosystems and the biological diversity they support. "Bartram's Redeye Bass", a provisionally recognized species historically known as Redeve Bass, is range-restricted to the Savannah River system in South Carolina and Georgia (Freeman et al. 2015). The native river was impounded in the latter 20th century, and invasive Alabama Bass were subsequently introduced into the reservoirs. Over the ensuing decades, Alabama Bass rapidly displaced the endemics through introgressive hybridization and direct competition (Oswald et al. 2015). Impounded reservoirs provide a more suitable habitat for the Alabama Bass making it difficult for the endemic Bartram's Redeye Bass to compete in the altered habitat produced by the Project. In fact, evidence to date suggests Bartram's Redeye Bass have been nearly extirpated from upper Savannah mainstem reservoirs (Bangs et al. 2018), and the few remaining 'pure' endemic bass populations are now restricted to only a handful of disconnected tributary systems, including Stevens Creek. Accordingly, Bartram's Redeye Bass are considered of greatest conservation need in South Carolina and Georgia, as addressed in their respective State Wildlife Action Plans. Both states recognize the imminent threats of extirpation posed by invasive species and habitat change (e.g., impoundment).

Ongoing work on this issue between SCDNR, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and Clemson University throughout the Savannah River Basin would benefit from more intensive information from the Project Area. Status of Alabama and Bartram's Redeye Bass have not been systematically evaluated and the potential impacts from current operations is unknown.

Information from this study will be used to (1) evaluate continuing Project effects on the distribution and status of both species; (2) evaluate the potential effects of any proposed or required operational changes; and (3) develop and evaluate protection, mitigation, and enhancement (PM&E) measures. The first two objectives will provide information that will be used to develop protective strategies for Bartram's Redeye Bass. While Alabama Bass and their hybrids have been collected from the Savannah River mainstem reservoir and Stevens Creek, the extent of the invasive species is still unknown. This information is needed to understand the
Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary COMMENTS on Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (P-2535-126) PAD and Study Requests November 2, 2020

present distribution and relative abundance of Bartram's Redeye Bass and Alabama Bass and to determine the extent of hybridization. The third objective will collect Project specific data that can be compared with data previously collected for the South Carolina Stream Assessment (SCSA) database and will allow for the assessment of Project related differences in species composition.

Recommended study methods

Suggested methods for the study will involve electrofishing to determine relative abundance and distribution of the two bass species of interest, and clipping a portion of a pelvic fin from each individual collected to genotype and identify pure versus hybrid individuals. The SCDNR Population Genetics Lab in Charleston is currently running genetic analyses utilizing microsatellites in ongoing work.

Targeted sites for this work, along with suggested electrofishing method and estimated crew time are provided:

- Mainstem Savannah River upstream from Stevens Creek reservoir to latitude 33.645° electrofishing boat crew, 1 day
- Stevens Creek Reservoir electrofishing boat crew, 1 day
- Georgia tributaries Little Kiokee Creek and Uchee Creek included within the Stevens Creek Project Boundary – boat and/or backpack electrofishing crew, 1 day
- Stevens Creek and tributaries within the Stevens Creek Project Boundary boat and/or backpack electrofishing crew, 2 days
 - o Sweetwater Branch (33.588359, -82.027639 and upstream)
 - Hardy Branch (33.67053, -82.02160 and upstream)
 - Anderson Branch (33.611849, -82.024068 and upstream)
 - o Cheves Creek (33.630352, -82.039308 and upstream)
 - o Dry Branch (33.642574, -82.044513 and upstream)
 - o Big Branch (33.635001, -82.036519 and upstream)
 - o Horn Creek (33.651416, -82.073803 and upstream)
 - o Lloyd Creek (33.658771, -82.127349 and upstream)
 - Tributary of Stevens Creek (33.648113, -82.108899 and upstream)
 - o Reedy Branch (33.625602, -82.045521 and upstream)_
- Stevens Creek Mainstem upstream to historic Bartram's Redeye Bass collection site downstream of St. Rd. S-33-88 east of Clarks Hill backpack electrofishing crew, 1 day

Cost considerations

The no-action alternative would be the least costly but would not provide the information necessary to evaluate endemic Bartram's Redeye Bass and invasive Alabama Bass at the Project. The proposed study provides a relatively low-cost approach to meet the objective, since SCNDR is already geared to the methods described. Personnel costs for two Biologist III, one Biologist I,

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary COMMENTS on Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (P-2535-126) PAD and Study Requests November 2, 2020

one Technician III, and one hourly technician to prepare logistically, carry out field sampling, and manage samples and data (10 days) are estimated at \$12,900, supplies and gas estimated at \$300, and genetic analyses for up to 100 individual fin clips is estimated at \$5500, for a total project cost estimation of \$18,700.

References

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Oswald, K., J. Leitner, D. Rankin, H. Barwick, B. Freeman, T. Greig, M. Bangs, and J. Quattro. 2015. Evolutionary genetic diversification, demography, and conservation of Bartram's Bass (Micropterus sp. cf. M. coosae). *In*: Tringali, M.D., Long, J.M., Birdsong, T.W., Allen, M.S. (eds). Black bass diversity: multidisciplinary science for conservation. American Fisheries Society, Symposium 82, Bethesda, Maryland, pp 601–614.

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Cc:	Alison Jakupca
Subject:	Stevens Creek - Revised Mussel Study Plan and Recreation Survey
Date:	Thursday, September 3, 2020 3:16:43 PM
Attachments:	455108 Stevens Creek Mussel Study Plan revised 8-31.docx
	Stevens Creek Recreation User Survey 8-14-20.docx

Hi Paula and Jay!

As promised, attached are the revised mussel study plan and the revised recreation survey form. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

Kelly Kirven
<u>Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); "Bill Post"; CALEB GASTON; Elizabeth</u> Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov): Ellen Waldrop: Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov): Henry Mealing: Jason Moak;
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<u>Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov)</u>
Stevens Creek Fish Passage TWC Meeting - Doodle Poll Thursday, August 27, 2020 10:45:56 AM

Good morning all,

We would like to hold a meeting of the Fish Passage TWC to discuss the existing American eel data we have compiled and discuss next steps. This meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams. Please visit the link below and vote for the days that work best for your schedule.

https://www.doodle.com/poll/vbqwcqmnsqavna4a

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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	James -r-s; william Jabour (william: Jabour even with careful (asreal (asreal)) Andy Herndon (Andrew Herndon@hoad.gov);
	Christ Finomason (informason) entry Boddo (Fritz Boddo Baggas dav): Grag Million (million (million)) boddo (Fritz Boddo Baggas dav): Grag Million (million) (million)
	(bothati infine ws.gov), Filz Nonde (Filz Nondeenidaa gov), Gred Mixon (filxon) edult st.gov), Jason bettinger
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	Kernivedni Scyovi, Fade wilder (rade wilder endaalgovi, kun alle, kusty verletick (verletiw editec.sc.govi, Soott Glassmever, Tony Hornbuckle (thornbuckle/fal@gmail.com), Tawia Cheatwood
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Subject	Staylors Crock Project, Davised Study Diags
Subject.	Slevens clear Figlet - Revised Study Fians
Date:	Inursday, September 17, 2020 9:01:59 AM
Attachments:	Stevens Creek Water Quality Study Plan 9-16.pdf
	455108 Stevens Creek Mussel Study Plan revised 9-15.docx
	Stevens Creek Recreation User Survey 9-15.docx

Good morning all,

During the September 15th Stevens Creek Joint RCG meeting, we discussed several changes to the Recreation Study survey form, and Water Quality and Mussel study plans. Please review the revised Recreation Study survey form (revised questions are highlighted) and Mussel study plan (revisions shown in track changes) and let me know if you have any additional edits or concerns. Also, please note the changes made to the Water Quality study plan regarding nutrient sampling in section 4.3.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

Agenda

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535) Dominion Energy South Carolina

JOINT RESOURCE CONSERVATION GROUP MEETING SEPTEMBER 15, 2020 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

- REVIEW MUSSEL STUDY PLAN REVISIONS
- REVIEW RECREATION STUDY PLAN REVISIONS
- REVIEW WATER QUALITY STUDY PLAN
 - 0 UPDATE ON WATER QUALITY STUDY PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES
- Relicensing Process Discussion: Schedule and Upcoming Meetings

Recreation User Survey Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Clerk:_		Site:		Date:	Time:	am/pm
Weathe	er: 🛛 Sunny	Partly	Cloudy	□ Cloudy	Light Rain	☐ Heavy Rain
RESPC	NDENT GENDER:	□ Male	□ Female	RESPONDEN	T REFUSED INTERVI	IEW: 🗆
NUMB	ER OF PEOPLE IN	VEHICLE: _		RESPONDEN	IT DOES NOT SPEAK	
				RESPONDEN ENGLISH):	T'S PRIMARY LANG	UAGE (IF NOT
VEHICI	E HAS A BOAT TH			RESPONDEN	T IS NOT 18 YEARS	OR OLDER: 🛛
RESPO	NDENT HAS BEEN		VED AT THIS		SLY: 🗆	
	THE FIRST FEW	QUESTIC	ONS ASK A		EXPERIENCE HEI	RE TODAY
1.	Including yourse	lf, how ma people	ny people a e in party	are in your part	y today? <i>(Fill in bla</i>	ınk.)
2.	What time did yo	ou arrive at	t this recrea am / pm	ition site today′	? (Fill in blank.)	
3.	Have you visited year? (Circle on	<mark>l Stevens (</mark> e)	Creek Rese	rvoir more, les	s or about the sam	<mark>e over the last</mark>
	MORE		AB	OUT THE SAM	IE	LESS
4.	What is the prim site? (<i>Please recolumn</i> .)	ary recrea ad the list t	tion activity to responde	that you partic ents. Check on	ipated in today at t <i>ly one main activit</i> y	his recreation / in the first

What other activities did you participate in today at this recreation site? (Check all that apply in the second column.)

Check only	Check all	
one main	other	
activity	activities	Types of Activities
		FISHING:
		boat fishing
		pier/dock fishing
		bank fishing
		bow fishing/spear fishing
		BOATING:
		motor boating
		pontoon/party boating
		canoeing/kayaking
		paddle-boarding
		Jet-skiing

Check only	Check all	
<u>one</u> main	other	
activity	activities	Types of Activities
		OTHER:
		bicycling
		diving/SCUBA
		tent or vehicle camping
		horseback riding
		walking/hiking/backpacking
		sightseeing
		hunting
		nature study/wildlife viewing/photography
		swimming
		picnicking
		sunbathing
		other:
		None

- 5. If you are hunting or fishing today, what is/are your target species? (List all that are stated.)
- 6. Did you spend any time on the water today? (*Check one box.*)
 - □ YES□ NO (If no, skip to Question 8.)
- 7A. Did you recreate on or near any of the islands today?
 - □ YES □ NO (If n
 - NO (If no, skip to Question 8.)
- 7B. What activities did you participate in *while on/near the island(s)*? (Do not read this list. Allow respondent to answer and check all that apply and/or fill in the blanks.)

□ sunbathing	□ bank fishing	
□ camping	□ walking/hiking	□ sightseeing
nature study/wildlife viewing/photography	e □ swimming	
□ other (please spec	vify:)

8. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being light, 3 being moderate, and 5 being heavy, how would you rate the crowdedness *at this recreation site* today? (*Circle one number.*)



9A. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the overall condition *of this recreation site* today? (*Circle one number.*)



- 9B. Are there any additional facilities/improvements needed **at this recreation site**? (Check one box.)
 - □ YES
 □ NO (If no, skip to Question 9.)
- 9C. What do you recommend? (Do not read this list. Allow respondent to answer and check all that apply and/or fill in the blanks.)

access road		bank fishing area		boat dock
boat launch		camping area		fish cleaning station
fishing pier/dock		lighting		parking lot
picnic tables/shelter		restrooms		signs & information
swimming area		trails		trash cans
RV camping		tent camping	□ infor	bilingual signs & mation
other (please specify:			<u>۱</u>	
 	<u> </u>		.)	

- 9D. Are there any other improvements that you would recommend for this site?
 - □ YES

- NO (If no, skip to Question 10.)
- 9E. What improvements do you recommend? (Fill in the blank.)

- 10A. Do you ever recreate **at Fury's Ferry or Chota Drive** recreation sites? (*Check one box.*)
 - □ YES□ NO (If no, skip to Question 11.)
- 10B. What activities have you participated in *while at Fury's Ferry or Chota Drive*? (Do not read this list. Allow respondent to answer and check all that apply and/or fill in the blanks.)

□ sunbathing		bank fishing		hunting
□ camping		walking/hiking		sightseeing
nature study/wildlife viewing/photography		swimming		picnicking
□ motor-boating		kayaking/canoeing		boat fishing
□ other (please specify:			<u> </u>	
	• • • • •)	

- 10C. Are there any additional facilities/improvements needed *at Fury's Ferry and/or Chota Drive*? (*Check one box.*)
 - □ YES □ NO (If no. s
 - NO (If no, skip to Question 11.)
- 10D. What improvements do you recommend **at Fury's Ferry and/or Chota Drive**? (Fill in the blank.)

- 11. Are there any additional **recreation facilities and/or boating access provisions** needed at the Stevens Creek Project?
- 12. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very unlikely and 5 being very likely, how likely would you be to portage Stevens Creek Dam, if it were possible?

Very	/ Unlikely	/		Ver	<mark>y Likely</mark>
-					_
1	2	3	4	5	

ar were vou horn?			
ve any additional co needed recreation f	mments about acilities?(<i>Ple</i>	this recreation ase fill in blank	site, including commer and be as specific as
	ve any additional co needed recreation f	ve any additional comments about needed recreation facilities? (<i>Plea</i>	ve any additional comments about this recreation needed recreation facilities? (<i>Please fill in blank</i>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP! WE APPRECIATE YOUR TIME TODAY!

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC NO. 2535)

Prepared for:

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina

Prepared by:



Lexington, South Carolina www.KleinschmidtUSA.com

September 2020

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

Prepared for:

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina

Prepared by:



Lexington, South Carolina www.KleinschmidtUSA.com

September 2020

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA, INC.

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STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA, INC.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is the licensee of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) (Project). The Project, which has an installed capacity of 17.28 megawatts (MW), is located in Edgefield and McCormick counties, South Carolina and Columbia County, Georgia, at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River. The Project's dam is located approximately one mile upstream of the Augusta Diversion Dam, and approximately 13 miles downstream of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) J. Strom Thurmond Dam (Thurmond Dam). The Stevens Creek Reservoir is approximately 25 miles long, extending upstream to the Thurmond Dam and 12 miles up Stevens Creek. The surface area of the reservoir is 2,400 acres at the normal full pond EL 187.5 feet. The Project drainage area is approximately 7,173 square miles.

DESC operates the Project to generate clean, renewable energy and re-regulate highly variable river flows discharged by the USACE from the Thurmond Dam. DESC's operational protocols include releasing all Thurmond Dam discharges on a weekly basis and operating to achieve full pool in the Stevens Creek reservoir by Friday evening to provide a continuous weekend downstream discharge.

On November 22, 1995, FERC issued a 30-year license which is scheduled to expire on October 31, 2025. DESC intends to file an application for a new license with FERC on or before October 31, 2023. The Project is currently involved in a relicensing process which involves cooperation and collaboration between DESC, as licensee, and a variety of stakeholders including state and federal resource agencies, state and local government, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and interested individuals. DESC established a Water Quality, Fish and Wildlife Resource Conservation Group (RCG), with interested stakeholders to address Project issues related to aquatic and terrestrial resources. The RCG determined there was a need for supplemental water

quality data at the Project, particularly dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR) expressed a desire for more information on water quality in upstream areas of Stevens Creek to determine its suitability for fish habitat. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) expressed a desire for the periodic monitoring of water quality, specifically DO, in the Savannah River arm of the Stevens Creek reservoir, in an area typically higher in aquatic vegetation. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) expressed that the collection of continuous downstream water quality data over a period of time would aid in supporting the baseline water quality data currently available, as summarized in the Pre-Application Document prepared for the Project relicensing. This study plan addresses these requests.

2.0 STUDY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to assess the water quality of the Savannah River, immediately downstream of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project and in the Stevens Creek arm and Savannah River arm of Stevens Creek Reservoir.

3.0 GEOGRAPHIC AND TEMPORAL SCOPE

Water quality will be monitored at six sites in and around the Stevens Creek Reservoir, including five sites in the Savannah River and one site in Stevens Creek. Monitoring Site 1 will be used as a control, and will be located in Stevens Creek Reservoir, upstream of the hydro station. Monitoring Site 2 will be located directly downstream of the Stevens Creek Dam. Monitoring Sites 3 and 4 will be located downstream and upstream of the east end of Stevens Creek Dam, respectively. Monitoring Site 5 will be located in Stevens Creek near Woodlawn Road, approximately 4.5 miles upstream of its confluence with the Savannah River at Stevens Creek Dam. Monitoring site 6 will be located in the Savannah River arm of Stevens Creek Reservoir, just upstream of the confluence with Stevens Creek. The monitoring sites are shown in Figure 1.

The study will begin January 1, 2021 and extend through December 31, 2021.



FIGURE 1 STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT WATER QUALITY STUDY SITES

4.0 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 CONTINUOUS MONITORING

Water quality will be monitored at Monitoring Sites 1-5 shown in Figure 1 for temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, conductivity, and turbidity using continuous water quality monitoring instruments. The instruments will be deployed at approximately mid-depth in the stream channel. The instruments will be calibrated according to the manufacturer's specifications and will be set to record measurements at hourly intervals.

The instruments will be cleaned, checked for accuracy, and downloaded on a monthly basis, at minimum, though more frequent checks will be conducted after initial deployment to determine the extent of fouling from aquatic vegetation. A separate, calibrated meter will be used to record DO and water temperature readings during each maintenance visit to the sites. These data will be compared to deployed instrument data as a check on accuracy and for use in post-processing and correction of any fouling or calibration drift.

All continuous data will be compiled at the end of the monitoring season. The data will be analyzed by computing daily and monthly minimum, maximum, and average values for DO and water temperature and comparing them to applicable water quality criteria.

4.2 **PERIODIC MONITORING**

Water quality will be monitored periodically at Monitoring Site 6 shown in Figure 1 for temperature, dissolved oxygen, and pH during summer months for 24-48 hour periods using continuous water quality monitoring instruments. Specifically, data will be collected for one period in mid-June; two periods each in July, August and September; and one period in mid-October. The instruments will be deployed at approximately mid-depth in the stream channel. The instruments will be calibrated according to the manufacturer's specifications and will be set to record measurements at 15-minute intervals.

A separate, calibrated meter will be used to record DO and water temperature readings during each deployment and retrieval visit to Monitoring Site 6. These data will be compared to continuous instrument data collected at Monitoring Site 6 as a check on accuracy and for use in post-processing and correction of any fouling or calibration drift. All periodic data collected at Monitoring Site 6 will be compiled at the end of the monitoring season. The data will be analyzed by computing daily minimum, maximum, and average values for DO, water temperature, and pH and comparing them to applicable water quality criteria.

4.3 NUTRIENT SAMPLING

Water samples will be collected monthly at Sites 1 through 5, and at Site 6 during periodic sampling, and submitted to a certified laboratory for analysis of ammonia, nitrate-nitrite, total Kjeldahl nitrogen, orthophosphate, and total phosphorus. A set of duplicate samples and one field blank sample will also be included for quality assurance.

4.4 EXISTING MONITORING DATA

Data collected by the USGS in 2020 and 2021 as required by Article 405 of the existing license will be summarized and included in the final report.

5.0 SCHEDULE

The continuous water quality monitoring instruments will be deployed at Monitoring Sites 1-5 on, or around, January 1, 2021 and will collect data for approximately twelve months. The instruments will be checked monthly, at a minimum, during the study period. Periodic sampling at Monitoring Site 6 will occur once in mid-June, twice monthly in July, August and September, and once in mid-October. Nutrient samples will be collected monthly during 2021 and timed to coincide with maintenance visits to the continuous monitors. Study methodology, timing and duration may be adjusted based on consultation with resource agencies and interested stakeholders.

A final report summarizing study findings will be issued within four months of the end of field work. The report will include tabular and graphical summaries of the DO and water temperature data, as well as summaries of pertinent hydrologic and meteorological data, and data collected by the USGS as part of the existing Project license requirement.

6.0 USE OF STUDY RESULTS

Study results will be used to inform discussion of various resource issues during the relicensing process.

Meeting Notes and Presentations May 2020 through December 2020

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

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Joint RCG Meeting

April 23, 2020

Final KMK 5-29-20

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Caleb Gaston (DESC) Randy Mahan (DESC) Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Jordan Johnson (Kleinschmidt) Bret Hoffman (Kleinschmidt) Jay Payne (GDNR – WRD) Paula Marcinek (GDNR – WRD) Stacy Rieke (GDNR – HPD) Cameron Henderson (SCDHEC) Rusty Wenerick (SCDHEC) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Jason Bettinger (SCDNR) Ron Ahle (SCDNR) Melanie Olds (USFWS) Don Imm (USFWS) Scott Glassmeyer (USFWS) Morgan Wolf (USFWS) Keith Whalen (USFS) Derrick Miller (USFS) Twyla Cheatwood (NMFS) Andy Herndon (NMFS) Tonya Bonitatibus (SRK) John Harris (homeowner)

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 the meeting was to review the revisions made to the Water Quality Study Plan, Mussel Study Plan, RTE Whitepaper, and draft Pre-Application Document (PAD). The presentation used during the meeting is attached to the end of these notes. Alison opened the meeting by reviewing the relicensing schedule. DESC plans to file the Notice of Intent (NOI), PAD and draft study plans with FERC on or around May 15, 2020. At that time, DESC will request to use the Traditional Licensing Process (TLP). FERC will act on that request in June/July 2020. The Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) and site visit will be held in August 2020 and comments on the PAD will be due in October 2020. The first study season will begin in January 2021.

Alison asked the agencies if they expected any time delays in reviewing the PAD associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. All agencies indicated that they don't expect any delays in their reviewing timeframes.

The group reviewed the changes made to the Water Quality Study Plan since the last RCG meeting. Jason M. noted that a sixth monitoring site was added to the study. The site is located in the Savannah River arm of the Stevens Creek Reservoir, just upstream of the Savannah River's



confluence with Stevens Creek. At a previous meeting, Jason B. requested that this area be monitored periodically in the summer months for temperature, DO and pH.

Henry reviewed the changes made to the Mussel Study Plan. The study methodology was updated to match that as written in the SCDNR Mussel SOP. Morgan said that she is generally supportive of the study plan, however she has some concerns about the survey window. Surveys were planned to take place through late October 2021. Morgan said she would rather see the surveys end in September. If surveys occur too late into fall, leaf litter can begin to obstruct view. Paula said that she spoke with the GDNR malacologist and he indicated that some of the tributaries on the Georgia side of the reservoir should potentially be included in the study plan, including little Kiokee Creek and Uchee Creek. Paula said that these areas shouldn't be disregarded because of degradation. Paula will provide Kelly the contact information for the GDNR malacologist. He may be able to provide some existing data that can be included in the study. Alison said that the Forest Service provided a report on mussel surveys that were conducted on Forest Service lands near the Project. Henry asked if a comprehensive report that includes existing data and the new data that would be collected during the mussel study would be helpful. The agencies agreed that this would be good since there isn't something like that already in existence for the Project area.

Kelly reviewed the changes made to the RTE Whitepaper. Revisions included updating the species list for South Carolina state protected species and adding state protection status to the state species included in the report. Ron had a few comments on the report. He said that although Shortnose and Atlantic Sturgeon are not in the Project area at this time, they may be in the future following downstream fish passage installation. He requested these species be included in the report. Ron also noted that some of the language regarding logging and construction in the Project area that was included in the red-cockaded woodpecker and relict trillium summaries contradicted each other. Ron also noted that the Robust Redhorse distribution is more widespread than the report indicates. Paula said she would provide more information on this that can be included in the report. Finally, Ron requested that additional discussion be added to the Shoals Spider Lily summary on why this species won't be impacted by continued Project operations. Kelly said that the report will be revised to address Ron's comments.

The group then focused on updates that were made to the draft PAD. Alison highlighted changes that were made in the following sections: Section 4.2 - Water Resources; Section 4.3 – Fish and Aquatic Resources; Section 4.5 – Floodplains, Wetlands, Riparian and Littoral Habitat; Section 4.6 – Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species, Section 4.7 – Recreation and Land Use; Section 4.9 – Cultural Resources; Section 5.0 – Preliminary Issues and Studies List for Each Resource Area; and Section 6.0 – Summary of Contacts. A list of the revisions to each section is included in the presentation (attached).

Alison then requested that stakeholders send in letters or emails that indicate their support for using the TLP. Alison said these TLP support letters would be filed with the PAD and can aid in FERC's decision to approve the use of the TLP.

Alison opened the meeting for questions. John Harris asked if there was any information in the PAD regarding water levels and operating ranges for Stevens Creek Reservoir. Amy said that the reservoir level can reach 183' per the existing license, however, DESC can and has deviated from that occasional maintenance following agency and FERC approval. However, DESC does not always operate to the lower level of 183'. John said that he receives a lot of comments from other

homeowners and recreators on Stevens Creek Reservoir that they would like to see the lower level of the operating range raised a foot or two. He said that it is his hope that through relicensing, the lower operating range is raised to 184'. Henry and Alison said that this issue can be addressed during relicensing. Kelly added that relicensing is a years-long process and that even if the operating range were raised a foot, DESC would not have to comply until a new license is issued. And that could be in five or more years. However, it was noted that the current operating range is important in allowing DESC the flexibility they need to re-regulate the flows that are released from the upstream Thurmond Dam. This is one of the primary functions of the Project, in addition to producing hydroelectric power.

John asked if there were any projects planned for the near future that might require DESC to operate at an even lower level, as they did last year when replacing the flashboards. Ray said that DESC is planning to install post- tension rock anchors in the dam later this year. The reservoir will be lowered beginning in June/July and will likely last until late September, as weather and flows permit. The reservoir drawdown will be to levels like those last summer. Kelly will send John a link to the Project website, where drawdown information will be posted. He can share this link with other homeowners that are interested.

Action items from this meeting are listed below.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Kleinschmidt will post the draft PAD and study plans to the Project website for final agency review.
- Paula will provide the Georgia DNR malacologist information. Kleinschmidt will follow up with him to gather additional mussel information in the Project area.
- Stakeholders will send DESC TLP support letters/emails, if able.
- Kleinschmidt will address Ron's comments on the RTE Whitepaper, and include any revisions made in the PAD.
- Kelly will send John a link to the Project website.





Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (P-2535) Joint RCG Meeting April 23, 2020

Agenda

OVERVIEW OF RELICENSING SCHEDULE

- ► GENERAL DISCUSSION OF CURRENT OPERATING PROCEEDURES
- MILESTONE DATES AND REVIEW TIMEFRAMES
- STUDY PLAN FINALIZATION: WATER QUALITY STUDY, FRESHWATER MUSSEL SURVEY, RTE WHITEPAPER
- PAD UPDATES OVERVIEW
- ► TLP SUPPORT
- Relicensing Questions and Concerns

Upcoming Relicensing Process Schedule and Process Plan

Activity	Timeframe
RCG Conference Call to Review Final PAD	April 2020
File NOI/PAD/Draft Study Plans (**Official Start of Relicensing**)	May 15, 2020
FERC Approval of TLP	June/July 2020
Agency/Stakeholder Meeting (JAM) and Site Visit	August 2020
Comments Due on PAD	October 2020
First Study Season Begins	January 2021

Completed and Finalized Study Plans/Whitepapers







Recreation Study Plan Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper

RTE Whitepaper

Water Quality Study Plan

Objective

Assess water quality in Stevens Creek Reservoir and the Savannah River immediately downstream of Stevens Creek Dam.

Monitoring Locations

- Stevens Creek @ Woodlawn Drive; Stevens Creek Dam Forebay and Tailrace
- Stevens Creek Dam East End
- Savannah River Arm (Periodic)

Continuous Sampling

- Sites 1-5 15-minute intervals
- Temperature, Dissolved Oxygen, pH, conductivity, turbidity from January through December, 2021

Periodic Sampling

- Sites 2, 3 and 5 monthly nutrient samples
- Site 6 24-48 hours of continuous sample, once in mid-June, twice monthly in July, August and September, and once in mid-October
 - Temp, DO, pH



Mussel Study Plan

Objective

 Gather quantitative and qualitative data on diversity, spatial distribution and relative abundance (density) of mussel fauna inhabiting Stevens Creek

Scope

- Upstream extent of Stevens Creek to the confluence with Horn Creek (purple area)
- Late March/Late October 2021

Methods

- SCDNR Mussel SOP
- ▶ 5-10 representative sites, 100 meters per site
- Qualitative tactile/visual searches of all habitats
- Quantitative survey minimum of 3% of survey area, systematic sampling



RT&E Whitepaper

Changes since Previous Meeting

- updated species list from SCDNR (March 27, 2020)
- Added state species status
- Updated information included in the PAD

Species determined to potentially occur:

- Atlantic Spike
- Bald Eagle
- Bartram's Bass
- Brook Floater
- Carolina Heelsplitter
- ► Faded Trillium
- Miccosukee Gooseberry
- Monarch Butterfly
- Relict Trillium
- Roanoke Slabshell
- Robust Redhorse
- Shoals Spider Lily
- Tricolored Bat
- Webster's Salamander
- Wood Stork
- Yellow Lampmussel

PAD Updates - Overview

Water Resources

Water Quality Study Plan Mussel Study Plan (water quality components)

Fish and Aquatic Resources

Fisheries data from Bettinger/Bulak Report Mussel Data from 2017 Alderman Study in Sumter NF Mussel Study Plan Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper



Floodplains, Wetlands, Riparian, and Littoral Habitat

Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper

PAD Updates - Overview



Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species orest Service TES species - Long Cane Ranger District tate species lists with protection status ITE Whitepaper Aussel Study Plan (federal and state-listed species)

Recreation and Land Use Resources

Buffer Zone Information from SCDNR

Recreation Study Plan



Cultural Resources

Cultural study requests from SCSHPO and GA HPD

PAD Updates - Overview

🛐 Section 5.0

Issues Pertaining to the Identified Resources Potential Studies and Information Gathering Requirements Associated with the Identified Issues

Relevant Qualifying Federal and State or Tribal Comprehensive Waterway Plans

Section 6.0 – Summary of Contacts

TLP Support

- DESC is requesting stakeholders provide a letter or email of support (or no objection) to using the TLP for Stevens Creek relicensing
- Example TLP support letters sent by Alison on April 17, 2020
- Please provide letter/email to Amy by May 4, 2020
- Support letter will be filed with the NOI/PAD





Other Relicensing Questions/Concerns?

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

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Fish Passage Technical Committee Meeting

June 23, 2020

Final KMK 7-13-20

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Caleb Gaston (DESC) Pete Sturke (Dominion Energy) Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Bill Post (SCDNR) Ellen Waldrop (SCDNR) Paula Marcinek (GADNR) Jay Payne (GADNR) Melanie Olds (USFWS) Fritz Rohde (NMFS)

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 the meeting was to discuss the presence of American Eels at the Project, determine to what extent eels need to be studied during relicensing, and begin discussion of possible passage opportunities.

The group discussed the presence of American Eels above and below the Stevens Creek Dam. Henry said he knows they are above the dam, although he doesn't know where they are passing. Melanie said the USFWS is interested in where the eels are passing and if existing passage opportunities are sufficient. Henry asked if agencies have a target passage number in mind to determine how much passage is sufficient. The agencies indicated there is no target number at this time.

The group discussed existing data on eels at the Project. Alison said there is some information from a previous netting and entrainment study conducted at Stevens Creek. Paula said that the Georgia DNR stream team has data on eels in the area, including Kiokee Creek. Elizabeth said the South Carolina DNR stream team should have information as well, and she will provide that to the group.

The group discussed the need to conduct eel studies at the project to determine abundance, size, and passage location. Elizabeth said that the issue with conducting studies now for fish passage that won't be installed in the very near future is that flow dispersal could change between now and then. In addition, the system could change after passage is installed at Augusta. Bill said typically a siting study is conducted prior to passage installation to determine where eels are congregating downstream of the dam and where they may potentially pass. Bill also mentioned that downstream passage should also be considered. Henry said that the question is whether these studies need to be conducted during relicensing or after a passage prescription is implemented. The group looked at


pictures of the dam with the new flashboards. Ray noted that leakage over the dam is more evenly distributed versus leakage prior to installation of the new flashboards. The dam also appears to have a rough texture that could aid in eel passage.

The group agreed to form a fish passage technical committee for relicensing, consisting of representatives from the following agencies: NMFS, USFWS, SCDNR, and GADNR. Prior to the next meeting of this group, DESC and Kleinschmidt will compile all existing data available on American Eels in the Project vicinity. This information will be distributed to the technical committee and a meeting will be scheduled for the fall to discuss and determine path forward.

Action items from this meeting are listed below.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Agencies will send their existing American Eel data from within the Stevens Creek Project area to Kelly.
- DESC and Kleinschmidt will compile existing American Eel data and distribute to the technical committee for review.
- DESC and Kleinschmidt will schedule a meeting in the fall to discuss eel data and determine a path forward.



Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Joint Agency Meeting September 3, 2020



How to Submit a Question...

- Email Kelly at <u>Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.</u> <u>com</u>
- Or type a comment in the comment box on Microsoft Teams







General Project Information

- FERC Project No. 2535
- Owned and operated by Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.
- FERC license issued on November 22, 1995; expires October 31, 2025
 - DESC intends to file an application for new license on or before October 31, 2023
- The Project occupies approximately 104 acres of U.S. Forest Service lands in the Sumter National Forest



Project History





Project Facilities

- Stevens Creek Project is linearly configured from left to right, looking downstream with the following components:
 - 97-foot-long concrete non-overflow section,
 - a 2,000-foot-long concrete ogee spillway,
 - ▶ an 85-foot-wide inoperative lock,
 - ▶ a 388-foot-long brick powerhouse, and
 - ▶ 102.5-foot-long non-overflow section.
- Powerhouse contains 8 turbine-generator units
- Stevens Creek Reservoir has a surface area of 2,400 acres at full pool and fluctuates between 183.0 feet and 187.5 feet

Project Operations

- Total maximum rated capacity of 17.28 MW
- Dependable capacity of approximately 10 MW in the winter and 8 MW in the summer
- Operated remotely from the Urquhart Steam Station near Beech Island, SC
- Serves as a re-regulating project for the upstream Thurmond Dam Project (required by Article 402 of current FERC license)
- Operated in accordance with the Operating Plan developed in consultation with USACE, USFWS, GADNR, SCDNR, and City of Augusta











Questions or Comments??



Video Site Visit







Pre-PAD Consultation

Agency/NGO Kick-off Meetings

- January 10, 2019
- March 27, 2019

Public Outreach Workshop

• November 29, 2018

Resource Conservation Group (RCG) Meetings

- May 15, 2019
- August 22, 2019
- November 13, 2019
- December 4, 2019
- February 18, 2020
- April 23, 2020
- June 23, 2020

Pre-PAD Consultation



Pre-PAD Tribal/Cultural Consultation

 Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

- Initial Consultation with Georgia SHPO, South Carolina SHPO, USFS, and Tribes -October 15, 2019
 - Phase I and II Cultural Resources Investigations, Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project, 1996
 - Historic Properties Management Plan, 2004
- SHPOs requested a site revisit to the 19 archaeological sites identified in the previous cultural resource investigations



Pre-Application Document

Filed on May 15, 2020

Provides existing, relevant, and reasonably available information on potentially affected resources

Includes study plans developed during pre-PAD consultation

Copies of the PAD are available on the Project website at: <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>

Questions or Comments??

Study Plans and Whitepapers

Mussel Study Plan

Water Quality Study Plan Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Whitepaper

Recreation Study

Plan

Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper Outline

Process Plan and Schedule

Αςτινιτγ	Responsible Party	TIMEFRAME	DATES
Conduct JAM and Site Visit	DESC	30 to 60 days after FERC Notice of Commencement and TLP Approval	September 3 2020
File Comments on PAD, and Study Requests	Stakeholders	Within 60 days of JAM	November 2 2020
Conduct Studies and Prepare Reports	DESC		2021-2022
File DLA with Stakeholders and FERC	DESC	No later than 150 days prior to deadline for filing FLA	11/30/2022
File Comments on Applicant's DLA	Stakeholders	Within 90 days of filing DLA	2/28/2023
File FLA	DESC	No later than 24 months before existing license expires	10/31/2023
FERC Issues New License	FERC	2 years after FLA is filed	10/31/2025

FERC Guidelines for Study or Information Requests 18 CFR 4.38(b)(5)



Stevens Creek Relicensing Website www.stevenscreekrelicense.com



Welcome to the Stevens Creek Relicensing Website

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) has started their multi-year relicensing process for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project). This is a federally mandated process that is governed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and has the ultimate goal of obtaining a new operating license for the Project. This new license will dictate Project operations and associated Project resource management for the next 40 to 50 years.

FERC requires DESC to collaborate and consult with stakeholders, including federal, state, and local resource agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other interested parties throughout the entire multi-year relicensing process. DESC and stakeholders will work together to address operational, economic, and environmental issues associated with the Project. DESC's ultimate goal is to receive a new FERC operating license that satisfies the entire relicensing team and appropriately addresses the concerns of all stakeholders.

DESC welcomes you to the Stevens Creek Relicensing website and hopes that the site serves as a helpful and informative public resource throughout relicensing. If you have any questions or concerns, please visit the Contact Us page.



PROJECT UPDATES Dominion Energy to temporarily lower water levels upstream of Stevens Creek Dam for maintenance:

News Release



Project Issues and Information Discussion

Contact Information

Ms. Amy Bresnahan, P.E. Relicensing Project Manager Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. 220 Operation Way Mail Code A221 Cayce, SC 29033-3701 Phone: (803) 217-9965 Email: <u>Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u> Ms. Alison Jakupca Kleinschmidt Associates Phone: (803) 462-5628 Email: <u>Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com</u>

> Ms. Kelly Kirven Kleinschmidt Associates Phone: (803) 462-5633

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	(William E Jabour@usace army mil): JAMES J ANDRETH: "Sarab Salazar": Allan Creamer@ferc.gov:
	matthew.long@dominionenergy.com: wcbwaldo@aol.com: JAMES MILLER: ROBERT MCMILLAN: JACK BROCK:
	johncraun@att.net
Subject:	Stevens Creek JAM - 6 PM Session
Date:	Thursday, September 3, 2020 6:40:54 PM

Good evening all,

Due to lack of interest, the 6PM session of the Stevens Creek Joint Agency Meeting (JAM) ended at 6:30PM. The virtual site visit video will be available on the Project website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u> within the next few days. In addition, if you would like a link to the recording of the 2PM session, please let me know.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633

Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Joint RCG Meeting

September 15, 2020

Final KMK 10-12-20

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Caleb Gaston (DESC) Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Bret Hoffman (Kleinschmidt) Paula Marcinek (GDNR – WRD) Steve Schleiger (GDNR – WRD) Rusty Wenerick (SCDHEC) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Jason Bettinger (SCDNR) Morgan Kern (SCDNR) Mark Scott (SCDNR) Melanie Olds (USFWS) Keith Whalen (USFS) Twyla Cheatwood (NMFS) Frank Carl (SRK) Dave Mewborn (SRK) Frank Holleman (Naturaland Trust)

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 the meeting was to review changes to the Mussel Study Plan, Recreation Study Plan survey form, and Water Quality Study Plan. Discussion on each study plan is summarized below. The revised documents from the meeting are attached to these notes.

Mussel Study Plan

Alison noted that there is a significant amount of existing mussel data in the Project vicinity, outside of the Project boundary. The study plan focuses on the collection of mussel data in specific areas within the Project boundary. Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR) requested the study area to be expanded to include portions of Uchee Creek and Little Kiokee Creek. The geographic scope in the study plan was modified to include these areas.

Frank Holleman indicated that the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) surveyed a stretch of Stevens Creek downstream of Highway 283, outside of the Project boundary. He said there was a large mussel presence in that area, although no Carolina heelsplitters were found. He will try to obtain the data from USFWS and share with the group. Frank also noted that Clemson University conducted a survey in the same stretch of Stevens Creek for Rocky Shoals Spider Lily populations. He will share that information as well.

Alison reviewed the other mussel study plan edits. Morgan asked to change the study plan timeframe to exclude the month of October. She said that leaf litter can start to inhibit visual



surveys in the fall. Keith agreed and said that the Forest Service typically conducts mussel surveys between March 1 and September 30. Alison edited the study plan to reflect this request.

Recreation Study Plan

Kelly reviewed the edits made to the Recreation Study Plan survey form. She noted that GADNR indicated they are interested in a canoe portage at Stevens Creek dam. A question was added to the survey form to solicit feedback on public interest in a canoe portage. GADNR made additional edits to the survey form, including adding a question regarding the addition of recreation facilities and boating access provisions directly downstream of the dam. Kelly noted that the Augusta Project begins immediately downstream of Stevens Creek dam, so DESC is hesitant to collect any recreation data regarding downstream recreation. Paula said that GADNR is interested in a canoe portage and a tailwater fishing area on the Georgia side of Stevens Creek dam. Amy said that she remembers provisions for a tailwater fishing pier in the past that was never constructed. She will research the FERC record to find out why the pier was never built. Stallings Island is located just downstream of the dam and adding formal recreation facilities could attract the public to the area, putting the protection of the cultural resource at risk. Paula said that a fishing pier will not provide access to the river and should not affect Stallings Island.

The group discussed the possibility of a canoe portage at the dam. The Georgia side of the dam presents issues since this is where the Project powerhouse and other Project facilities are located. In addition, there is a large substation located in this area. Safety would be a concern on the Georgia side. On the South Carolina side of the dam, the terrain is very steep and rocky, making passage difficult. Elizabeth asked if land clearing/earth moving activities and the addition of gravel would make the area more accessible. Ray said that it would take a lot of work and would be difficult to get equipment in the area. Alison suggested the Recreation RCG hold a site visit in the area to view both sides of the dam and get a better idea of how a canoe portage might be achieved. Additional representatives from GADNR and SCDNR boating access crews may attend the site visit. Alison said we will plan to conduct the site visit in the spring of 2021.

Paula noted that approximately 10 percent of the population in the Augusta area is Hispanic and suggested translating the survey form into Spanish for those individuals. Kelly said that this can be done, although it is not likely the field clerks administering the surveys will be able to speak Spanish. The Spanish surveys will be provided upon request and filled out directly by the survey respondent.

Jason B. said that many boaters access the Stevens Creek Reservoir using the two boat ramps in the Thurmond Dam tailrace, which are located outside of the Project boundary. These boat ramps are not included in the recreation study. He suggested contacting the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to see if they collect use data at these boat ramps. This data will provide a more complete picture of use at the Stevens Creek Reservoir. Kelly said she will contact USACE and any data they have will be incorporated into the Recreation study report.

Henry noted that the recreation study methods, including survey forms, may be modified as the study progresses to address needs or issues that arise. Kelly said that if issues or additional data needs become apparent, she will consult with the Recreation RCG prior to modifying study methods.

Water Quality Study Plan

Alison said that GADNR requested nutrient sampling be conducted at all water quality collection sites, rather than the limited sampling that was originally proposed. DESC agreed to add nutrient sampling at all six sites.

Jason noted that Site 5 which was originally planned to be located at the bridge at Woodlawn Road will be moved a short distance downstream. Since the bridge does not have pilings to which the water quality monitor could be attached, keeping the monitor in that area would require use of a buoy and almost certain loss of the monitor during the study. Instead, Jason said that a homeowner downstream of the Woodlawn bridge will allow the monitor to be attached to his dock, providing protection to the monitor and discouraging vandalism.

Other Discussion

Elizabeth said that she asked Mark Scott to join the meeting to discuss a potential Redeye Bass study. Mark said that the Redeye Bass, also known as Bartram's Bass or Bartram's Redeye Bass, is known to occur in the upper Savannah River, including Stevens Creek and other tributaries located on the Georgia side of the Savannah River. The species is listed as having highest priority conservation status in both the South Carolina and Georgia State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAP). The Alabama Bass has been invading the area over the last few decades and hybridizing with the Redeye Bass. The endemic species generally inhabits the area from Augusta Shoals to the Blue Ridge, or the Piedmont Region. Since agencies have a high conservation concern for the species, more information on the species in the Stevens Creek Reservoir would be a great value. Henry asked Mark what type of study he would like to see. Mark said that backpack shocking in the general areas where the mussel surveys will be conducted would work. DNA would need to be collected on the fish to ensure positive identification. Mark will submit a written request to the Water Quality, Fish and Wildlife RCG for consideration.

Action items from this meeting are listed below.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Kleinschmidt will send out the revised study plans for additional review/RCG approval.
- Frank H. will provide Naturaland Trust's mussel and Rocky Shoals Spider Lily data.
- Mark will develop a written request for Redeye Bass study for WQFW RCG consideration.



Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting

- REVIEW MUSSEL STUDY PLAN REVISIONS
- REVIEW RECREATION STUDY PLAN REVISIONS
- REVIEW WATER QUALITY STUDY PLAN
- Relicensing Process Discussion: Schedule and Upcoming Meetings
Mussel Study Plan

Proposed Mussel Survey Area

Objective

Gather data on mussel diversity, distribution and abundance in the study area

Study Area

Upstream extent of the Stevens Creek to the confluence with Horn Creek

Uchee Creek (GA)

Little Kiokee Creek (GA)

(purple)

Methods

Fall 2021

Wading, snorkeling/batiscope

5-10 representative sites



Recreation ("RUN") Study Plan

pat Nes bi:02018 2

Objective

Characterize existing use of Project Recreatic sites. Identify further recreation needs at the Project.

Rec. Site Locations Betty's Branch Chota Drive Fury's Ferry Stevens Creek Rec. Site

Data Collection Measures

Site Inventory; Spot Count; Traffic Counters; Recreation User Surveys,

Study Season April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022; 7 AM-8 PM

Updates Additional Questions Added to Recreation User Survey Form

Stevens Creek Recreation Sites



Water Quality Study Plan

Objective

Assess dissolved oxygen levels in Stevens Creek and the Savannah River (project tailrace).

Monitoring Locations

Stevens Creek @ Woodlawn Drive; Stevens Creek Dam Forebay and Tailrace

Stevens Creek Dam – East End

Monitoring Parameters

Continuous (15-minute interval) Temperature, Dissolved Oxygen, pH, conductivity, turbidity from January through December, 2021

Monthly nutrient sampling updates

Usin Stevens er (project Drive; and

Stevens Creek Dam 2 Miles Legend Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina Water Quality Study Sites Continuous Date Draw Checked By JWM 4/10/2020 A Periodic Kleinschmidt

Upcoming Relicensing Process Updates

Activity	Timeframe
Fish Passage TWC Meeting	September 29, 2020
TLP Regulatory Date: FERC PAD/Study Request Comment Due Date	November 2, 2020
Water Quality Study Begins	January 2021
Project Site Visit with Fish Passage Review Committee	Tentative Spring 2021
Recreation Study Begins	April 1, 2021
Mussel Survey	Fall 2021

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

Prepared for:

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina

Prepared by:

Kleinschmidt

Lexington, South Carolina www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

September 2020

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

Prepared for:

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina

Prepared by:



Lexington, South Carolina www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

September 2020

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA, INC.

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STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA, INC.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is the licensee of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) (Project). The Project, which has an installed capacity of 17.28 megawatts (MW), is located in Edgefield and McCormick counties, South Carolina and Columbia County, Georgia, at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River. The Project's dam is located approximately one mile upstream of the Augusta Diversion Dam, and approximately 13 miles downstream of the J. Strom Thurmond Dam (Thurmond Dam). The Stevens Creek Reservoir is approximately 25 miles long, extending upstream to the Thurmond Dam and 12 miles up Stevens Creek. The Project occupies approximately 104 acres of federal lands within the Sumter National Forest.

On November 22, 1995, FERC issued a 30-year license which is scheduled to expire on October 31, 2025. DESC intends to file an application for a new license with FERC on or before October 31, 2023. The Project is currently involved in a relicensing process which involves cooperation and collaboration between DESC, as licensee, and a variety of stakeholders including state and federal resource agencies, state and local government, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and interested individuals. DESC established a Water Quality, Fish and Wildlife Resource Conservation Group (RCG), with interested stakeholders to address Project issues related to aquatic and terrestrial resources. During an RCG meeting on November 13, 2019, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) formally requested a freshwater mussel study at the Project, particularly in the Stevens Creek arm of the Project reservoir. In a letter dated June 10, 2020, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR) requested that the large tributaries on the Georgia side of the Savannah River be included in the study. This study plan was developed in consultation with the USFWS, GADNR, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) and the RCG.

2.0 RELEVANT SPECIES INFORMATION

2.1 FEDERAL-PROTECTED SPECIES

As part of relicensing, DESC developed a Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE) Species Whitepaper for the Project. The whitepaper included a comprehensive list of federal-protected and Forest Service Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) mussel species that may occur in the Project boundary (Table 2-1) (Kleinschmidt 2020). In order to identify possible federally protected mussel species in the Project area, the USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) online system was reviewed. Forest Service TES species that may occur in the Project area were also identified. The Forest Service provided a list of their TES Species for the Long Cane Ranger District of the Sumter National Forest on January 15, 2020. These mussel species are included in Table 2-1.

TABLE 2-1FEDERAL-PROTECTED AND FOREST SERVICE TES MUSSEL SPECIES THAT MAY
OCCUR IN THE STEVENS CREEK PROJECT AREA

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	FEDERAL	FOREST SERVICE	
		PROTECTION	TES SPECIES - SNF	
Atlantic Spike	Elliptio producta		Sensitive	
Brook Floater	Alasmidonta varicosa		Sensitive	
Carolina Heelsplitter	Lasmigona decorata	Endangered	Endangered	
Roanoke Slabshell	Elliptio roanokensis		Sensitive	
Yellow Lampmussel	Lampsilis cariosa		Sensitive	

ATLANTIC SPIKE

The Atlantic spike is found throughout South Carolina and prefers streams or rivers with sandy, rocky, and/or muddy bottoms in sections where the current is moderate. This species is found throughout Maryland, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina, although it has been extirpated from some reaches where it was previously found, possibly due to environmental factors including decreased water quality associated with sedimentation and pollution. The host fish for this species is not known.

BROOK FLOATER

The brook floater is a freshwater mussel species that is usually found in high gradient, consistently flowing reaches of rivers and streams. Preferred substrates are characterized by sand and gravel, often with adjacent boulders. This species is sensitive to habitat degradation, including excessive

silt and nutrient inputs, and is also sensitive to hypoxia. Potential host fish include blacknose dace, longnose dace, golden shiner, pumpkinseed, slimy sculpin, yellow perch, and margined madtom. This species is known to occur in Edgefield and McCormick counties in SC. Specifically, it has been documented in several streams in the Stevens Creek basin.

CAROLINA HEELSPLITTER

The Carolina heelsplitter is found in cool, well-oxygenated reaches of rivers and streams. The current range of this species is limited as compared to its historic range. These declines and loss of populations are associated with factors including pollutants from municipal and industrial wastewater releases. The species is sensitive to silt and is generally found in silt-free areas with banks that are stabilized and shaded by trees and shrubs. One of the ten surviving South Carolina populations of Carolina heelsplitter is found in Turkey Creek and its tributaries upstream of the project boundary. The Turkey Creek Carolina heelsplitter population was stocked by the Forest Service, USFWS and SCDNR in 2019. These creeks are part of the Savannah River drainage, located in Edgefield County, SC.

ROANOKE SLABSHELL

The Roanoke slabshell is typically found in large rivers and occasionally in small creeks. The mussel tolerates large variations in flow levels and higher water temperatures, making it able to survive in some locations near dams and hydroelectric plants. In South Carolina, the mussel is found in the Pee Dee River and the Catawba, Congaree and Savannah River basins. Although it has the potential to be found in watersheds on the Long Cane Ranger District in the Savannah River basin, no known records in the Sumter National Forest exist.

YELLOW LAMPMUSSEL

The yellow lampmussel is a freshwater mussel species found primarily in medium to large rivers and streams with a variety of substrates including silt or sand, gravel bars and bedrock cracks. Distribution in South Carolina spans the Savannah, Broad, Wateree, Congaree, and Pee Dee River basins. The species is found in the Long Cane Ranger District in the Lower Stevens Creek and Turkey Creek-Stevens Creek watersheds with the potential to also occur in the Upper Stevens Creek watershed.

2.2 STATE PROTECTED SPECIES

In addition to federal-protected and Forest Service TES species, the RTE Whitepaper listed stateprotected mussel species that may occur in the Project vicinity (Kleinschmidt 2020). These species are listed in Table 2-2 and Table 2-3.

TABLE 2-2GEORGIA STATE-PROTECTED MUSSEL SPECIES THAT MAY OCCUR IN THE
STEVENS CREEK PROJECT VICINITY

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Atlantic Pigtoe	Fusconaia masoni
Brother Spike	Elliptio fraterna
Carolina Slabshell	Elliptio congaraea
Delicate Spike	Elliptio arctata
Roanoke Slabshell	Elliptio roanokensis
Savannah Lilliput	Toxolasma pullus
Yellow Lampmussel	Lampsilis cariosa

TABLE 2-3SOUTH CAROLINA STATE-PROTECTED MUSSEL SPECIES THAT MAY OCCUR IN
THE STEVENS CREEK PROJECT VICINITY

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Atlantic Spike	Elliptio producta
Eastern Creekshell	Villosa delumbis
Eastern Elliptio	Elliptio complanate
Florida Pondhorn	Uniomerus caroliniana
Yellow Lampmussel	Lampsilis cariosa

3.0 STUDY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the diversity, spatial distribution and relative abundance (density) of the mussel fauna inhabiting portions of Stevens Creek, Little Kiokee Creek, and Uchee Creek included within the Stevens Creek Project boundary.

4.0 GEOGRAPHIC AND TEMPORAL SCOPE

Hypolimnetic releases from J.S. Thurmond Reservoir are both low in oxygen and much colder than southeastern river typical temperatures. Therefore, mussel surveys will focus on selected habitats within the Stevens Creek Project boundary that are more likely to support populations of native freshwater mussels. Due to the accumulation of silt in the lower portions of Stevens Creek, a majority of the surveys will take place in the upper portion of Stevens Creek within the Project boundary. USFWS requested that surveys include the reach between the upstream extent of the Stevens Creek reservoir to the confluence with Horn Creek (Figure 4-1). In addition, GADNR requested that surveys include representative sites in the portions of Little Kiokee Creek and Uchee Creek within the Project boundary. Specific survey points will be identified in the field by the lead malacologist performing the study. Surveys will be conducted between late March and late September in 2021. Surveys will be focused during non-rainy periods when water clarity and temperatures are sufficiently high to support wading, snorkeling, and other in-water survey methods. We do not anticipate that scuba will be needed to perform surveys in the identified areas.



FIGURE 4-1 MUSSEL STUDY AREA

5.0 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Freshwater mussel surveys in Stevens Creek, Little Kiokee Creek, and Uchee Creek will involve timed visual (qualitative) and tactile inspections (quantitative) of suitable habitat for presence of live freshwater mussels and/or shell material. Prior to sampling, we will review existing mussel distribution data provided by SCDNR, GADNR, and the Forest Service to prioritize areas that should be surveyed or resurveyed. This will aid in identifying established populations of mussels within the project boundary that may be influenced by project operations.

Field survey methods will follow freshwater mussel survey standard operating procedures (SOP) established by the SC DNR (Appendix A) and will be conducted by a qualified malacologist with expertise in Savannah River fauna. Although the number and specific location of qualitative survey points will likely be refined in the field based on professional judgement of the lead malacologist, it is expected that a range of 5 to 10 representative sites, of approximately 100 meters per site, will be distributed along Stevens Creek. The number of representative sites surveyed in Little Kiokee Creek and Uchee Creek will be determined by the lead malacologist following discussions with the GADNR malacologist.

Particular attention will be placed upon the examination of potential Carolina heelsplitter (*Lasmigona decorata*) (federal-endangered species and South Carolina state-endangered species) habitat within areas of Stevens Creek, as well as habitat for the Forest Service TES species and state-protected species listed in Section 2.0. If key species are detected during the qualitative survey, quantitative surveys will be performed to determine relative abundance.

Exact methods for conducting visual and tactile searches will vary depending on water depth and survey method. Daily and weekly fluctuations of the Stevens Creek reservoir within a 4.5-foot band to accommodate flow releases from Thurmond Dam result in routine changes to the water surface elevation, microhabitat characteristics (e.g., water depth and water velocity), and water levels along shoreline habitats. The maximum reservoir drawdown of 4.5-feet exposes approximately 575 acres of littoral zone habitat (FERC 1995). Because of this, mussel surveys will focus primarily on those areas below the 4.5-foot depth contour where mussels are likely to become established.

Specific sampling protocols, using the SC DNR methods, for both qualitative and quantitative surveys to be employed during this study are included below (Appendix A) (SCDNR 2020).

Qualitative

Qualitative surveys should consist of tactile and visual searches of all habitats (not just suitable habitats) within the survey area to be searched, or "prescribed search area" (PSA). When delineating the PSA, every attempt should be made to not disturb the sediment. Shells should be collected from along all exposed areas in the PSA including banks and midchannel bars. The visual search on the bank(s) should be conducted in addition to hand grubbing (probing substrate with hands 1-2 inches into substrate) search and a visual search for individuals within the water (SCDNR 2020).

Recommended survey equipment will vary with stream condition. Mask and snorkel with hand grubbing should be used in areas with water depth less than an arm's length. When habitat type or turbidity preclude the use of a mask and snorkel, only hand grubbing would be sufficient. View buckets/bathyscopes may be used as a supplemental method. (SCDNR 2020).

Surveys should be conducted from downstream to upstream to maximize visibility and should cover the stream from bank to bank using a single pass and multiple observers. A minimum search rate of $10 \text{ m}^2/\text{min}$ (Smith et al. 2001) should be employed to ensure adequate coverage. Individuals of a native mussel species should be identified and counted, up to the first 100 individuals of each species found. One representative color photograph should be taken of each native mussel species found. If live, federally or state protected species are located, they should be identified, counted, measured for length, and photographed. If more than 100 live individuals of a single federally or state protected species, measure lengths for the first 100 individuals and count the remaining individuals. When measuring length of a mussel, calipers should be used to record the greatest distance from the anterior to the posterior shell margin to the nearest 0.1 mm (SCDNR 2020).

Quantitative

Quadrat surveys are used to estimate recruitment and the density or relative species abundance at a fixed site. Because mussels are typically non-uniformly distributed throughout a site, reach, or river, large sample sizes are required (SCDNR 2020). This method is not as effective for documenting species richness or the presence of rare species due to a smaller total search area but

does provide higher detection rates for juvenile mussels. This method is not recommended for monitoring mussels at a watershed or range wide scale but can be extremely useful for monitoring specific sites or meta-populations of interest (SCDNR 2020).

This method involves a fixed site location. The site is divided into a 0.25 m² grid and excavation quadrats are chosen using systematic sampling. To reduce time in water, multiple observers use snorkeling to excavate the 0.25 m² quadrat to 6 inches in depth. A minimum of 3 percent of the survey area should be surveyed when using this method (SCDNR 2020).

Live and fresh dead mussels collected during the survey will be identified to species, enumerated and returned to their habitat consistent with SCDNR SOP (Appendix A), although some shell material and/or live specimens may be preserved and returned to the laboratory for taxonomic confirmation. All sampling stations, as well as any significant mussel beds found during sampling, will be documented using a GPS receiver. Mussel habitat and substrate surveyed at each sample location, as well as the species collected during the survey, will also be noted and photo documented. Basic water quality parameters (temperature, dissolved oxygen and conductivity) will be collected near the substrate at representative sample areas. Any equipment used as part of the sampling will be cleaned before and after sampling in each area.

6.0 SCHEDULE

Field surveys will be conducted from late March to late September of 2021 over 2-3 days. Study methodology, timing and duration may be adjusted based on consultation with resource agencies and interested stakeholders. A final report will be issued to the RCG within four months of the completion of field work.

7.0 **REFERENCES**

- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). 1995. Final Environmental Assessment for Hydropower License. Filed November 7, 1995.Kleinschmidt. 2020. Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project FERC No. 2535: Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species Whitepaper. February 2020.
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR). 2020. Freshwater Mussel Survey Protocol. March 2020.

APPENDIX A

SCDNR FRESHWATER MUSSEL SURVEY PROTOCOL

Recreation User Survey Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Clerk:	Site:	Date:	Time:	am/pm		
Weather: 🛛 Sunny	Partly Cloudy	□ Cloudy	🗆 Light Rain	🗆 Heavy Rain		
RESPONDENT GENDER:	🗆 Male 🛛 Female	RESPONDEN		IEW: 🗆		
NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN	/EHICLE:		_ RESPONDENT DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH:			
		RESPONDEN ⁻ ENGLISH):	T'S PRIMARY LANG	UAGE (IF NOT		
VEHICLE HAS A BOAT TR		RESPONDEN	T IS NOT 18 YEARS	OR OLDER: 🗆		
RESPONDENT HAS BEEN INTERVIEWED AT THIS SITE PREVIOUSLY:						

THE FIRST FEW QUESTIONS ASK ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE HERE TODAY

1. Including yourself, how many people are in your party today? (Fill in blank.)

_____ people in party

2. What time did you arrive at this recreation site today? (Fill in blank.)

_____ am / pm

3. Have you visited Stevens Creek Reservoir more, less or about the same over the last year? (Circle one)

MORE ABOUT THE SAME LESS

4. What is the primary recreation activity that you participated in today at this recreation site? (*Please read the list to respondents. Check only one main activity in the first column.*)

What other activities did you participate in today at this recreation site? (Check all that apply in the second column.)

Check only one main	Check all other	
activity	activities	Types of Activities
		FISHING:
		boat fishing
		pier/dock fishing
		bank fishing
		bow fishing/spear fishing
		BOATING:
		motor boating
		pontoon/party boating
		canoeing/kayaking
		paddle-boarding
		Jet-skiing
		OTHER:

Check only	Check all	
<u>one</u> main	other	
activity	activities	Types of Activities
		bicycling
		diving/SCUBA
		tent or vehicle camping
		horseback riding
		walking/hiking/backpacking
		sightseeing
		hunting
		nature study/wildlife viewing/photography
		swimming
		picnicking
		sunbathing
		other:
		None

5. If you are hunting or fishing today, what is/are your target species? (List all that are stated.)

6. Did you spend any time on the water today? (Check one box.)

- □ YES□ NO (If no, skip to Question 7.)
- 7A. Did you recreate on or near any of the islands today?
 - ☐ YES☐ NO (If no, skip to Question 7.)
- 7B. What activities did you participate in *while on/near the island(s)*? (Do not read this list. Allow respondent to answer and check all that apply and/or fill in the blanks.)

□ sunbathing	bank fishing		hunting
□ camping	walking/hiking		sightseeing
nature study/wildlife viewing/photography	swimming		picnicking
□ other (please specify:			
)	

8. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being light, 3 being moderate, and 5 being heavy, how would you rate the crowdedness *at this recreation site* today? (*Circle one number.*)



9A. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the overall condition *of this recreation site* today? (*Circle one number.*)

Po	or			Exce	llent
1	2	3	4	5	

- 9B. Are there any additional facilities/improvements needed **at this recreation site**? (Check one box.)
 - □ YES□ NO (If no, skip to Question 9.)
- 9C. What do you recommend? (Do not read this list. Allow respondent to answer and check all that apply and/or fill in the blanks.)

access road	bank fishing area		boat dock
boat launch	camping area		fish cleaning station
fishing pier/dock	lighting		parking lot
picnic tables/shelter	restrooms		signs & information
swimming area	trails		trash cans
RV camping	tent camping	□ infor	bilingual signs & mation
other (please specify:)	
		.,	

- 9D. Are there any other improvements that you would recommend for this site?
 - □ YES □ NO
 - NO (If no, skip to Question 9.)
- 9E. What improvements do you recommend? (Fill in the blank.)

- 10A. Do you ever recreate **at Fury's Ferry or Chota Drive** recreation sites? (Check one box.)
 - □ YES
 □ NO (If no, skip to Question 10.)

10B. What activities have you participated in *while at Fury's Ferry or Chota Drive*? (Do not read this list. Allow respondent to answer and check all that apply and/or fill in the blanks.)

□ sunbathing		bank fishing		hunting
		walking/hiking		sightseeing
nature study/wildlife viewing/photography		swimming		picnicking
□ motor-boating		kayaking/canoeing		boat fishing
□ other (please specify:)	
)	

- 10C. Are there any additional facilities/improvements needed **at Fury's Ferry and/or Chota Drive**? (Check one box.)
 - □ YES □ NO

) (If no, skip to Question 10.)

10D. What improvements do you recommend **at Fury's Ferry and/or Chota Drive**? (Fill in the blank.)

11. Are there any additional **recreation facilities and/or boating access provisions** needed at the Stevens Creek Reservoir?

13. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very unlikely and 5 being very likely, how likely would you be to portage Stevens Creek Dam, if it were possible?



14. What ot	her lakes do you	recreate at? (I	Fill in blank.)
-------------	------------------	-----------------	-----------------

15.	What is your zip code?
16.	In what year were you born?
17.	Do you have any additional comments about this recreation site, including comments on existing or needed recreation facilities? (<i>Please fill in blank and be as specific as possible.</i>)
17. 	Do you have any additional comments about this recreation site, including comments on existing or needed recreation facilities? (<i>Please fill in blank and be as specific as possible</i> .)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP! WE APPRECIATE YOUR TIME TODAY!

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

Prepared for:

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina

Prepared by:



Lexington, South Carolina www.KleinschmidtUSA.com

May 2020

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

Prepared for:

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May 2020

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA, INC.

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STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535)

DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA, INC.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) is the licensee of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) (Project). The Project, which has an installed capacity of 17.28 megawatts (MW), is located in Edgefield and McCormick counties, South Carolina and Columbia County, Georgia, at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River. The Project's dam is located approximately one mile upstream of the Augusta Diversion Dam, and approximately 13 miles downstream of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) J. Strom Thurmond Dam (Thurmond Dam). The Stevens Creek Reservoir is approximately 25 miles long, extending upstream to the Thurmond Dam and 12 miles up Stevens Creek. The surface area of the reservoir is 2,400 acres at the normal full pond EL 187.5 feet. The Project drainage area is approximately 7,173 square miles.

DESC operates the Project to generate clean, renewable energy and re-regulate highly variable river flows discharged by the USACE from the Thurmond Dam. DESC's operational protocols include releasing all Thurmond Dam discharges on a weekly basis and operating to achieve full pool in the Stevens Creek reservoir by Friday evening to provide a continuous weekend downstream discharge.

On November 22, 1995, FERC issued a 30-year license which is scheduled to expire on October 31, 2025. DESC intends to file an application for a new license with FERC on or before October 31, 2023. The Project is currently involved in a relicensing process which involves cooperation and collaboration between DESC, as licensee, and a variety of stakeholders including state and federal resource agencies, state and local government, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and interested individuals. DESC established a Water Quality, Fish and Wildlife Resource Conservation Group (RCG), with interested stakeholders to address Project issues related to aquatic and terrestrial resources. The RCG determined there was a need for supplemental water

quality data at the Project, particularly dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR) expressed a desire for more information on water quality in upstream areas of Stevens Creek to determine its suitability for fish habitat. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) expressed a desire for the periodic monitoring of water quality, specifically DO, in the Savannah River arm of the Stevens Creek reservoir, in an area typically higher in aquatic vegetation. The National Marine Fisheries Service expressed that the collection of continuous downstream water quality data over a period of time would aid in supporting the baseline water quality data currently available, as summarized in the Pre-Application Document prepared for the Project relicensing. This study plan addresses these requests.

2.0 STUDY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to assess the water quality of the Savannah River, immediately downstream of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project and in the Stevens Creek arm and Savannah River arm of Stevens Creek Reservoir.

3.0 GEOGRAPHIC AND TEMPORAL SCOPE

Water quality will be monitored at six sites in and around the Stevens Creek Reservoir, including five sites in the Savannah River and one site in Stevens Creek. Monitoring Site 1 will be used as a control, and will be located in Stevens Creek Reservoir, upstream of the hydro station. Monitoring Site 2 will be located directly downstream of the Stevens Creek Dam. Monitoring Sites 3 and 4 will be located downstream and upstream of the east end of Stevens Creek Dam, respectively. Monitoring Site 5 will be located in Stevens Creek at Woodlawn Road, approximately 4.5 miles upstream of its confluence with the Savannah River at Stevens Creek Dam. Monitoring site 6 will be located in the Savannah River arm of Stevens Creek Reservoir, just upstream of the confluence with Stevens Creek. The monitoring sites are shown in Figure 1.

The study will begin January 1, 2021 and extend through December 31, 2021.



FIGURE 1 STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT WATER QUALITY STUDY SITES

4.0 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 CONTINUOUS MONITORING

Water quality will be monitored at Monitoring Sites 1-5 shown in Figure 1 for temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, conductivity, and turbidity using continuous water quality monitoring instruments. The instruments will be deployed at approximately mid-depth in the stream channel. The instruments will be calibrated according to the manufacturer's specifications and will be set to record measurements at hourly intervals.

The instruments will be cleaned, checked for accuracy, and downloaded on a monthly basis, at minimum, though more frequent checks will be conducted after initial deployment to determine the extent of fouling from aquatic vegetation. A separate, calibrated meter will be used to record DO and water temperature readings during each maintenance visit to the sites. These data will be compared to deployed instrument data as a check on accuracy and for use in post-processing and correction of any fouling or calibration drift.

All continuous data will be compiled at the end of the monitoring season. The data will be analyzed by computing daily and monthly minimum, maximum, and average values for DO and water temperature and comparing them to applicable water quality criteria.

4.2 **PERIODIC MONITORING**

Water quality will be monitored periodically at Monitoring Site 6 shown in Figure 1 for temperature, dissolved oxygen, and pH during summer months for 24-48 hour periods using continuous water quality monitoring instruments. Specifically, data will be collected for one period in mid-June; two periods each in July, August and September; and one period in mid-October. The instruments will be deployed at approximately mid-depth in the stream channel. The instruments will be calibrated according to the manufacturer's specifications and will be set to record measurements at 15-minute intervals.

A separate, calibrated meter will be used to record DO and water temperature readings during each deployment and retrieval visit to Monitoring Site 6. These data will be compared to continuous instrument data collected at Monitoring Site 6 as a check on accuracy and for use in post-processing and correction of any fouling or calibration drift.

All periodic data collected at Monitoring Site 6 will be compiled at the end of the monitoring season. The data will be analyzed by computing daily minimum, maximum, and average values for DO, water temperature, and pH and comparing them to applicable water quality criteria.

4.3 NUTRIENT SAMPLING

Water samples will be collected monthly at Sites 1 through 5, and at Site 6 during periodic sampling, and submitted to a certified laboratory for analysis of ammonia, nitrate-nitrite, total Kjeldahl nitrogen, orthophosphate, and total phosphorus. A set of duplicate samples and one field blank sample will also be included for quality assurance.

4.4 EXISTING MONITORING DATA

Data collected by the USGS in 2020 and 2021 as required by Article 405 of the existing license will be summarized and included in the final report.

5.0 SCHEDULE

The continuous water quality monitoring instruments will be deployed at Monitoring Sites 1-5 on, or around, January 1, 2021 and will collect data for approximately twelve months. The instruments will be checked monthly, at a minimum, during the study period. Periodic sampling at Monitoring Site 6 will occur once in mid-June, twice monthly in July, August and September, and once in mid-October. Nutrient samples will be collected monthly during 2021 and timed to coincide with maintenance visits to the continuous monitors. Study methodology, timing and duration may be adjusted based on consultation with resource agencies and interested stakeholders.

A final report summarizing study findings will be issued within four months of the end of field work. The report will include tabular and graphical summaries of the DO and water temperature data, as well as summaries of pertinent hydrologic and meteorological data, and data collected by the USGS as part of the existing Project license requirement.

6.0 USE OF STUDY RESULTS

Study results will be used to inform discussion of various resource issues during the relicensing process.

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Subject:	RE: Final Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020
Date:	Wednesday, October 14, 2020 9:34:37 AM

Good morning all!

Since our last Stevens Creek Joint RCG meeting on September 15th, several of you have contacted me to let me know you are okay with the study plan edits or sent a few additional minor edits. I wanted to put out one "last call" for any additional edits before we finalize the study plans prior to the start of field season in 2021. Please let me know if you have any additional study plan edits by next Wednesday, October 21st. The final study plans will then be emailed to you and posted to the Project relicensing website.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

From: Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Monday, October 12, 2020 9:28 AM

To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) <Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Ashley Holmes <ashley@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov) <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net) <chris@linksolar.net>; Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov) <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Dave Mewborn <dave@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Debbie Wallsmith (debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov) <debbie.wallsmith@dnr.ga.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us) <derrickmiller@fs.fed.us>; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org) <elena@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us) <emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us>; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov) < MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org) <elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org>; Frank Carl <frankcarl@knology.net>; FrankHolleman@NaturalandTrust.org; Henderson, Cameron T. <henderct@dhec.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jaime Loichinger (jloichinger@achp.gov) <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil) <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov) <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov) <jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov) <jeddins@achp.gov>; johncraun@att.net; Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov) < jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil) <Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov) <madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov>; Mark Scott <ScottM@dnr.sc.gov>; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov) <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; MICHAEL MOSLEY <michael.mosley@dominionenergy.com>; Outdoor Augusta <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov) <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybimmer@gmail.com)
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Subject: Final Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting Notes - 9/15/2020

Good morning all,

The final notes from the Stevens Creek Joint RCG meeting held on September 15th are attached. These notes are also available on the Project website at <u>www.stevenscreekrelicense.com</u>.

Thanks, Kelly

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

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Fish Passage Technical Committee Meeting

September 29, 2020

Final KMK 10-30-20

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Caleb Gaston (DESC) Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Bret Hoffman (Kleinschmidt Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Bill Post (SCDNR) Paula Marcinek (GADNR) Jay Payne (GADNR) Melanie Olds (USFWS) Scott Glassmeyer (USFWS) Twyla Cheatwood (NMFS) Fritz Rohde (NMFS)

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 the meeting was to discuss the existing American Eel data collected by Georgia DNR and South Carolina DNR and discuss next steps. The PowerPoint presentation, Excel spreadsheet, and American Eel location maps shown during the meeting are attached to these notes for reference.

Alison provided a brief recap of the previous meeting held on June 23, 2020. During that meeting, stakeholders discussed the presence of American Eels at the Project, to what extent eels need to be studied during relicensing, and possible passage opportunities. The group also discussed whether studies are needed during relicensing or after a passage prescription is implemented.

Following the meeting recap, Alison presented the existing eel data that was collected and provided by Georgia DNR and South Carolina DNR and eel data that was collected as part of the 1993 Stevens Creek Entrainment Study. Data indicates that American Eels of multiple year classes are passing over Stevens Creek dam and traveling upstream. Henry added that the data shows eels are also passing over the Augusta Dam and New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam (NSBLD). Fritz said that American Eels are being considered with the design of the fish ladder at Augusta Dam. He added that NMFS is currently working on their Biological Opinion and fish passage prescription and hope to file both by the end of 2020 or early 2021.

Alison said that after the previous meeting, there were several questions that stakeholders were considering. These questions are listed below.

- Is the Stevens Creek Dam an impediment to eel passage?
- How close to passage installation do studies need to occur?



- Could there be changes in the system prior to passage installation?
- Will flow dispersals change prior to passage installation?

The group considered these questions again. Henry asked the group if it is best to look for eels when a fish passage siting study is completed following a fish passage prescription for the Stevens Creek Project. Bill said that it is important that an eel ramp is installed in the correct location and therefore an eel siting study is important. This study should be completed closer to when fish passage installation would occur, since any changes in operations or flow dispersals could affect the proposed location of an eel ramp. Fritz agreed and noted that eel studies at the Wateree and Yadkin-Pee Dee projects were conducted as part of their new licenses. He also added that fish passage at Augusta is tied into passage installation at NSBLD. This puts fish passage installation at Augusta as occurring approximately six years from now. However, Twyla added that the fish passage prescription for Stevens Creek would be complete before passage is installed at Augusta.

Caleb asked if eel counts will be required at Augusta following passage installation. Fritz said the passage structure would have a fish counting window which will be used to view shad passage. Since eels mainly pass at night, no passage estimates for eels will be collected. Henry asked if there will be a way to count eels when testing the eel ladder at Augusta. Fritz said they haven't gotten that far into planning at this point.

Henry said that he saw the existing data collection effort for American Eels as something that could be included in the Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper. An entire section of the whitepaper will be dedicated to American Eels, including information on their history in the basin, existing location data, and ongoing passage efforts on the Savannah River. Alison noted that the Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper will be centered around fish passage and all applicable data collected during relicensing will feed into the whitepaper. The whitepaper will be distributed to the Fish Passage TWC for review and comment.

Alison also noted that during the June meeting, stakeholders discussed the possibility of a site visit to view the dam and possible passage opportunities. Alison asked if agencies were still interested in participating in a site visit in spring of 2021. Everyone indicated that this would be very helpful for future discussion of American Eel passage at Stevens Creek.

Alison asked Fritz if NMFS would be able to provide an update on the status of fish passage at Augusta and NSBLD during the spring site visit. Fritz said yes and added that the current schedule for fish passage installation at NSBLD includes initiation of upland work in January and in-water work in April.

Action items from this meeting are listed below.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Kleinschmidt will distribute maps and spreadsheet with existing American Eel data.
- DESC and Kleinschmidt will draft the American Eel section of the Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper and distribute to the TWC for review.
- DESC and Kleinschmidt will schedule a site visit for the spring of 2021.



• NMFS will provide an update on the status of fish passage at Augusta and NSBLD at the site visit.



Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Fish Passage Technical Working Committee

September 29, 2020



Re-Cap Previous Discussions

Review Existing Data and Sources

Open Discussion on "What Does This Tell Us?"

Next Steps





Meeting Re-Cap: June 23, 2020

- The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the presence of American Eels at the Project.
- determine to what extent eels need to be studied during relicensing, and
- begin discussion of possible passage opportunities.
- Discussions on whether information was needed on:
 - Abundance
 - Size
 - Passage Location
- Question: Are studies needed during relicensing or after passage prescription is implemented?
- Action Items: Compile and Review Existing Eel Data

Action Item Results: Review and Compile Existing Eel Data

- Data Sources:
 - GADNR Stream Team Data
 - SCDNR Stream Team Data
 - 1993 Stevens Creek Entrainment Study Data

Details:

- ► 66 Sampling Events Logged
- Date Range: 1972 through 2018
- 128 eels captured during 66 sampling events
- Length/Weight Information Not Complete: When available ranged from
 - ► 15 g (Savannah River, Downstream of SC)
 - 1360 g (3 Eels-Batch Weight: Savannah River, In SC Project Boundary)



Action Item Results: Review and Compile Existing Eel Data

- 1993 Stevens Creek Entrainment Study Data
 - Eels were the 4th most abundant species captured during this study
 - Regression Equation: Likely Between 2 and 10 Years old (Helfman et al. 1984)

TABLE 2

FISH COLLECTED VIA RECOVERY NETTING AT THE STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

SPECIES	NUMBER	SIZE RANGES (mm)	MEDIAN LENGTH (mm)	PERCENT OF ABUNDANCE
American eel	12	187-609	357	12.37
Blackbanded darter	2	49-78	63.5	2.06
Blueback herring	9	94-153	132	9.28
Bluegill	15	35-183	81	15.46
Brook silversides	1	63	63	1.03
Channel catfish	2	63-111	87	2.06
Gizzard shad	4	111-122	117.5	4.12
Lepomis sp.	1	80	80	1.03
Redbreast sunfish	5	95-164	134	5.15
Snail bullhead	1	179	179	1.03
Spottail shiner	4	94-107	98	4.12
Tadpole madtom	1	60	60	1.03
Threadfin shad	23	38-76	51	23.71
White bass	1	399	399	1.03
White catfish	1	191	191	1.03
White perch	1	145	145	1.03
Yellow perch	14	78-249	89	14.43





What Does This Tell Us? AND Existing Questions

Eels are passing upstream of dam

Regression data points to multiple year classes making it over SC dam

- Existing Questions from Previous Meeting:
 - Is the dam an impediment to eel passage?
 - How close to passage installation do studies need to occur?
 - Could there be changes in the system prior to passage installation?
 - ▶ Will flow dispersals change prior to passage installation?

Next Steps

► TWC Site Visit: Spring 2021



			-				
1 1	11/2/1972	33.8	-82.125			SC	Beaverdam Cr., trib Stevens Cr., 6 aM E Parksville (Upstream of SC Project Boundary)
2 1	11/2/1972	33 7916	-82 1959			sc	Stevens Cr. 1 M F Parksville (Unstream of SC Project Boundary)
2 1	1002	33.7510	02.1530		10	50	From 1002 Dames & Means Entrainment Study at Charles
3	1993				12		From 1995 Dames & Moore Entrainment Study at Stevens Creek
4	Aug-97	33.523759	-82.010988	3	2	318 GA	
5	Nov-97	33.523759	-82.010988	3	21	No weight GA	
6	6/4/1998	33.43088	-81.92057			SC	Savannah River, below the I-20 bridge in the Agusta shoals, boarder of Richmond Co., GA and Aiken Co.,
7 (08-Aug-00	33.29212	-82.27698		1	261.4 GA	Boggy Gut Creek
8 0	08-000	32 01/195	-91 77290		1	47.2 GA	Reaverdam Creek
0 1	11/4/2004	22 571112	01.77200	2	2	1360 CA	Swarah Birer In Stevens Crock Brojest Boundary
	11/4/2004	33.371113	*82.00288	2		1300 GA	Savainian kilor, in Stevens Creek Project boundary
10 1	11/4/2004	33.571113	-82.06288	2	1	320 GA	Savannah River, In Stevens Creek Project Boundary
11 1	11/5/2004	33.612993	-82.170539	1	1	215 GA	Savannah River, In Stevens Creek Project Boundary
12 1	11/5/2004	33.612993	-82.170539	1	1	540 GA	Savannah River, In Stevens Creek Project Boundary
13 1	11/7/2004	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	1200 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
14 1	11/9/2004	33.508396	-81.995496	4	1	25 GA	Savannah River. Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
15 1	11/9/2004	33 508396	-81 995496	4	4	820 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
16 1	11/0/2004	22 508206	81 00E406	4	2	EA CA	Susanah Riter, Downstraam of Stavase Creak Project Boundary
10 1	1/0/2004	33.500550	02.010000	4	-	114 CA	Savannan River, Downsteam of Stevens Creak Project Doundary
1/ 1	11/8/2005	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	114 GA	savarinan River, Downstream of stevens Creek Project Boundary
18 1	11/8/2005	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	356 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
19 1	11/8/2005	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	210 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
20 1	11/8/2005	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	204 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
21 1	11/8/2005	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	446 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
22 1	11/8/2005	33,508396	-81,995496	4	1	110 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
23 1	11/8/2005	33.508396	-81.995496	4	1	464 64	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Roundary
24 14	1/15/2005	22 5105 30	82.006207	-+	1	280 CA	Savannah Rivar, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Doundary
24 11	1/15/2005	33.3183//	-62.000207	/	1	280 GA	Savaman Kiver, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
25 11	1/15/2005	33.518577	-82.006207	7	1	315 GA	Savannan Kiver, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
26 1	15-May-08	32.28654	-81.19148		8	97.4 GA	Sweigoffer Creek
<mark>27</mark> 6	5/24/2008	33.51522	-81.99334			SC	Upstream of SC Project Boundary
28 7	7/29/2008	33.9009	-81.96869			SC	
29	30-Jul-08	33,38391	-82.00403		14	343.2 GA	Butler Creek
30	30-lul-08	33,34646	-82.09145		4	906.5 GA	Spirit Creek
31	20-101-00	22 24641	-92 00122			28 4 64	Friendshin Branch
22	20-Int-05	33.34041	-32.05122		*	20.4 04	Pade Crack
32	30-Jul-08	33.42300	-82.00695		1	26.8 GA	Rocky Creek
33	18-Jun-09	33.07265	-81.90310		1	28 GA	Fitz Branch
34	28-Jun-12	33.60099	-82.23458		9	961 GA	Kiokee Creek (Upstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary)
35 10	0/29/2013	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	132 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
36 10	0/29/2013	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	256 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
37 10	0/29/2013	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	381 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
38 10	/29/2013	33.523759	-82.010988	3	- 1	185 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
20 10	/20/2012	22 522750	82.010089	2	-	100 64	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
23 10	J/ 29/ 2013	33.323/39	-95.010988	3	1	190 GA	Savaman niver, Downstream of Chaines Creek Project Doundary
40 10	J/29/2013	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	15 GA	Savannan kiver, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
41 10	0/30/2013	33.457362	-81.921657	5	1	215 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
42 10	0/31/2013	33.518577	-82.006207	7	1	381 GA	Augusta Canal
43 10	0/19/2016	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	62 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
44 10	0/19/2016	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	580 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
45 10)/19/2016	33 523750	-82 010989	3	-	480 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
16 10	0/10/2010	22 522750	92.010000	2	1	400 GA	Savannah Biyar, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
40 10	J/ 19/ 2010	33.323/39	-95.010988	3	1	620 GA	Savaman niver, Downstream of Chause Creek Project Doundary
47 10	0/19/2016	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	1200 GA	Savannan Kiver, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
48 10	0/19/2016	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	45 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
49 10	0/19/2016	33.523759	-82.010988	3	1	280 GA	Savannah River, Downstream of Stevens Creek Project Boundary
50	13-Jun-18	33.23029	-82.092432		6	GA	Mcbean Creek
51	14-lun-19	33 174052	-81 848294		4	GA	Newberry Creek
52	02 101 10	22 224402	01 050447		4	GA	Borny Gut
52 50	03-JUI-18	33.224492	-01.85841/		0	GA	Doggy Gol
53	26-Jul-18	33.29212	-82.27698		2	GA	Boggy Gut Creek
54	26-Jul-18	33.355782	-82.141344		12	GA	South Prong Creek
55	13-Sep-18	32.82131	-81.62127		1	GA	Beaverdam Creek
56	2009	33.44544	-81.91992			SC	
57	2009	33,43927	-81.91287			SC	Savannah River, 400 m below SC 28
58	2009	33 42564	-81 93222			sc	Savannah River, 0.5 mi downstream from Columbia Nitrogen outfall, RM
50	2009	33.42304	91 0400			30	Savaman Aiver, 0.5 milliowinstream nom columbia (Niti Ogen Outrall, Nivi
29	2009	33.37039	-81.9466			SC	Savannan Kiver Delow LOCK and Dam, KM 186.5-187.2
60	2009	33.37222	-81.94097			SC	Savannah River at Lock and Dam, RM 187.5
61	2009	33.54388	-81.99645			SC	Fox Creek
62	2009	33.49842	-81.99981			SC	Raes Creek, Lake Olmstead at Lakeshore Loop Road
63	2009	33,2651	-81.8439			SC	·
64	2000	22 21212	-81 20717			sc 60	Savannah River at Demeires Landing, RM 160 3
U*+	2009	33.21213	-01.00/1/			30	Savaman niver as pennelles talluling, nivi 100.5
CF		33 77758	-81.82384			SC	Savannan Kiver apove Shell Blutt Landing, KM 162
65	2009	55.227.50					

i.

Date	No. of Eels
1/1/1993	12
Aug-97	2
Nov-97	2
8/8/2000	1
8/8/2000	1
11/4/2004	3
11/4/2004	1
11/5/2004	1
11/5/2004	1
11/7/2004	1
11/9/2004	1
11/9/2004	4
11/9/2004	2
11/8/2005	1
11/8/2005	1
11/8/2005	1
11/8/2005	1
11/8/2005	1
11/8/2005	1
11/8/2005	1
11/15/2005	1
11/15/2005	1
5/15/2008	8
7/30/2008	14
7/30/2008	4
7/30/2008	4
7/30/2008	1
6/18/2009	1
6/28/2012	9
10/29/2013	1
10/29/2013	1
10/29/2013	1
10/29/2013	1
10/29/2013	1
10/29/2013	1
10/30/2013	1
10/31/2013	1
10/19/2016	1
10/19/2016	1
10/19/2016	1
10/19/2016	1
10/19/2016	1
10/19/2016	1
10/19/2016	1
6/13/2018	6
6/14/2018	4
7/3/2018	6
7/26/2018	2
7/26/2018	12
9/13/2018	1

Date	No. of Eels
1/1/1993	12
8/1/1997	2
11/1/1997	2
8/8/2000	2
11/4/2004	4
11/5/2004	2
11/7/2004	1
11/9/2004	7
11/8/2005	7
11/15/2005	2
5/15/2008	8
7/30/2008	23
6/18/2009	1
6/28/2012	9
10/29/2013	6
10/30/2013	1
10/31/2013	1
10/19/2016	7
6/13/2018	6
6/14/2018	4
7/3/2018	6
7/26/2018	14
9/13/2018	1
Total	128



Eel Collection Locations



Eel Collection Locations



Eel Collection Locations



Email and Written Correspondence 2021

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Good morning all,

DESC would like to schedule a meeting in mid- to late-February to review comments received on the Stevens Creek PAD. Below is a link to a doodle poll. Please vote for the days that work best for your schedule. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this will be a virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams. A detailed agenda will be distributed prior to the meeting.

https://doodle.com/poll/upg6gghx2dy67ie6?utm_source=poll&utm_medium=link

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

From:	Kelly Kirven
То:	Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); "Bill Post"; Bjorn Lake - NOAA
	Federal; Bret Hoffman; CALEB GASTON; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov); Ellen Waldrop; Fritz Rohde
	(Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov); Henry Mealing; Jason Moak; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jordan Johnson; Kelly Kirven;
	Melanie Olds (melanie olds@fws.gov); Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov); paul.vidonic@dominionenergy.com;
	Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov); RAYMOND AMMARELL; Twyla Cheatwood
	(twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov); Ashley Holmes; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov); caitlinh@ccppcrafts.com;
	Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net); Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov); Dave Mewborn;
	Debbie.Wallsmith@dca.ga.gov; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us); dickgayle801@gmail.com; Elena Richards
	(elena@savannahriverkeeper.org); Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us); Elizabeth Toombs
	(elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org); Frank Carl; FrankHolleman@NaturalandTrust.org; Jaime Loichinger
	(jloichinger@achp.gov); Jamie Sykes (James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil); Jeff Darley (jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov);
	<u>Jennifer Welte (jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov); John Eddins (jeddins@achp.gov); johncraun@att.net; Jon Ambrose</u>
	(jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov); Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil); Madeline Banyas
	(madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov); Mark Scott; MICHAEL MOSLEY; Outdoor Augusta; R. A. (Tony) Hicks
	(barneybimmer@gmail.com); rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com); Rob Pavey
	(rpavey1@comcast.net); Robert Phillips (rphillips@gwf.org); Robin Goodloe (robin_goodloe@fws.gov); Robinson,
	Scott; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil); Stan Simpson (Stanley.L.Simpson@usace.army.mil); Steve
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	Morgan Kern (KernMednr.sc.gov); Rusty Wenerick (Weneritwrednectsc.gov); Scott Glassmeyer; Tony Hornbuckle
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Attachments:	Stevens creek KUG Meeting Agenda 2-25-21.docx

Good afternoon all,

Our next Stevens Creek Joint RCG meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, February 25th from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM via Microsoft Teams. The agenda for this meeting is attached.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

AGENDA

STEVENS CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT (FERC No. 2535) DOMINION ENERGY SOUTH CAROLINA

JOINT RESOURCE CONSERVATION GROUP MEETING FEBRUARY 25, 2021 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

PURPOSE: Discuss the 2021 study schedule, including accompanying comments on the PAD/Study Requests and associated study plan revisions; general review of Project operations and the relicensing schedule moving forward.

- REVIEW UPCOMING 2021 STUDY SCHEDULE AND REQUESTED
 - UPDATES/REVISIONS
 - WATER QUALITY
 - RECREATION USE AND NEEDS
 - MUSSEL SURVEY
- REVIEW AND DISCUSS NEW STUDY REQUESTS
 - PROJECT SURVIVAL STUDY
 - $\circ~$ Upstream and Downstream Fish Passage Feasibility Study
 - BARTRAM'S BASS STUDY
- GENERAL REVIEW OF PROJECT OPERATIONS
- 2021 MEETING SCHEDULE REVIEW

Alison Jakupca

Stevens Creek Joint RCG Meeting
Microsoft Teams Meeting
Thu 2/25/2021 9:00 AM
Thu 2/25/2021 12:00 PM
(none)
Accepted
Kelly Kirven
 Kelly Kirven Kelly Kirven; Alison Jakupca; AMY BRESNAHAN (Amy,Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com); 'Bill Post', Bjorn Lake - NOAA Federal; Bret Hoffman; CALEB GASTON; Elizabeth Miller (MillerE@dnr.sc.gov); Ellen Waldrop; Fritz Rohde (Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov); Henry Mealing; Jason Moak; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov; Jordan Johnson; Melanie Olds (melanie_olds@fws.gov); Pace Wilber (Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov); paul.vidonic@dominionenergy.com; Paula Marcinek (paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov); RAYMOND AMMARELL; Twyla Cheatwood (twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov); Ashley Holmes; Bill Marshall (marshallb@dnr.sc.gov); catilinh@ccppcrafts.com; Chris Howard (chris@linksolar.net); Chris Nelson (chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov); Dave Mewborn; Debbie.Wallsmith@dca.ga.gov; Derrick Miller (derrickmiller@fs.fed.us); dickgayle801 @gmail.com; Elena Richards (elena@savannahriverkeeper.org); Elizabeth Johnson (emjohnson@scdah.state.sc.us); Elizabeth Toombs (elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org); Frank Carl; FrankHolleman@NaturalandTrust.org; Jaime Loichinger (jiochinger@achp.gov); Johncraun@att.net; Jon Ambrose (jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov); Kathryn Feingold (Kathryn.A.Feingold@usace.army.mil); Madeline Banyas (madeline.banyas@dnr.ga.gov); Mark Scott; MICHAEL MOSLEY; Outdoor Augusta; R. A. (Tony) Hicks (barneybinmer@gmail.com); rachel@savannahriverkeeper.org; randy mahan (rmahan@sc.rr.com); Rob Pavey (rpavey1@comcast.net); Robert Phillips (riphillips@gwf.org); Robin Goodloe (robin_goodloe@fws.gov); Robinson, Scott; Scott Hyatt (scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil); Stave Schleiger (steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov); Thom Litts (thom.lits@dnr.ga.gov); Tonya Bonitatibus (riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org); Wenonah Haire; Whalen, James -FS; Whitney M. Rooks; William Jabour (William.EJabour@u
(jonn.narris@gfil.com); Josn Williford (josnua.paul.Williford@gmail.com); Ley, Amanda; Lorianne Riggin (RigginL@dnr.sc.gov); Lynn Arnett (LynnArnett325@gmail.com); Mark

Required Attendees:	Caldwell (mark_caldwell@fws.gov); Mark Davis; matthew.long@dominionenergy.com; Merrill McGregor (merrillm@scccl.org); Mike Boyd; Pat and Dallas Simon (patsimon@wctel.net); Ron Davis (bigron.davis00@gmail.com); Sica Collins
	(Sica@savannahriverkeeper.org); Tom McCoy (thomas_mccoy@fws.gov); Tom Proctor (proctor351@aol.com): WILLIAM CHASTAIN
Optional Attendees:	WILLIAM CHASTAIN; Miller, Derrick -FS; tbonitatibus@gmail.com; Johnson, Elizabeth; Kevin Nebiolo; Jesse Wechsler

An agenda will be distributed prior to the meeting.

Thanks, Kelly

Kelly Kirven Project Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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From:	Jennifer D. Bedell
To:	Jennifer Gut
Subject:	Stevens Creek Recreation and Stallings Island
Date:	Wednesday, July 6, 2022 2:38:14 PM

Good Afternoon Jennifer-

Thank you for hosting the call today.

My apologies that I had to catch another meeting near the end of the recreation discussion and did not get a chance to voice a topic of concern. I did want to make sure that you all are aware of GASHPO's concerns for how the potential addition of a kayak/canoe launch and subsequently higher visitorship might adversely affect Stallings Island. I know Aspen had been meeting with you all on this project previously, and I do see in her notes that there have been at least brief discussions about our concerns for Stallings, but I am unclear if, or to what extent, they have been taken into consideration. Stalling's Island is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is also a National Historic Landmark. I also wanted to make sure that the National Park Service NHL folks have been invited to consult on the project as well. I didn't catch if there was a SCSHPO/archaeological rep on the call, but at least 3 reps from federally recognized Tribal Nations were present and I suspect they may have similar concerns. We certainly understand the need for recreation in the area and would like to continue this discussion further. If there are future plans to have a cultural resources discussion specifically, please let me know.

Thanks so much and Take Care!

Jenn



???????

Jennifer D. Bedell

Archaeological Compliance Program Manager and Tribal Liaison Georgia Department of Community Affairs 60 Executive Park South, NE Atlanta, Georgia 30329

Direct +14044866371 Jennifer.Bedell@dca.ga.gov

-Augusta GEJORGIA

UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

Wes Byne, P.E. Director

May 28, 2021

James M. Landreth, Vice President Power Generation Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. 220 Operations Way, MMC A221 Cayce, SC 29033

RE: Stevens Creek Relicensing, P-2535 Request for Opportunity to Participate in Relicensing and Support of Comments Regarding Studies

Dear Vice President Landreth:

Augusta, Georgia is requesting an opportunity to participate in relicensing of the Stevens Creek Project under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC" or "Commission") approved Traditional Licensing Process, Acc. # 200200716-3004, on July 16, 2020. From FERC records it appears that the Preliminary Application Document was mailed to Mayor Hardie Davis office, however, Augusta has not received information or communications since that time. As a local government within fifteen (15) miles of the project and otherwise interested party, Augusta requests to be included in all future information distribution and comment.

The Savannah River provides 100% of Augusta public water supply under state and federal law, and the river serves as a water supply watershed for Augusta water users. Augusta has been located on the river and dependent upon the river for centuries. Augusta includes numerous parks, recreational amenities, and historic sites including the Augusta Riverwalk along the Savannah River, the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area, river related activities and recreational opportunities. Augusta's economic health and future depend upon the Savannah River. Augusta has water rights in the waters of the Savannah River, and has operated water infrastructure since 1875 including the Augusta Canal, diversion dam and appurtenant features. Augusta's infrastructure is located within one mile of the dam and is affected by dam operations and accordingly as local government owned and operated resources are an important part of consideration of relicensing effects and alternatives.

In reviewing relicensing filings available at FERC's eLibrary and the Stevens Creek Relicensing website, stevenscreekrelicense.com. Augusta does not appear on the electronic distribution list which does include a large number of other governmental entities as well as professional environmental organizations and others. Augusta requests that it be added to the distribution list and provides proper contact information below.

Comment Regarding Proposed Studies

Augusta supports the comments of resource agencies including the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources ("SCDNR") in its November 2, 2020 comments regarding the scope of studies on water quality and flow. Augusta concurs that additional Project generation and

> 452 Walker Street, Suite 200 Augusta, GA 30901 (706) 312-4154 WWW.AUGUSTAGA.GOV

operational procedure detail (as per Section 3.3. of the PAD) is necessary to assess water management goals and effects (SCDNR Additional Information and Study Request). Augusta is unclear regarding the scope of operational flow assessment for the relicensing environmental documentation. This appears to also be a concern of SCDNR. We would appreciate additional information regarding the scope of analysis of flow for this relicensing.

Because the Stevens Creek project reregulates flows, including effects on the Augusta shoals and to the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam pool, relicensing environmental assessments should include a proper scope of geographic effect. Proper geographic scope is particularly important in light of efforts underway to introduce endangered fish species into the shoal areas. The February 2021 Water Quality Study Plan, as an example, limits data collection to the area immediately downstream of the Stevens Creek Dam. Water Quality Study Plan, Figure 1. Studies will collect temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, conductivity, and turbidity data. In light of the reregulation function, however, Stevens Creek operational effects would be observable downstream and through the shoals. Augusta's observations indicate a substantial temperature variation with potential effect on aquatic life some distance downstream of the Stevens Creek discharge. The Mussel Study Plan (Kleinschmidt, February 2021) confirms the presence of hypolimnetic releases from J.S. Thurmond Reservoir low in oxygen and much colder than southeastern river typical temperatures. The PAD identifies several native mussel species, which are affected by flows and Stevens Creek operations, in the shoals area. See PAD, Table -5. The Water Quality Study Plan should be amended to include additional downstream data points to determine geographic extent of water quality parameter characteristics to consider operational effects on water quality, particularly in the shoals and Augusta. The Water Quality Study Plan states that monitoring would commence January 2021, which is before the report was dated. Augusta recommends that for remaining data collection periods additional downstream monitors be employed and the monitoring period may have to be adjusted to obtain an appropriate seasonal data set.

Detailed assessment of flows is also necessary to determine Stevens' Creek effect on New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam pool elevation, which is protected under Federal law. The pool elevation, by extension, protects Augusta's water supply, recreation, Augusta Riverwalk, Augusta Canal National Heritage Area, and historic and recreational resources.

Augusta also notes that the Recreation Study Plan is limited to in-reservoir recreational features. Consistent with the SCDNR comment regarding flow and operations and Augusta's support of additional flow information and detailed assessment, Stevens Creek largely controls flow for the purpose of recreation from the Stevens Creek dam to the NSBLD and should be included in any assessment.

Comment Regarding Preliminary Application Document

Augusta has been able to access only the eFiled PAD document, which is missing Figures 4-9 through 4-14 (these are blank) and Augusta would request replacement copies of these figures which are water quality information central to Augusta interests.

Future Communications

Please use the following contact information for future distribution and comment. Via mail or hard copy:

Wes Byne, PE Director, Augusta Utilities 452 Walker St. Augusta, GA 30901

For electronic distributions please use the following emails:

Wes Byne <u>WByne@augustaga.gov</u>

Hameed Malik HMalik@augustaga.gov

Oscar Flite OFlite@augustaga.gov

David Moore <u>david.moore@earthandwatergroup.com</u>

Thank you for your attention to this matter and consideration of these comments. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this correspondence.

Wes Byne, PE Utilities Director

Cc: Amy Bresnahan, Relicensing Project Manager (<u>Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u>) Alison Jakupca, Kleinschmidt (Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com) Document Content(s) 2021.6.1 Aug UT - Dominion Stevens Creek Studies.PDF......1 Meeting Notes and Presentations 2021

MEETING NOTES Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Joint Meeting

February 25, 2021

Final KMK 4-14-2021

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Caleb Gaston (DESC) Randy Mahan (DESC) Paul Vidonic (Dominion Energy) Taylor Allen (Dominion Energy) Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Bret Hoffman (Kleinschmidt) Kevin Nebiolo (Kleinschmidt) Stan Simpson (USACE) Don Imm (USFWS) Eric Bauer (USFWS) Keith Whalen (USFS) Paula Marcinek (GDNR - WRD) Steve Schleiger (GDNR- WRD) Bill Post (SCDNR) Ellen Waldrop (SCDNR) Mark Scott (SCDNR) Bruce Azevedo (SUOWPC) Tom Proctor (Landowner)

Ray Ammarell (DESC) Billy Chastain (DESC) Matt Long (DESC) Pete Sturke (Dominion Energy) Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt) Jordan Johnson (Kleinschmidt) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Kathryn Feingold (USACE) Melanie Olds (USFWS) Twyla Cheatwood (NOAA) Derrick Miller(USFS) Jay Payne (GDNR - WRD) Rusty Wenerick (SCDHEC) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Jason Bettinger (SCDNR) Tonya Bonitatibus (SRK) Ashley Reid (SUOWPC)

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 the meeting was to review and discuss the 2021 study schedule, including any accompanying comments on the PAD/Study Requests and associated study plan revisions; review Project operations; and review the remaining relicensing schedule.

Upcoming 2021 Study Schedule and Requested Updates/Revisions

The water quality monitors were installed at the end of January/beginning of February due to high flows. The monitors will collect data for a full year and will be removed end of January/beginning of February 2022.

The recreation study will continue as planned in 2021, despite the ongoing pandemic. Recreation clerks will wear masks and practice social distancing. The recreation user forms were updated to account for GADNR comments received previously. Derrick indicated that the USFS is fine with data collection at Chota Drive but reiterated the USFS current stance that they do not support recreation improvements at the site.



The mussel study plan was modified to specify the use of a secchi disk to collect turbidity information during field work. Alison added that a malacologist reviewing the study plan noted that the study plan and SCDNR SOP indicated different survey lengths (100m vs. 400m). Elizabeth M. said that she would check with Morgan Kern (SCDNR) on the difference and let the group know the appropriate survey length. This study will be conducted in late summer (August/September) 2021.

Project Survival Study Discussion

The Project Survival Study was requested following PAD distribution for the purpose of informing Section 18 fish passage prescriptions. Alison noted that following the comments, Kleinschmidt ran the blade strike model to guide discussions for today's meeting. The Kleinschmidt model is very similar to the one used by USFWS. The software (Stryke) is a Monte Carlo model. Kevin provided an overview of the results. The model ran 300 fish per simulation for 30 simulations, based on known information of Stevens Creek Dam. To be as conservative as possible, 100% of fish were routed through the units, although it is likely that some fish will pass via spill over the spillway. Jordan said that the model used blueback herring as the target species and length was assumed to be 10-12 inches, which is longer than would be expected for the landlocked population of herring passing downstream from Thurmond. The model was also run using American eel. Results showed survival rates of 84% and 79% for blueback herring and American eel, respectively. Don asked if the model has the capability to look at the benefits of existing avoidance and minimization measures. Kevin said yes, but we would need more data to input into the model.

Alison said that the existing RMC entrainment study from the mid-1990s showed that herring survival rates were around 94%. The blade strike model runs included very conservative estimates, so it can be assumed the range of survival is likely between 84 and 94 percent.

Bill Post noted that more life stages of eels could be included in the model even though there is not a lot of evidence for larger eels reaching that far up the system.

The group discussed linear regression modeling for American eels. Kevin noted that as a statistician, he has noticed several issues with applying linear regression. He recommended using a beta regression model, which has a response variable. Kleinschmidt would also need additional data to run this type of model.

The group agreed that this is a good discussion to continue during the next Fish Passage TWC meeting. Kleinschmidt will send the model results out to stakeholders for review. Twyla will send this information to the NMFS fish passage engineer for comment. Kleinschmidt will also add silver eels into the blade strike model and send this information out to stakeholders.

Upstream and Downstream Fish Passage Feasibility Study

An Upstream and Downstream Fish Passage Feasibility study was requested following PAD distribution with the purpose of informing Section 18 fish passage prescriptions. This study will be conducted after the Project Survival Study is completed. Alison said that the Fish Passage TWC is planning to go to the Project in 2021 to look at the lock and dam and discuss various alternatives for passage of alosines and American eel. This information may be included in the Aquatic Habitat





Whitepaper. This study request will continue to be discussed as more information on passage at the downstream Augusta Project becomes available.

Later during the meeting, Tonya asked if Robust Redhorse should also be considered during the fish passage feasibility study. Paula said that Robust Redhorse have not been seen above the downstream lock and dam in many years, although targeted surveys have not been completed in years. Melanie said that the USFWS has considered including them, however, passage above Stevens Creek does not open up much additional habitat for the species. She said that passage considerations based solely on this species might not be warranted since it would not open a significant amount of additional habitat. However, the USFWS always takes this species into consideration. Don added that he doesn't believe the Robust Redhorse's natural habitat and preference is in a lake. Alison said that one of the goals of the aquatic habitat whitepaper is to identify the habitat available above Stevens Creek Dam as it compares to the needs of certain species. The group agrees to circle back to this issue later when fish passage downstream is complete.

Bartram's Bass Discussion

SCDNR requested a Bartram's Bass study at the Project. SCDNR has conducted studies on this species to better understand the species and its specific threats. One known threat is hybridization with non-native spotted bass. SCDNR wants to know if hybridization is happening in the vicinity of the Project. The group discussed this study's project nexus. SCDNR said that they are interested in how Project operations may be affecting this species.

Alison said that during the mussel surveys, tidbit samplers will be installed to determine the extent of the project effects on Stevens Creek. This will also inform project effects in the area where Bartram's Bass is expected to occur. Alison also said that SCDNR can consider requesting funds from the Stevens Creek Habitat Enhancement Fund, as this study may fit within the requirements of that fund. This study would be conducted in 2022.

Keith added that additional fish access to the Project could cause the issue of hybridization to become worse. Melanie said that this species is not listed as an At-Risk Species (ARS) yet as this species is just starting to get on the USFWS' radar.

Land Ownership Map, Recreation Access in Georgia, Aquatic Vegetation Control

Alison said that DESC will plan a meeting to talk about additional access to the Project, including a downstream fishing pier and/or canoe access on the Georgia side of the river. Alison also said that DESC will be developing a land ownership map during relicensing and will distribute that to stakeholders when it's complete.

Don noted that aquatic vegetation (specifically Hydrilla) has been indirectly linked to coot and bald eagle brain lesion, however aquatic vegetation should not be eradicated as it is good for juvenile fish. Alison asked what control methods are safe with no effects to water quality. Tonya said that spraying was conducted several times at Augusta and harvesting was conducted as well. The spraying wasn't effective due to water movement. Henry said that the USACE has been successful



at minimizing Hydrilla on Lake Thurmond, although he's not sure of their methods. The group will continue to discuss this issue.

Project Operations

Alison said that there seemed to be some confusion regarding operations at Stevens Creek and their function to re-regulate flows from the upstream Thurmond Dam. Stevens Creek Reservoir fills in approximately 4 hours when both projects are running at full capacity. There is agency concern over reservoir fluctuation and fish spawning, however, when Thurmond is operating in a peaking pattern, there is a significant amount of water coming downstream that Stevens Creek has to re-regulate. This results in reservoir fluctuation. To steady levels in the Stevens Creek Reservoir, downstream flows would have to fluctuate. Either the reservoir or the river downstream of Stevens Creek Dam must fluctuate when Thurmond operates. Don agreed that the Project purpose is to modulate flow as it heads toward Augusta and downstream effects would be negative for all species without the Stevens Creek Project. Stan added that Thurmond has a maximum capacity of about 37,000 cfs and is limited to a minimum flow of 3,600 cfs, so it's hard for Stevens Creek hydro to stabilize the reservoir level for spawning. During fish spawning, the USACE tries to stabilize their lakes, which makes it extremely difficult for DESC to keep the Stevens Creek reservoir stable.

Schedule

The group discussed upcoming events related to relicensing. A Fish Passage TWC site visit may be planned for spring 2021. The recreation study officially begins in April 2021. The mussel study will be conducted in late summer 2021. A study season review meeting will likely be planned for late fall 2021. Alison asked the group if they were still under individual restrictions from their agencies to conduct in-person visits. USFWS can travel and do outside field visits in small groups. NMFS has more restrictions but potential for upcoming in-person visits is increasing. SCDNR and GADNR can conduct outside visits. USFS noted that there is a federal order in place that masks be worn on all federal property, so visits to USFS property would require masks, even when outside and 6 feet apart.

Alison said she would put together a draft list of agency attendees for a small group to visit the Project tentatively in May.

Action items from this meeting are listed below.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Elizabeth will check with Morgan on survey lengths for mussel survey.
- Kleinschmidt will add silver eel to linear regression data and send out the excel file with the formulas.
- Kleinschmidt will put together draft list of agency attendees for a site visit tentatively in May.



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

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Fish Passage Technical Committee Meeting

May 27, 2021

Final JAG 3-4-22

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Paul Vidonic (Dominion) Pete Sturke (Dominion) Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Bret Hoffman (Kleinschmidt) Jennifer Güt (Kleinschmidt) Will Pruitt (Kleinschmidt) Eric Bauer (USFWS) Jay Payne (GDNR) Paula Marcinek (GDNR) Bill Post (SCDNR) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Tonya Bonitatibus (Savannah Riverkeeper) John Craun (Individual)

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 the meeting was to visit the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project) to discuss big picture ideas for the fish passage and next steps.

Alison provided a brief recap of the previous meeting held on September 29, 2020. During that meeting, stakeholders discussed the American Eel (eel) data that was collected and provided by Georgia DNR and South Carolina DNR and eel data that was collected as part of the 1993 Stevens Creek Entrainment Study. The data indicated that eels of multiple year classes are passing over Stevens Creek dam and traveling upstream. Fritz from NMFS stated that eels are being considered with the design of the fish passage at Augusta Dam, which is tied into passage at the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam (NSBLD). Bill from SCDNR and Fritz agreed that a site study should be conducted closer to the time of fish passage installation, and that any changes in operations or flow dispersals could affect the proposed location of an eel ladder at the Project. Alison mentioned the development of the Aquatic Habitat White Paper that would incorporate eel data and all other relevant data, and that will be distributed to the Fish Passage TWC for review and comment.

Following the meeting recap, Alison restated that the timing of fish passage at the Project is largely dependent on downstream activities at Augusta Dam and NSBLD and asked if anyone knew of any updates with the two projects. Bill stated that the court's decision that the removal of the NSBLD does not adhere to the 2016 federal Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act is being appealed. Eric inquired if there was any coordination with the operation of the Augusta Dam and the Stevens Creek projects. Alison explained that there is currently no coordination beyond the reregulation benefits that the Stevens Creek project provides for the downstream project.



Eric asked if consideration had been given to the initial installation of an eel ladder with passage for other fish species considered at a later point. Bill and Henry discussed that a siting study may be needed post-license, prior to eel ladder installation to determine the location of eel aggregation, and that downstream fish passage activities will likely factor in. Paul stated Dominion's goal is to make sure the structure is safe and is in the best location for maximum fish passage. Tonya presented that there is a benefit to building a fish passage within the locks that would also serve a recreational purpose of allowing boaters to access the river both upstream and downstream of the Project. Recreation is popular in the area and is advertised by Columbia County. Henry expressed concerns that this may allow for an adverse opportunity for recreational fisherman to exploit fisheries resources near the fish passage and/or require Dominion employees to act as law enforcement. Pete and Alison stated that the NMFS fish passage prescription is largely dependent on the best-available site-specific fisheries data. Alison and Henry emphasized that this is the beginning of a long process and that no final decisions are being made at this point.

Meeting participants were split into two groups to walk along the top of the Project powerhouse intake area and portions of the dam. Afterwards, Paula inquired about the sediment load that is being deposited by Stevens Creek. Amy stated that is unknown at the moment. She explained that during a large rain event, Stevens Creek discharges a large amount very quickly that is then released via the four-foot flashboards on that side of the dam. This is then typically followed by a substantial release from the Thurmond Dam.

There are no action items from this meeting.



MEETING NOTES Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Recreation Site Visit

May 27, 2021

Final JAG 3-4-22

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Paul Vidonic (Dominion) Pete Sturke (Dominion) Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Bret Hoffman (Kleinschmidt) Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt) Timothy Scarboro (GDNR) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Jay Payne (GDNR) Paula Marcinek (GDNR) Aspen Kemmerlin (GHPD) Santiago Martinez (GHPD) Jessica Crawford (Archaeological Conservancy) Tonya Bonitatibus (Savannah Riverkeeper) John Craun (Individual)

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 the meeting was to visit the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project) to discuss potential recreation improvements at the Project.

Alison provided a brief recap of recreation improvements that have been recommended for the Stevens Creek Project, including the installation of a canoe portage (on either the GA or SC side of the dam) and a tailrace fishing pier on the GA side of the dam.

The group started the site visit on the GA side of the dam, just downstream of the powerhouse. They viewed the area immediately downstream of the powerhouse and an area a little further down in the tailrace. Regarding a canoe portage on the GA side of the dam, concerns over public safety and close proximity to Stallings Island (a National Historic Landmark and a National Register of Historic Places [NRHP]-listed site) were expressed. However, a tailrace fishing pier may be possible and will be discussed further.

The group then traveled to the SC side of the dam to view the small piece of property owned by DESC adjacent to the dam abutment to see if this area could potentially be modified to include a canoe portage. The group agreed that although the shoreline is extremely steep, a canoe portage could potentially be constructed by performing minor site-grading, without the need for heavy equipment, as it would be difficult for heavy equipment to access the site. DESC noted that they would need to discuss the proposed canoe portage with legal counsel, as there are potential safety concerns with the site being in very close proximity to the dam. Concerns over increasing public access to Stallings Island were also discussed.



Tonya noted that her preference for dam portage would be through the existing lock at the dam, although this may cause several safety issues.

The group will meet again later in the year to continue discussing potential additional recreation opportunities at the Project and DESC will provide a follow-up regarding internal review of the SC-based canoe portage.


MEETING NOTES Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

U.S. Forest Service Meeting

June 3, 2021

Final KMK 6-30-2021

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt) Jason Moser (US Forest Service) Jim Bates (US Forest Service)

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 the meeting was to touch base with the US Forest Service regarding cultural issues at the Stevens Creek Project. Jason Moser (Heritage Program Manager for Francis Marion and Sumter National Forest) reached out to Amy Bresnahan via email on June 2, 2021 requesting a conference call to discuss the Project. The conference call occurred on June 3, 2021.

During the conference call, Amy provided a summary of the cultural activities that have occurred during relicensing thus far, including a request from SCSHPO to revisit several cultural sites previously studied to verify and map their delineation and locations to current methodology and standards. Amy noted that this effort is underway, and a report should be available soon. Amy will share this report with the US Forest Service. Amy also provided a summary of the recent site visit to discuss potential recreation in the vicinity of Stallings Island.

Amy noted that in addition to Derrick Miller, Keith Whalen, and Jim Bates with the US Forest Service, Jason Moser, Glenn Kansanback and John R. Kirkaldie have been added to the Project distribution list and will receive project updates and correspondence moving forward.



Email and Written Correspondence 2022

From:	Jennifer Gut
To:	Andy Colbert; Andy Herndon; Bill Marshall; Chris Nelson; Derrick Miller (derrick.miller@usda.gov); Elizabeth
	Johnson; Elizabeth Toombs; Jaime Loichinger; Jamie Rader; Jamie Sykes; Jeff Darley; Jennifer Welte; John
	Eddins; Melanie Olds; Pace Wilber; Paula Marcinek; Rob Pavey; Robert Phillips; Scott Hyatt; Stan Simpson; Steve
	Schleiger; Thom Litts; Tony Hicks; Tonya Bonitatibus; Twyla Cheatwood; wenonahh@ccppcrafts.com; Chris
	Thomason; David Eargle; Fritz Rohde; Greg Mixon; Jason Bettinger; Morgan Kern; Rusty Wenerick; Tony
	Hornbuckle; Amy Bresnahan; Ray Ammarell; Caleb Gaston; Paul Vidonic; Pete Sturke; Alison Jakupca; Henry
	<u>Mealing; Jason Moak; Jordan Johnson; Will Pruitt; Kelly Kirven; Williams, Jeffery; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov;</u>
	Blackburn, Shelly; Iris Griffin; Wes Byne; Oscar Flite; David Moore; Hameed Malik; Bauer, Eric F; Elizabeth Miller;
	Jon Ambrose; Kathryn Feingold
Subject:	Stevens Creek Hydro Project Agency Outreach Meeting
Start:	Wednesday, July 6, 2022 1:00:00 PM
End:	Wednesday, July 6, 2022 4:00:00 PM
Location:	Misty Lake Clubhouse
Attachments:	image001.jpg

Good morning all,

Thank you for your responses to the meeting poll concerning the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) Resource Conservation Group meeting as part of the Project's relicensing effort. Dominion Energy South Carolina (DESC) will be hosting the meeting July 6, 2022 from 1 to 4 pm. The meeting will be held at DESC's Misty Lake Clubhouse. Please note, the best address to use to reach the Misty Lake Clubhouse is 2242 Ascauga Lake Road, North Augusta, SC. The entrance to the clubhouse is just beyond the fire department building.

We very much encourage in-person attendance. However, we will be providing a virtual option for those who are not able to attend in person. Please let me know whether you plan to attend in-person or virtually. We will send out the virtual/conference call information closer to the meeting date.

The purpose of the meeting is to present the results from the studies that were conducted in 2021 as part of the Project's relicensing efforts as well as to discuss next steps. We will plan to talk about recreation during the first hour or so of the meeting. The remainder of the meeting will be devoted to water quality and mussels. We are working on finalizing the study reports – they will be distributed prior to the meeting.

If you have any questions, you can reach me at the information below. You may also contact Alison Jakupca (Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com <mailto:Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>) or Amy Bresnahan (Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>). We look forward to meeting with you all soon.

Thanks,

Jenn

Jennifer A. Güt

Staff Licensing Coordinator

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Office: 803.904.8680

Cell: 706.294.3225

Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com <mailto:Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

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We provide practical solutions for renewable energy, water, and environmental projects!

From:	Jennifer Gut
To:	Jennifer Gut; Kevin Mack; Twyla Cheatwood; Andy Herndon; Melanie Olds; Jamie Sykes; Kathryn Feingold; Scott
	<u>Hyatt; Stan Simpson; William Jabour; Derrick Miller (derrick.miller@usda.gov); roderick.alfred@usda.gov; Bill</u>
	Marshall; Bill Post; Chris Thomason; Elizabeth Miller; Jason Bettinger; Greg Mixon; Rusty Wenerick; Chris Nelson;
	<u>Jay Payne; Jeff Darley; Jennifer Welte; Jon Ambrose; Paula Marcinek; Steve Schleiger; Thom Litts; Tonya</u>
	<u>Bonitatibus; Tony Hicks; Tony Hornbuckle; Rob Pavey; Jaime Loichinger; John Eddins; Elizabeth Toombs;</u>
	Wenonah Haire; Elizabeth Johnson; Robert Phillips; Andy Colbert; cole@colewatkinstours.com; Aspen Kemmerlin;
	<u>Ayesha Tarek; Eric Bauer; Hameed Malik; Jeffery Williams; Jessica Crawford; LeeAnne Wendt; Turner Hunt;</u>
	Oscar Flite; Santi Martinez; Shelly Blackburn; Wes Byne; Jennifer Bedell; Paul Farrow; David Moore; Keith
	Whalen; Chad Hendrix; John Craun; John Luton; Amy Bresnahan; Ray Ammarell; Caleb Gaston; Paul Vidonic;
	Pete Sturke; Taylor Allen; Iris Griffin; James Miller; Alison Jakupca; Kelly Kirven; Jordan Johnson; Jason Moak;
	Will Pruitt; Nicole Haibach
Subject:	Stevens Creek Resource Conservation Group Meeting
Start:	Tuesday, September 20, 2022 10:00:00 AM
End:	Tuesday, September 20, 2022 4:00:00 PM
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting; Savannah Rapids Pavilion

Hello all,

Based on the responses to the meeting poll, we have scheduled the Stevens Creek Resource Conservation Group meeting for Tuesday, September 20, 2022. We will discuss fish passage from approximately 10 am-12 pm and recreation from 1-4 pm EST. Please note that this is a hybrid meeting with options to attend either in person or virtually. We strongly encourage those that are able to travel to join us in the Red Cedar Room at the Savannah Rapids Pavilion (3300 Evans To Locks Road, Martinez, GA 30907). Lunch will be brought in for in-person attendees.

Upon accepting the meeting invite, please let me know: 1) if you plan to attend the meeting in person or virtually and 2) what portions of the meeting you plan to attend (fish, recreation, or both). This will greatly assist me in coordinating the meeting. Please reach out to me, Alison, or Amy with any questions. We look forward to speaking with you all soon!

Best,

Jenn

Microsoft Teams meeting

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Meeting ID: 215 420 511 89 Passcode: f37o6T

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From:	Alison Jakupca
То:	Jennifer Gut; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8); Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8); Derrick Miller
Subject:	RE: Stevens Creek FS 4e Conditions Discussion
Date:	Tuesday, September 27, 2022 1:34:31 PM

Hello All, As discussed last Friday, we will be holding this meeting at Kleinschmidt Offices located at 204 Caughman Farm Lane, Suite 301, Lexington, SC 29072. Looking forward to seeing you next week! Alison

Alison Jakupca Senior Regulatory Coordinator Office: 803 462 5628 Mobile: 864 906 4119 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

Providing practical solutions for complex problems affecting energy, water, and the environment

----Original Appointment----From: Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 7, 2022 10:39 AM
To: Jennifer Gut; Amy Bresnahan; Ray Ammarell; Derrick Miller; Alison Jakupca
Subject: Stevens Creek FS 4e Conditions Discussion
When: Wednesday, October 5, 2022 10:00 AM-12:00 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada).
Where: 4931 Broad River Road

Hi all – since it's so far out, I just picked a date and time for the FS 4e discussion for the Stevens Creek Project. Please let me know if this date/time doesn't end up working for you and I'll reschedule. Thanks!

From:	Jennifer Gut
To:	Jennifer Gut; Alison Jakupca; Amy Bresnahan; Andy Herndon - NMFS; Caleb Gaston; Clint.Peacock@dnr.ga.gov;
	David Eargle - SCDHEC; Derrick Miller - USFS; Elizabeth Miller - SCDNR; Jamie Sykes - USACE; Jason Bettinger -
	SCDNR; Jason Moak; Jordan Johnson; Keith Whalen - USFS; Kevin Mack - NMFS; Melanie Olds - USFWS (SC);
	Morgan Kern - SCDNR; Paula Marcinek - GADNR; Pete Sturke; paul.vidonic@dominionenergy.com; Ray Ammarell;
	Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC; Tonya Bonitatibus; Twyla Cheatwood - NMFS; bilal.harris@earthandwatergroup.com;
	Bjorn Lake; Chad Hendrix - City of Augusta; Eric Bauer - USFWS (GA); Iris Griffin; Jay Payne; Jeffery Williams -
	GADNR; John Craun; Oscar Flite - City of Augusta; Wes Byne - City of Augusta
Cc:	Henry Mealing
Subject:	Stevens Creek Hydro Water Quality TWC Meeting
Start:	Tuesday, December 13, 2022 1:30:00 PM
End:	Tuesday, December 13, 2022 3:00:00 PM
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting

Hello all:

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss water quality at the Stevens Creek Project, particularly in the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir. Please reach out to me, Alison, and/or Amy in the meantime with any questions. I hope you all have a great Thanksgiving Holiday!

Best,

Jenn

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

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24da4a1fdce9&threadid=19_meeting_NJY0N2VmMGEtYJEWYS00MDY4L1K3NJMtNjKyZJJIZJJZGEX@thread.v2&messagetd=0&tanguage=en-US> 20220902 SC Department of Health & Environmental Control's (SCDHEC's) comments, questions, and requests regarding the draft Water Quality Study Report for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project, FERC No. 2535.



Figure 1. SCDHEC surface water quality monitoring stations in the Stevens Creek watershed where use support and trends were reported in 2018. Green = Fully Supports, Yellow = Partially Supports, Red = Use Support Not Met. Note that Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorous were not assessed at any of these stream stations and are only assessed at lake stations. Note that temperature is not assessed at any stations because of the standard being based on natural conditions. Note also that SCDHEC monitors water quality, benthic macroinvertebrates, and fish tissue at additional stations in the

watershed not shown on this figure. SCDHEC water quality data can be downloaded from the Water Quality Portal here: <u>https://www.waterqualitydata.us/</u>.

Comments and Questions:

1. SCDHEC notes that the executive summary fails to make note of one of the major revelations of the study: the negative impact of the project on water quality above the dam in the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir as indicated in this study, for example, by water quality at Study Site 5 and USGS Station 5. SCDHEC notes that the executive summary only makes a conclusion about the lack of a negative impact on water quality downstream of the dam, even though the stated goals and objectives include assessing water quality in the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir.

2. The report makes the following statement on page 2-1 under the heading Geographical and Temporal Scope: "Monitoring Site 1 was used as a control and was located in Stevens Creek Reservoir upstream of the hydro station." We don't understand the use of the term control here and the meaning of this statement. The authors should explain the meaning of this statement. Were any of the stations located in a freely flowing portion of the river, free from the influence of any dam or hydroelectric project?

3. SCDHEC also notes that this section describes the location of Study Sites and provides a figure showing these locations but doesn't provide any coordinates. The report should provide coordinates and photographs for each Study Site.

4. The report also states the following under the same heading: "Monitoring Site 5 was located in Stevens Creek near Woodlawn Road, approximately 4.5 miles upstream of its confluence with the Savannah River at Stevens Creek Dam." In an earlier section, the report describes the reservoir as reaching 12 miles up Stevens Creek. Since the report documents water quality issues at this Study Site, we believe additional data is needed to document the physical extent of these issues. For example, SCDHEC ambient surface water quality monitoring data indicate DO, NH3, pH, and Turbidity fully support classified uses at station SV-371 in Horn Creek at Garrett Road, approximately 4 or 5 miles upstream of Study Site 5 (See **Figure 1**).

5. The report makes the following statement on page 3-3 under the heading SCDHEC Water Quality Standards for Freshwaters referring to Regulation 61-68: "The regulation assigns classifications to water bodies in the state and establishes water quality standards for those classifications." SCDHEC notes that this is not correct and that classifications are assigned in Regulation 61-69, *Classified Waters*, which we note the authors do list in the reference section.

6. SCDHEC notes that Table 3-4 on page 3-2 gives the equation for calculating the criterion maximum concentration (CMC) in waters where salmonids are absent from ATTACHMENT 3 - CALCULATION OF FRESHWATER AMMONIA CRITERION in R.61-68, which is one of two conditions included in Attachment 3. (The regulation states CMC means the highest instream concentration of a toxicant or an effluent to which the organisms can be exposed for a brief period of time without causing an acute effect.) A footnote in R.61-68 to the NON PRIORITY POLLUTANTS table under the Appendix titled WATER QUALITY NUMERIC CRITERIA FOR THE PROTECTION OF AQUATIC LIFE AND HUMAN HEALTH states the following: "According to the procedures described in the Guidelines for Deriving Numerical National Water Quality Criteria for the Protection of Aquatic Organisms and Their Uses, except possibly where a very sensitive species is important at a site, freshwater aquatic life should be protected if both conditions specified in Attachment 3 - Calculation of Freshwater Ammonia Criterion are satisfied." Table 3-4 states that the

"standard" is pH, temperature, and life-stage dependent; however, regulation 61-68 notes in the NON PRIORITY POLLUTANTS table that numeric criteria for ammonia are pH and temperature dependent.

7. SCDEC notes that Regulation 61-68, under Section E.GENERAL RULES AND STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL WATERS, states the following:

"11. In order to protect and maintain lakes and other waters of the State, consideration needs to be given to the control of nutrients reaching the waters of the State. Therefore, the Department shall control nutrients as prescribed below.

a...

b. Numeric nutrient criteria for lakes are based on an ecoregional approach which takes into account the geographic location of the lakes within the State and are listed below. These numeric criteria are applicable to lakes of 40 acres or more. Lakes of less than 40 acres will continue to be protected by the narrative criteria.

(1)...

(2) For the Piedmont and Southeastern Plains ecoregions of the State, total phosphorus shall not exceed 0.06 mg/l, chlorophyll a shall not exceed 40 ug/l, and total nitrogen shall not exceed 1.50 mg/l."

8. SCDHEC notes specific conductance values were highest at Study Site 5 and USGS Site 5.

9. SCDHEC notes that Table 4-26 and Figure 4-45 indicate some unusually high pH readings at Study Site 6. Can the authors give any explanation for this data?

10. SCDHEC notes turbidity values were highest at Study Site 5.

11. SCDHEC notes that Study Site 5 generally had the highest nutrient levels measured except for ammonia and orthophosphate, which were highest at Study Sites 3 and 2 respectively. The ammonia value measured at Study Site 3 is higher than the maximum TKN value. Since TKN includes ammonia, the ammonia value should have been lower than the TKN value. It's also peculiar that Orthophosphate was measured at Study Site 2, but Phosphorous was not detected.

12. The analysis and discussion section makes the following statement on page 5-2: "Water quality within Stevens Creek arm and Savannah River arm of Stevens Creek Reservoir is significantly influenced by external sources outside of DESC's control; nevertheless, water quality monitoring data demonstrate that re-oxygenation occurs as water passes through Stevens Creek Reservoir, the Stevens Creek powerhouse and over the Stevens Creek spillway, benefiting aquatic resources within the Savannah River downstream of the Project." We note that dissolved oxygen and some of the other parameters measured in this study fully support classified uses upstream of Study Site 5 in Stevens Creek, for example at SCDHEC fixed ambient surface water quality monitoring station SV-371 in Horn Creek at Garrett Road, approximately 4 or 5 miles upstream of Study Site 5 (See **Figure 1**). We also note that dissolved oxygen fully supported classified uses at all the other stations shown in **Figure 1** where it was assessed (all but one). 2018 trend analysis indicated no significant trends in dissolved oxygen data at Station SV-371 or at any of the stations in **Figure 1** where dissolved oxygen was assessed and where there was enough data for trend analysis.

Request for second year of study, etc.:

1. SCDHEC requests the water quality study be continued for a second year, collecting additional water quality data and additional water quality parameters (for example chlorophyll a) at additional locations

in the Stevens Creek Arm of the reservoir to document the physical extent of water quality issues in this part of the reservoir. According to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, the water quality issues here could be acting as a barrier or impediment to fish passage upstream to the many miles of stream habitat in the Stevens Creek watershed. SCDHEC requests that stakeholders, including regulatory and resource agencies, be consulted when planning the details of this study.

2. SCDHEC also requests additional data collection to determine the residence time in the lower portion of the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir where there are documented water quality issues such as low dissolved oxygen. SCDHEC also recommends collecting similar data from an upstream reach that is more river-like and where dissolved oxygen and other parameters fully supports aquatic life uses for comparison. SCDHEC requests that stakeholders, including regulatory and resource agencies, be consulted when planning the details of the additional data collection.

3. Finally, SCDHEC requests that the licensee, in designing this second-year study, considers the adequacy of the data for informing the task of working with the regulatory and resource agencies and other stakeholders to develop PM&E measures to include in the license application to address these water quality issues and ameliorate their potential impact on fish passage.

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

1000 Assembly Street PO Box 167 Columbia, SC 29202 843-953-3881 Office millere@dnr.sc.gov



Robert H. Boyles, Jr. Director

Lorianne Riggin Director, Office of Environmental Programs

September 2, 2022

Ms. Jennifer A. Güt Staff Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt 204 Caughman Farm Lane, Suite 301 Lexington, SC 29072

REFERENCE: Comments on the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (P-2535) Freshwater Mussel, Recreation Use and Needs, and Water Quality Study Reports.

Dear Ms. Güt:

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) has reviewed the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project's (P-2535) Freshwater Mussel, Recreation Use and Needs, and Water Quality Study Reports and offer the following comments.

Freshwater Mussel Study Report

The SCDNR notes that the two species collected during the survey were *Elliptio complanata* and *Villosa delumbis*, which are both moderate priority species in the South Carolina State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The SCDNR has records of *Lampsilis cariosa*, a highest priority SWAP species, at Stevens Creek Heritage Preserve, located less than four miles upstream of the Project Boundary in the Stevens Creek arm. SCDNR also has records of *Uniomerus carolinianus*, *Elliptio angustata*, and *Elliptio producta* in the surrounding area. Additionally, the SCDNR notes that since deeper pools were not sampled during the survey, *Lampsilis cariosa* could have been missed due to their habitat preference.

Recreation Use and Needs Study Report

The SCDNR finds the data collected during the Recreational Use and Needs (RUN) Study Report support the need for additional recreational enhancements at the Stevens Creek Project. The SCDNR requests the licensee further discuss Goal 2 of the RUN Study by identifying ways to improve recreational access and amenities in the Project Area.

The SCDNR continues to support the licensee providing downstream portage opportunities for the public around the Stevens Creek dam. The findings in Section 4.5.2 indicate that 79 percent of recreationists at the Betty's Branch Recreation Site and 11 percent of recreationists at Stevens Creek Recreation Site identified non-motorized watercraft as their primary recreation activity. Further, 71 percent of the recreationists at Betty's Branch and 62 percent of recreationists at Stevens Creek Recreation Site indicated that they were likely to very likely to utilize a portage around the dam.

The SCDNR agrees with partner resource agencies, tribes, and other stakeholders that looting of Stallings Island is a concern and looks forward to developing protective measures to preserve the island's cultural resources. Public recreational access to the Savannah River below Stevens Creek dam currently exists; therefore, the public's access around the dam should not be limited due to these concerns.

Water Quality Study Report

Data presented in the Water Quality Study Report indicate that poor water quality conditions frequently occur in the Stevens Creek arm. One main objective of the study was to assess the water quality in the Stevens Creek arm. However, the report does not make note of any contributing factors leading to the poor water quality. USGS station 021963601 located near Study Site 5 suggests a direct effect of the Stevens Creek reservoir level on flow fluctuations in the Stevens Creek arm. SCDNR staff would like an assessment of how flow dynamics and hydraulic residency may be altering instream flows, sediment transport, nutrients, and water quality in the Stevens Creek arm.

The Executive Summary states that there were several dissolved oxygen excursions throughout the study period, particularly at Site 4 and the J. Strom Thurmond (JST) Dam Tailrace. However, Section 5.0 states that dissolved oxygen excursions were most prevalent below the JST Dam and at Site 5, with Site 1 having the third most excursions at the Project. The Executive Summary should be corrected to reflect the results of the study.

The Water Quality Study Plan developed in consultation with the resource agencies and stakeholders stipulates that all continuous data will be analyzed by computing daily and monthly minimum, maximum, and average values for DO and water temperature. Please include the applicable daily water quality parameters in the report. This information will be a useful tool in determining the duration of low DO excursions at each of the Study Sites.

The SCDNR requests that the GPS coordinates and approximate depth ranges of all Study Sites be included in the report.

If possible, the SCDNR recommends that the licensee include bathymetry data around the Stevens Creek dam in the report to better understand the effects of sediment deposition on water quality.

The SCDNR requests further information and discussion regarding why the dissolved oxygen level dropped at Study Site 4 in October 2021.

To better understand the Stevens Creek Project's effects on water quality, the SCDNR requests an extension of the current water quality study for an additional 12-month period. As indicated in the report, Study Site 5 is only 4.5 miles upstream of the confluence with the Savannah River at Stevens Creek Dam. Since the Project Boundary extends 12 miles upstream of the confluence, SCDNR requests additional study sites within the Stevens Creek arm in the second period of the study to better understand the physical extent of the poor water quality. Further, the SCDNR requests additional study sites in the vicinity of Site 5 to determine if the low dissolved oxygen is creating a barrier to fish passage.

The SCDNR recommends the licensee work with the resource agencies and stakeholders to develop PM&E measures to include in the license application to minimize these water quality issues and prevent negative impacts on fish passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the study reports and provide comments. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at <u>MillerE@dnr.sc.gov</u> or by phone at 843.953.3881.

Sincerely,

alizatettas C Millen

Elizabeth C. Miller FERC Coordinator, SCDNR

From:	Jennifer D. Bedell
To:	Jennifer Gut
Subject:	Stevens Creek Recreation and Stallings Island
Date:	Wednesday, July 6, 2022 2:38:14 PM

Good Afternoon Jennifer-

Thank you for hosting the call today.

My apologies that I had to catch another meeting near the end of the recreation discussion and did not get a chance to voice a topic of concern. I did want to make sure that you all are aware of GASHPO's concerns for how the potential addition of a kayak/canoe launch and subsequently higher visitorship might adversely affect Stallings Island. I know Aspen had been meeting with you all on this project previously, and I do see in her notes that there have been at least brief discussions about our concerns for Stallings, but I am unclear if, or to what extent, they have been taken into consideration. Stalling's Island is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is also a National Historic Landmark. I also wanted to make sure that the National Park Service NHL folks have been invited to consult on the project as well. I didn't catch if there was a SCSHPO/archaeological rep on the call, but at least 3 reps from federally recognized Tribal Nations were present and I suspect they may have similar concerns. We certainly understand the need for recreation in the area and would like to continue this discussion further. If there are future plans to have a cultural resources discussion specifically, please let me know.

Thanks so much and Take Care!

Jenn



???????

Jennifer D. Bedell

Archaeological Compliance Program Manager and Tribal Liaison Georgia Department of Community Affairs 60 Executive Park South, NE Atlanta, Georgia 30329

Direct +14044866371 Jennifer.Bedell@dca.ga.gov



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE Southeast Regional Office 263 13th Avenue South St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505 https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/southeast

September 1, 2022

F/SER47:KM/pw

(Sent via Electronic Mail)

Jennifer A. Güt, Staff Licensing Coordinator Kelinschmidt 204 Caughman Farm Lane, Suite 301 Lexington, SC 29072

Dear Ms. Güt:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reviewed the reports on recreation, mussels, and water quality studies conducted at the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on behalf of Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC). The current license for the project expires October 31, 2025. Three studies related to relicensing are now complete and ready for review. NMFS has no comments on the *Recreation Use and Needs Study Report* or the 2021 Mussel Study Executive Summary. As the nation's federal trustee for the conservation and management of marine, estuarine, and diadromous fishery resources, the NMFS provides the following comments and recommendations on the *Water Quality Study Report* pursuant to the authorities of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and Federal Power Act.

The Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project impounds the Savannah River at its confluence with Stevens Creek. The project is approximately one mile upstream of the Augusta Diversion Dam and approximately 13 river miles downstream of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) J. Storm Thurmond (JST) Dam. DESC operates the Stevens Creek Project to produce hydroelectric energy and re-regulate the flows discharged from JST Dam. The USACE collects water quality data every 15 minutes at JST Dam, and the U.S. Geological Survey collects water quality data monthly at six sites throughout the project area. Low concentrations of dissolved oxygen (DO) are the primary water quality concern. As water temperatures warm, the JST Reservoir stratifies resulting in discharges of hypoxic/anoxic waters into the Savannah River. Similar but less severe low DO conditions occur in Stevens Creek during late summer and persist into fall.

Throughout 2021, DESC recorded water quality hourly at five additional sites and periodically at an additional one. Measures of water temperature, DO, pH, conductivity, and turbidity were taken every hour at each of the five hourly monitoring sites. The *Water Quality Study Report* summarizes these data in the context of the other monitoring studies and identifies instances when water quality failed to meet state standards. Average daily DO in the JST tailrace was below state standard (5 mg/L) for 44% of the year. At the Stevens Creek monitoring site (about five river miles upstream from the confluence with the Savannah River), average daily DO dropped below the state standard for at least 30% of the year (29% of measured days with no data during a summer month when DO was likely low). At both of those locations, the recorded DO was below the instantaneous state standard (4 mg/L) for 27% and 15% of samples, respectively.

As water flows downstream from the JST tailrace and Stevens Creek monitoring site, the water reoxygenates as indicated by DO measurements at the hourly monitoring sites directly above the Stevens Creek powerhouse and spillway. Average daily DO above the powerhouse was below the state standard for 16% of the year, and below the instantaneous standard for 0.22% of samples. This represents an



improvement over DO coming out of the JST tailrace. Comparing average monthly DO between the two indicates that flowing down the Savannah River added approximately 2 mg/L of oxygen back into the water during months when low DO is a concern. Average daily DO above the Stevens Creek spillway was below the state standard for 4% of the year, and below the instantaneous standard for 0.77% of samples. This represents an improvement over DO at the Stevens Creek monitoring site. Comparing average monthly DO between the two indicates that flowing down Stevens Creek added approximately 1.7 mg/L of oxygen back into the water during months when low DO is a concern.

Notably, DO levels remained above the daily average and instantaneous state standards at both of the hourly monitoring sites below the Stevens Creek Dam, despite the hypoxic water conditions upstream during parts of the year. This indicates that, in 2021, the Stevens Creek Dam contributed to re-oxygenating the water moving through the system. The degree of re-oxygenation can be roughly determined. During months when low DO is a concern, moving through the Stevens Creek powerhouse added approximately 1 mg/L of oxygen back into the water. Spilling over the tailrace increased DO by approximately 2 mg/L.

The methods used for study enabled accurate determinations of average daily and instantaneous values, which was not possible with the methods used under the current license. However, the main body of the *Water Quality Study Report* summarizes water quality parameters at a monthly resolution and only presents continuous data as figures in appendices. That is useful for broadly determining when poor water quality affects system, but it does not make use of the data's full potential. It should be possible, for example, to pinpoint the timing and duration of individual hypoxia events in Stevens Creek. Such high-resolution data is valuable to resource managers and represents a powerful analytical tool.

Low DO is a concern in this system, especially in the lower reaches of Stevens Creek. Water quality monitoring conducted by the South Carolina Department and Health and Environmental Concern at a site in Stevens Creek and a site in Horn Creek had no DO values below state standards. Those monitoring stations are approximately 12 and 5 river miles above the Stevens Creek monitoring site in the Water Quality Study Report, respectively. It appears the DO issues experienced in the lower portion of Stevens Creek are the result of the water becoming impounded as it approaches the confluence with the Savannah River, and subsequently, the Stevens Creek Dam. NMFS suggests conducting a study of the hydraulic residence time in Stevens Creek in order to determine how long water stays impounded above the dam before passing over the spillway or through the powerhouse.

NMFS has the following recommendations for improving the Water Quality Study Report:

- 1) Section 4 presents the methods used in data collection and mentions continuous monitoring but does not state the time interval used. The methods section should explicitly state how frequently measurements were taken.
- 2) The results tables in section 4 give the monthly average, maximum, and minimum of the various water quality parameters measured. Are the maximum and minimum values instantaneous measures or a daily average? The report should make clear what value is being presented.
- 3) Because the tables in section 4 are presenting a monthly average, NMFS suggests including the average in the figures as well. That would make it a little easier for the reader to keep up with the data presented because the table and figure would contain the same information. You could superimpose the monthly average as a symbol over the box plots.
- 4) The report may benefit from some restructuring.
 - a. Re-ordering site presentations. Currently, the study site numbers seem to be assigned going counterclockwise around the dam. That leads to a lot of jumping around in space for the reader and confuses the message. We suggest presenting the sites in the order that water flows through the project area: JST Tailrace, Site 6, Site 5, Site 1, Site 4, Site 2, and Site 3. In this way, the reader is following along as the water moves downstream and

can track changes more easily. This is especially important for DO and makes the point that DO improved after moving through SC powerhouse or over the spillway more stark. We also suggest changing site names to include some descriptive information, or at least reflect this reordering. Discussion o the USGS sites should also be reordered in a similar fashion.

- b. Many of the tables in section 4 could be combined. A single table for each water quality parameter could list each of the seven sites side-by-side as columns (in the same order suggested above). You could still use footnotes to indicate all the various quirks as the report currently does. This allows the reader to easily track changes from site to site, and reduces the burden of flipping from page to page to make a comparison. The figures could probably also benefit from being combined on a single grid for each environmental parameter.
- 5) Appendix B is titled "Dissolved Oxygen Monthly Data" when series data are presented.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments and recommendations. Please direct related questions or comments to the attention of Mr. Kevin Mack at our Charleston Field Office, 331 Ft Johnson Road, Charleston, South Carolina 29412 or at Kevin.Mack@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

/ for

Virginia M. Fay Assistant Regional Administrator Habitat Conservation Division

cc: Kleinschmidt, Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com SCDNR, MixonG@dnr.sc.gov, MillerE@dnr.sc.gov GADNR, Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov USFWS, Melanie_Olds@fws.gov F/SER47, Twyla.Cheatwood@noaa.gov



NMFS map summarizing data in the *Water Quality Study Report* illustrating the discussion of the frequencies of reported observations below state water quality standards at eight stations.



WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION

MARK WILLIAMS COMMISSIONER

TED WILL DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Stevens Creek Hydropower Project, FERC Docket # P-2535 Comments on Recreation Use and Needs Study Report and Water Quality Study Report

Water Quality Study Report

One of the most significant findings from this study is the poor water quality in the Stevens Creek arm (study sites 4 & 5). Stevens Creek Dam likely plays an important role in the downstream processing of all the water quality parameters measured in this study, especially in the context of receiving the poor water quality measured in Stevens Creek and the poorly oxygenated water from Thurmond Dam.

Please expand of the "Analysis and Discussion" section to include discussion of these parameters, most notably dissolved oxygen, temperature, turbidity, and nutrient levels. Specifically, include discussion of the following observations:

Dissolved Oxygen

 Minimum recorded values of dissolved oxygen (DO) were below 5 mg/L for six months each at sites 4 & 5 and of further concern is a minimum DO value of 0.4 mg/L at site 4 in October 2021 (Tables 4-11 and 4-12). We request Dominion provide a discussion of how long dissolved oxygen levels remained below 5 mg/L during each excursion and discuss the potential causes.

Temperature

• Stevens Creek Dam appears to help mitigate the latitudinal temperature gradient seemingly driven by the warmer water coming from Stevens Creek.

Turbidity

- Stevens Creek is consistently very turbid and appears to maintain higher turbidity levels on the SC side both above and below the dam. Overall turbidity appears largely unaffected by the dam, with downstream sites matching very closely to corresponding upstream sites, except for occasional spikes of turbidity at Site 1 that do not seem to make it past the dam.
- At site 1 from June to October of 2021, there were several outlier turbidity measurements that were significantly higher than average for that site and higher than other sites at that time.

Nutrients

- Stevens Creek Reservoir appears to function as a P-sink, reducing the high P load from Stevens Creek to negligible levels before it enters the reservoir (likely due to settling or uptake). Phosphorous levels were negligible within the reservoir and below the dam despite high levels above in Stevens Creek.
- The negligible values of ammonia measured indicate that the TKN values essentially represent organic N. Stevens Creek also appears to be a significant source of organic N that decreases by almost half as it flows through the SC side of the system (sites 5, 4, then 3). A lesser amount of organic N flows through the system on the GA side. Dissolved inorganic N levels are consistent

across all sites suggesting that N may be saturated and not a primary limiting nutrient in the system. Stevens Creek Reservoir does not appear to function as a strong sink for N, as it does for P.

- The ammonia value measured at site 3 is higher than any corresponding TKN value, which should not be possible.
- With Orthophosphate measured at site 2, it seems that the corresponding Total Phosphorous value should have detected at least a similar value.
- Please provide the nutrient data listed by month collected, as was provided for DO, temperature, and turbidity. These data may help us understand seasonal effects and relationships with other monthly parameters.

Other

• We request Dominion include coordinates of the water quality sampling locations within the study report, so that resource agencies can know the exact location of the water quality sampling within the channel. Two additional inset maps (1. JST forebay/tailrace and 2. Site 5) would be helpful. These details will help us understand how flow dynamics could be affecting water quality results.

Additional Studies

• We request that Dominion extend the continuous and monthly water quality study for a second 12month period. During this second period, we request that Dominion consult with resource agencies to expand water quality monitoring efforts within the Stevens Creek arm by adding sample sites dispersed throughout the Stevens Creek project area. This expanded study should include investigation into how Stevens Creek Dam alters flow dynamics of Stevens Creek. Results of the study should include a discussion of how the dam may be influencing the elevated phosphorus and low dissolved oxygen levels within Stevens Creek and the reservoir at and below the confluence.

Recreation Use and Needs Study Report

Discussion of Future Use

• Please expand the discussion section to address Objective iii of Goal 2 by summarizing some potential takeaways or ideas to improve recreation in the project area.

Improved Reservoir Access

- In Section 4.5.6, nearly as many responses in Table 4.16 mentioned "near the dam" as they did "Sportsman's Corner". The former was not mentioned in the narrative and the latter was. Please include the need for more access near the dam on the Georgia side in the narrative along with the need for access near Sportsman's Corner.
- The results of the surveys suggest a need for improved boating access. The Stevens Creek recreation site was the only site to exceed capacity (Section 4.3) during the recreation study and it was also the site where most of the users were boat fishing (Section 4.5.2) and vehicles with trailers were the most common vehicle type (Section 4.6). It was peak fishing season (April June 2021) when the Stevens Creek site exceeded or approached capacity. Additional boating access facilities with trailer parking would help with Stevens Creek Recreation Site's capacity issues. Since most of the project area users are from the Georgia (Section 4.5.1), additional boating access may be most effective on the Georgia side of the reservoir.

Downstream Access

 Sixty-nine percent of visitors indicated that they would utilize a portage. Additionally, Stallings Island is included as a Columbia County tourist attraction (<u>https://www.visitcolumbiacountyga.com/serene18-paddle-trail/</u>). We look forward to continued discussions with all stakeholders to ensure efforts to improve access reduce, or at the minimum do not increase, potential threats to cultural resources.

Anglers' Target Species

• If possible, please provide the percentage of anglers' total responses for each target fish species listed in Section 4.5.2.

From:	Luton, John	
To:	Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8); Blackburn, Shelly	
Cc:	Swain, Ashley; Alison Jakupca; Jennifer Gut; Hodges, Dennis	
Subject:	Re: Potential for Portage and Connectivity: Savannah River	
Date:	Monday, August 1, 2022 9:04:42 AM	
Attachments:	image006.png	
	image010.png	
	image012.png	
	image015.png	
	image016.png	
	image017.png	

Amy,

Yes, I will be there. I have attached a master plan we recently did of the of the dock/boat ramp area at Betty's Branch/Riverside park for your information. We are currently moving forward with replacement of the dock which was damaged by a fallen tree. Looking forward to speaking with you further. Thank you

John Luton

Division Director Community Services Columbia County, Ga BOC (706) 868-3484

From: AMY BRESNAHAN <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>

Date: Friday, July 29, 2022 at 12:42 PM

To: Blackburn, Shelly <sblackburn@choosecolumbiacounty.com>

Cc: Swain, Ashley <ABSWAIN@choosecolumbiacounty.com>, Luton, John

<JLUTON@columbiacountyga.gov>, Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com

<Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>, Jennifer Gut

<Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Subject: RE: Potential for Portage and Connectivity: Savannah River

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Columbia County email system. Please exercise caution before clicking links, opening attachments, replying, or providing information to the sender.

Shelly,

Thank you for the contact information. Keep an eye out for a poll to schedule the next meeting specifically for recreation and there will be discussions taking place.

John – we will plan to get you in the loop on these discussion and I hope you can attend our next meeting that will be scheduled soon.

Thank you. **Amy Bresnahan, P.E.** Power Generation Civil Engineering Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. 400 Otarre Parkway, Cayce, SC 29033 Mailing Address: 220 Operation Way, MC B223, Cayce, SC 29033 O: (803)217-9965 C: (803)206-4667



Actions Speak Louder

From: Blackburn, Shelly <sblackburn@choosecolumbiacounty.com>
Sent: Monday, July 11, 2022 9:35 AM
To: Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Alison Jakupca
<Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>
Cc: Swain, Ashley <ABSWAIN@choosecolumbiacounty.com>; Luton, John
<JLUTON@columbiacountyga.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Potential for Portage and Connectivity: Savannah River

CAUTION! This message was NOT SENT from DOMINION ENERGY

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Amy and Alison,

It was great seeing you both last week and hearing the results of your research!

I would like to introduce you to John Luton, Director of Columbia County Community Services. John and his team have developed a strategic plan for Bettys Branch and Riverside Park. I think it would be valuable information for you to have as you move forward with your plans.

Thank you,

Shelly

From: Blackburn, Shelly
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 10:09 AM
To: AMY BRESNAHAN <<u>amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u>>; Alison Jakupca
<<u>Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com</u>>
Cc: Swain, Ashley <<u>ABSWAIN@choosecolumbiacounty.com</u>>; Paul Farrow <<u>pfarrow@comcast.net</u>>

Subject: RE: Potential for Portage and Connectivity: Savannah River

Amy and Alison,

It was a pleasure meeting you both yesterday! We sincerely appreciate you taking the time to meet with us. It was exciting to hear about the potential for new and enhanced recreational activities along the Stevens Creek project.

Below, I have listed the contact information for Columbia County Community Services Director, John Luton. He will be the best contact for any discussion concerning Betty's Branch and any other Columbia County Parks. As soon as the Parks and Recreation Master plan is complete, we will make sure you receive a copy.

John Luton Division Director Columbia County Community Services <u>jluton@columbiacountyga.gov</u> Office: 706.312.7511

Please let us know if we can do anything to help!

Sincerely,

Shelly

From: Blackburn, Shelly Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 12:14 PM To: AMY BRESNAHAN <<u>amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u>> Cc: Swain, Ashley <<u>ABSWAIN@choosecolumbiacounty.com</u>>; Alison.Jakupca@Kleinschmidtgroup.com; RAYMOND AMMARELL <<u>RAYMOND.AMMARELL@dominionenergy.com</u>> Subject: RE: Potential for Portage and Connectivity: Savannah River

I just sent a calendar invite for May 9 at 11:30AM.

Our office is located inside of the Columbia County Visitors Center at 3300 Evans To Locks Road, Martinez, GA 30907. When you enter Savannah Rapids Park, make your way down the hill and you will see the Visitors Center Cottage.

Look forward to meeting you!

Thank you,

Shelly

Shelly Blackburn

Executive Director Columbia County Convention & Visitors Bureau From:Wenerick, William "Rusty"To:Jennifer GutSubject:Re: Stevens Creek Hydro Project Meeting Follow-UpDate:Monday, August 15, 2022 8:20:12 AMAttachments:Outlook-1469104240.png

Jennifer, I attended virtually. No other comments. Rusty

William R. "Rusty" Wenerick Project Manager S.C. Dept. of Health & Environmental Control Office: (803) 898-4266 Fax: (803) 898-7344 Connect: www.scdhec.gov Facebook LinkedIn



From: Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2022 6:14 PM

To: Andy Colbert <outdooraugusta@gmail.com>; Andy Herndon <andrew.herndon@noaa.gov>; Aspen Kemmerlin <Aspen.Kemmerlin@dca.ga.gov>; Ayesha Tarek <Ayesha.Tarek@dca.ga.gov>; Bill Marshall <marshallb@dnr.sc.gov>; Chris Nelson <chris.nelson@dnr.ga.gov>; Chris Thomason <thomasonc@dnr.sc.gov>; Eargle, David A. <EARGLEDA@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrick.miller@usda.gov) <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Elizabeth Toombs <elizabethtoombs@cherokee.org>; Elizabeth Miller <millere@dnr.sc.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric bauer@fws.gov>; Fritz Rohde <fritz.rohde@noaa.gov>; MixonG@dnr.sc.gov <MixonG@dnr.sc.gov>; Hameed Malik <HMalik@augustaga.gov>; Jaime Loichinger <jloichinger@achp.gov>; Jamie Sykes <james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger
<bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeff Darley <jeff.darley@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Welte <jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov>; Jessica F. Crawford <tacsoutheast@gmail.com>; John Eddins <jeddins@achp.gov>; Jon Ambrose <jon.ambrose@dnr.ga.gov>; Kathryn Feingold <kathryn.a.feingold@usace.army.mil>; 'LWendt@muscogeenation.com' <LWendt@muscogeenation.com>; melanie olds@fws.gov <melanie olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern <kernm@dnr.sc.gov>; Oscar Flite <OFlite@augustaga.gov>; Pace Wilber <pace.wilber@noaa.gov>; Paula Marcinek <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; Rob Pavey <rpavey1@comcast.net>; Wenerick, William "Rusty" <WENERIWR@dhec.sc.gov>; santiago.martinez@dca.ga.gov <Santiago.Martinez@dca.ga.gov>; Scott Hyatt <scott.m.hyatt2@usace.army.mil>; Blackburn, Shelly <sblackburn@choosecolumbiacounty.com>; Stan Simpson <stanley.l.simpson@usace.army.mil>; Steve Schleiger <steve.schleiger@dnr.ga.gov>; 'thunt@muscogeenation.com' <THunt@muscogeenation.com>; Thom Litts <thom.litts@dnr.ga.gov>; Tony Hicks

*** Caution. This is an EXTERNAL email. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email. *** Good evening all,

Attached are the meeting notes from the joint Resource Conservation Group (RCG) meeting held June 6, 2022 to review the results from recreation, mussels, and water quality studies conducted at the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project. Please provide any comments on all three reports that were discussed (Recreation Use and Needs Study Report, Mussel Executive Summary, and 2021 Water Quality Report) to me via email by **Friday, August 26, 2022.** The reports were sent out prior to the meeting, but please let me know if you did not receive them and I will be happy to provide them. The water quality data, including sonde depth measurements, is in the process of being compiled and will be available soon. I will reach out again to you all within the next week or so to schedule RCG meetings to discuss recreation and fish passage protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures at the Project. Please let me, Alison, or Amy know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Jenn

Jennifer A. Güt Staff Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.904.8680 Cell: 706.294.3225 Follow us on LinkedIn We provide practical solutions for renewable energy, water, and environmental projects!

From:	Kelly Kirven
To:	Samuel.Buckles@usda.gov
Cc:	Jennifer Gut; Alison Jakupca
Subject:	Stevens Creek Recreation Study Report
Date:	Friday, October 7, 2022 1:53:45 PM
Attachments:	P-2535 Stevens Creek Recreation Use and Needs Study Report 06.22.22.pdf

Hi Gray!

It was nice virtually meeting you this week during our discussion on preliminary 4(e) conditions for the Stevens Creek Project. As promised, I have attached the Stevens Creek Recreation Study Report that we prepared for the Stevens Creek relicensing. Please note that the appendices haven't been completed yet, but if you would like to have a copy of the study plan and data collection forms, just let me know. The final complete report will be filed with the Draft License Application. If you have any questions about the information included in the report, please don't hesitate to reach out.

I look forward to working with you on this project! Have a great weekend.

Kelly

Kelly Kirven Section Manager – Terrestrial/Aquatics Kleinschmidt Office: 803.462.5633 Cell: 423.747.2660 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

From:	Olds, Melanie J
To:	Jennifer Gut
Subject:	Re: [EXTERNAL] FW: Stevens Creek Hydro Project Fish Passage/Recreation Follow-Up and Water Quality TWC Meeting Availability
Date:	Monday, November 21, 2022 12:11:00 PM

Sorry -- I should have added to my previous email that I've reviewed the meeting notes from Sept and don't have any edits.

Melaníe

Melanie Olds |Fish & Wildlife Biologist Regulatory Team Lead/FERC Coordinator U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office 176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200 Charleston, SC 29407 843-727-4707 ext. 40413 843-300-0413 (direct line)

NOTE: This email correspondence and any attachments to and from this sender is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.

From: Olds, Melanie J <melanie_olds@fws.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2022 12:09 PM
To: Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] FW: Stevens Creek Hydro Project Fish Passage/Recreation Follow-Up and Water Quality TWC Meeting Availability

Hi Jenn,

I actually have another meeting from 1-2 at that time. I'm working most of December and not taking much time off but have quiet a few meetings already scheduled that many of the times proposed seemed to overlap.

Melaníe

Melanie Olds |Fish & Wildlife Biologist Regulatory Team Lead/FERC Coordinator U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office 176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200 Charleston, SC 29407 843-727-4707 ext. 40413 843-300-0413 (direct line)

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From: Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com>
Sent: Friday, November 18, 2022 8:49 AM
To: Olds, Melanie J <melanie_olds@fws.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Stevens Creek Hydro Project Fish Passage/Recreation Follow-Up and Water Quality TWC Meeting Availability

This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.

Good morning Melanie and Happy Friday,

I'm attempting to schedule the Stevens Creek Water Quality TWC meeting, and I see via the Doodle Poll that you're not available for much of December. I just wanted to confirm if that was the case because I've encountered problems with the website before where it doesn't display all the potential times. We are aiming to have the meeting December 13 from 1:30-3. Will this work for your schedule? If I don't talk to you beforehand, I hope you have a great weekend.

Thanks,

Jenn

From: Jennifer Gut

Sent: Thursday, November 10, 2022 4:21 PM

To: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Amy Bresnahan <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Andy Herndon <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; Caleb Gaston <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; David Eargle <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller (derrick.miller@usda.gov) <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Elizabeth Miller <millere@dnr.sc.gov>; Henry Mealing <Henry.Mealing@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jamie Sykes <James.A.Sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Jordan Johnson <Jordan.Johnson@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Keith Whalen <james.whalen@usda.gov>; Kelly Kirven <Kelly.Kirven@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Melanie Olds <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern <kernm@dnr.sc.gov>; Paul Vidonic <paul.vidonic@dominionenergy.com>; Paula Marcinek <paula.marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; Pete Sturke <peter.m.sturke@dominionenergy.com>; Ray Ammarell <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Rusty Wenerick <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Tonya Bonitatibus <riverkeeper@savannahriverkeeper.org>; Will Pruitt <Will.Pruitt@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; bilal.harris@earthandwatergroup.com; Bill Post - SCDNR <postb@dnr.sc.gov>; bjorn.lake@noaa.gov; Chad Hendrix - City of Augusta <chendrix@augustaga.gov>; Eric Bauer - USFWS (GA) <eric_bauer@fws.gov>; Iris Griffin <iris.griffin@dominionenergy.com>; Jay Payne <jason.payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Jeffery Williams - GADNR <jeffery.williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Jessica Crawford - Stallings Island <tacsoutheast@gmail.com>; John Craun <johncraun@att.net>; Kevin Mack - NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; LeeAnne Wendt -Muscogee <lwendt@muscogeenation.com>; Oscar Flite - City of Augusta <oflite@augustaga.gov>;

Santi Martinez - GA SHPO <santiago.martinez@dca.ga.gov>; Shelly Blackburn - Columbia Co. GA <sblackburn@choosecolumbiacounty.com>; Wes Byne - City of Augusta <wbyne@augustaga.gov>; colewatkinstours@gmail.com; abswain@choosecolumbiacounty.com Cc: Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Amy Bresnahan <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>

Subject: Stevens Creek Hydro Project Fish Passage/Recreation Follow-Up and Water Quality TWC Meeting Availability

Hello all:

I hope you are doing well. Please see attached the meeting notes from the joint fish passage TWC and recreation TWC meeting held September 20th for the Stevens Creek Hydro Project. Please provide any edits or additions to the meeting notes by **Tuesday, November 22, 2022.** As you may recall, an action item from the meeting was to schedule a water quality TWC meeting to further discuss water quality concerns within the Project boundary. For those interested in participating, please provide your availability via the link below – we would like to get this on attendee's calendars as soon as possible. Note that there are potential dates from November 28 through December 16.

https://doodle.com/meeting/participate/id/bmO88ROe

Best,

Jenn

Jennifer A. Güt Staff Licensing Coordinator Kleinschmidt Office: 803.904.8680 Cell: 706.294.3225 Follow us on LinkedIn We provide practical solutions for renewable energy, water, and environmental projects! Meeting Notes and Presentations 2022

MEETING NOTES Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Dominion Energy South Carolina Joint Resource Conservation Group Meeting

July 6, 2022

Final JAG 7/26/22

ATTENDEES:

Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Amy Bresnahan (Dominion) Caleb Gaston (Dominion) Chad Hendrix (City of Augusta)* David Moore (City of Augusta Consultant)* Derrick Miller (USFS)* Elizabeth Toombs (Cherokee Nation)* Eric Bauer (USFWS)* Hameed Malik (City of Augusta) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Iris Griffin (Dominion) Jamie Sykes (USACE) Jason Bettinger (SCDNR)* Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Jay Payne (GADNR) Jeffery Williams (GADNR) Jenn Güt (Kleinschmidt) Jennifer Bedell (GADCA)* Jessica Crawford (Archeological Conservancy)* Jim Miller (Dominion)*

Jordan Johnson (Kleinschmidt) Keith Whalen (USFS)* Kelly Kirven (Kleinschmidt) Kevin Mack (NMFS)* LeeAnn Wendt (Muscogee Nation)* Melanie Olds (USFWS)* Morgan Kern (SCDNR)* Oscar Flite (City of Augusta) Paul Farrow (Columbia Co. Visitors Bureau) Paul Vidonic (Dominion) Paula Marcinek (GADNR)* Pete Sturke (Dominion) Ray Ammarell (Dominion) Santiago Martinez (GADCA)* Shelly Blackburn (Columbia Co. Visitors Bureau) Tonya Bonitatibus (Savannah Riverkeeper)* Taylor Allen (Dominion)* Turner Hunt (Muscogee Nation)* Wes Byne (City of Augusta)* Will Pruitt (Kleinschmidt)

* conference call

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.

Meeting Purpose

To review and discuss the results of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project Relicensing studies and discuss next steps moving forward in the relicensing process.

Meeting Summary





On June 6, 2022, Dominion held a meeting with local, state, and federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations to discuss the results of the Stevens Creek Project Relicensing studies – Recreation Use and Needs (RUN), Freshwater Mussel Survey, and Water Quality. Alison Jakupca, Kleinschmidt, began the meeting with introductions and the relicensing schedule update. Alison also facilitated discussions throughout the meeting. Kelly Kirven, Kleinschmidt, presented the results from the Recreation Use and Needs Study. Caleb Gaston, Dominion, presented the results from both the Freshwater Mussel Survey and Water Quality Study.

Recreation Use and Needs

The group discussed the RUN study, with a focus on the results. Kelly went briefly over the methodology of the study and noted that the focus of the user surveys and spot counts at Betty's Branch was the boat ramp area and not use of the entire Riverside Park. There may have been some carry-over from Riverside Park into the Betty's Branch area which may have slightly overinflated recreation days at the Betty's Branch site. In general, capacity at the Stevens Creek Project is not a concern. Something of note is that weekends and weekdays are consistently used at the Project. Additionally, there appears to be a shift towards kayaking/paddling use compared to previous years. No user surveys were conducted at Fury's Ferry or Chota Drive, both located on USFS land, due to the lack of users on the periodic days staff were at the site. There were questions in the user surveys administered at Stevens Creek and Betty's Branch to further assess the use of the Fury's Ferry and Chota Drive sites, and it was determined that neither site is heavily used. The USFS noted that Fury's Ferry and Chota Drive are remote, therefore safety is a concern, but they are regularly patrolled by both the USFS and SCDNR. The USFS does not maintain the road down to Chota Drive due to budget constraints, does not plan to do so in the future, and would, therefore, not be interested in further developing the site. Further discussions were concerning the desire for a canoe portage around the Stevens Creek Dam. Of the recreation users surveyed, 26 percent stated they were very unlikely to use a canoe portage around the SC side and 44 percent were very likely to utilize a portage. Tonya Bonitatibus, Savannah Riverkeeper, inquired as to the number of people who answered very likely that may have rented a boat that day; they may not be familiar with the area and/or kayaking and what portage would entail. Jenn Güt, Kleinschmidt, discussed the meeting she and Dominion had with local recreation-based business owners – neither would likely market the canoe portage as part as their business due to the liability of the terrain. Tonya also inquired as to how many people commented on Betty's Branch needing to be dredged, which was unknown at the time (it was later determined that there was at least one comment about dredging). Amy Bresnahan, Dominion, noted that low water at the dam due to maintenance activities during the recreation survey period may have influenced some of the comments regarding low water. Many comments centered around making improvements at the Betty's Branch kayak/canoe launch. Alison stated that it may make sense to focus on adding a canoe/kayak launch at the Project for recreation enhancement. However, Dominion does not own a lot of land around the reservoir, and, thus,



enhancement possibilities are limited. The possibility of enhancement measures at Betty's Branch was mentioned as a potential opportunity to meet recreation needs.

<u>Mussels</u>

Caleb presented on the mussel survey conducted in October 2021 at the Project. The four select focus areas (Stevens Creek/Horn Creek; Dry Branch/Cheves Creek/Big Branch; Little Kiokee Creek; and Uchee Creek), determined previously with the Resource Conservation Group, were paddled, and wading/snorkeling/bathyscope methods and tactile searches were conducted. Survey depth was limited as SCUBA was not employed as part of the survey. Caleb proceeded to go over the more detailed results for each of the focus areas. No live specimens were found at the Project, and shell from one Eastern Elliptio and two Eastern Creekshell were identified. The Stevens Creek Reservoir generally has poor mussel habitat within the Project Boundary Line (PBL). Oscar Flite, City of Augusta, asked if mussel surveys were conducted below the dam. Surveys were conducted within the survey scope previously determined with resource agencies which generally consists of the FERC-designated PBL, which is upstream of the dam.

Water Quality

Caleb presented the methods and results from the water quality study conducted in 2021-2022. In general, water discharged from the Stevens Creek powerhouse meets applicable dissolved oxygen (DO) criteria. Nutrient sample results indicate levels below established criteria for lakes, with the exception of phosphorous at the Stevens Creek site. Jason Bettinger, SCDNR, asked at what depths the sondes were deployed (approximately 1 meter) as he was noticing some lower DO levels at sites 4 and 5. Jordan Johnson, Kleinschmidt, will check if any of the sondes deployed at those sites measured depth (it was later determined several sondes provide depth information) and will provide that data. Jason Moak, Kleinschmidt, noted that lower DO levels could be an artifact of biofouling. Tonya and Wes Byne, City of Augusta, both requested the water quality data in Excel format.

Other Discussions

Following presentation of the mussel survey results, the question was raised as to why the survey was not conducted below the Stevens Creek Dam. Questions were also raised by representatives from the City of Augusta about the effects of the Project below the dam, the FERC PBL, and whether appropriate NEPA analysis was conducted. Alison noted that crucial criteria for determining whether a study is to be conducted at a FERC project is project nexus – whether there is a connection between project operations and effects (direct, indirect, and/or cumulative). Amy Bresnahan, Dominion, explained operations at the Stevens Creek Project and its FERC-designated role to re-regulate the discharge from the USACE Thurmond Dam located upstream from the Project. Water quality below the Stevens Creek Dam is a function of the water released from the Thurmond Dam and operation of the Project; data indicate that water is improved, if anything, as it passes



through the Project. Both Eric Bauer, USFWS, and Paula Marcinek, GADNR, noted that impacts below the PBL can be assessed and the PBL can change during the relicensing. Alison stated that the PBL and project effects are considered on a case-by-case basis. Dominion performed studies based on the project nexus and worked closely with the agencies to develop the study scope prior to study implementation.

Next Steps

Dominion will start discussing proposed mitigation and enhancement (PM&E) at the Project and would like to further discuss these with the agencies prior to the submission of the Draft License Application. Kleinschmidt will reach out soon to schedule individual Resource Conservation Group (RCG) meetings. The relicensing schedule is included below.

Activity	Timeframe
Mussel Survey Completed	October 2021
Water Quality Study Concluded	February 10, 2022
Recreation Study Concluded	March 31, 2022
Study Season Review Meeting and Study Report Review	July 2022
RCG Meetings to Discuss PM&E Measures	Fall 2022
Draft License Application for Agency Review	November 2022
Continued RCG Discussion on PM&E Measures	November 2022 – October 2023
File Final License Application with FERC	October 31, 2023

ACTION ITEMS:

- Kleinschmidt will send out user survey additional facility comments separated by site this was accomplished via email on June 7, 2022
- Kleinschmidt to make water quality data available, including sonde depth data
- Dominion/Kleinschmidt to schedule individual RCG meetings





Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project

Study Report Review Meeting with Resource Conservation Groups

July 6, 2022
Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Relicensing Process Schedule Review and Update
- REVIEW RECREATION USE AND NEEDS STUDY RESULTS
- Break
- REVIEW FRESHWATER MUSSEL SURVEY RESULTS
- REVIEW WATER QUALITY STUDY RESULTS
- CLOSING AND NEXT STEPS



To review and discuss the results of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project Relicensing studies - Recreation Use and Needs, Freshwater Mussel Surveys, and Water Quality and discuss next steps moving forward in the relicensing process.



Relicensing Schedule Update

Activity	Timeframe
Mussel Survey Completed	October 2021
Water Quality Study Concluded	February 10, 2022
Recreation Study Concluded	March 31, 2022
Study Season Review Meeting and Study Report Review	July 2022
RCG Meetings to Discuss PM&E Measures	Fall 2022
Draft License Application for Agency Review	November 2022
Continued RCG Discussion on PM&E Measures	November 2022- October 2023
File Final License Application with FERC	October 31, 2023



Recreation Use and Needs Study

Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project FERC No. 2535





Study Area and Season

- April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022
 - Traffic counters were deployed for 1 full year
 - Surveys and spot counts were collected between April 1, 2021 and September 6, 2021 (Labor Day Weekend)

Methodology

Recreation Site	Site Inventory	Spot Count	Traffic Counter Data	Recreation User Surveys ¹
Stevens Creek recreation site	*	*	*	*
Fury's Ferry recreation site	*	Periodic	*	Periodic
Chota Drive recreation site	*	Periodic	*	Periodic
Betty's Branch/Riverside Park	*	*	*	*

Recreation Site	# of Surveys
Stevens Creek	81
Recreation Site	
Betty's Branch	214
Recreation Site	
Total	295

¹ In accordance with the study plan, recreation user surveys were to only be administered at Fury's Ferry and Chota Drive if recreation users were present during traffic counter data download events and willing to complete a survey. No surveys were collected at Fury's Ferry and Chota Drive.

Inventory

Site Name	\$ Fee	ADA Amenities ¹	Picnicking	# Shelters	# of Tables	# of Grills	Trails	Campgrounds	Swimming	Bank Fishing	Dock Fishing	# Ramps	# Docks	Parking Spaces	Restrooms	Playground and Sport Facilities	Owner
Stevens Creek Recreation Site	\$0	\checkmark	\checkmark	0	3	0	0	0	0	-	-	1	0	6	1	-	DESC
Fury's Ferry Recreation Site	\$0	-	V	0	2	0	0	0	0	V	-	1	0	8	0	-	Forest Service
Chota Drive Recreation Site	\$0	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	\checkmark	-	1	0	2	0	-	Forest Service
Betty's Branch	\$0	√	\checkmark	0	4	0	0	0	0	-	√	1	1	4	0	-	DESC
Riverside Park Parking Lot	\$0	√	√	1	5	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	74	6	\checkmark	Columbia County
Totals	\$0			1	9	0	0	0	0			4	1	94	7		

Estimated Recreation Days

Month, Day Type	Stevens Creek Recreation Site	Fury's Ferry Recreation Site ¹	Chota Drive Recreation Site	Riverside Park Parking Lot ²	Betty's Branch Recreation Site	Total
Total						
Weekdays	7,060	7,721	1,059	23,176	20,082	59,098
Weekends	3,663	3,860	410	20,027	4,494	32,454
Holidays	1,001	1,232	129	4,890	1,409	8,661
TOTAL	11,723	12,813	1,598	48,093	25,986	100,213

Average Capacity

Month, Day Type	Stevens Creek Recreation Site	Fury's Ferry Recreation Site	Chota Drive Recreation Site	Betty's Branch Recreation Site	Riverside Park Parking Lot
Total					
Average Capacity – Weekdays	41%	33%	18%	22%	20%
Average Capacity – Weekends	61%	48%	21%	14%	33%
Average Capacity – Holidays	51%	48%	20%	14%	26%

Estimated Future Recreation Days

Year	Population Growth Rates (3- County Subtotal)	Stevens Creek Recreation Site	Fury's Ferry Recreation Site	Chota Drive Recreation Site	Riverside Park Parking Lot	Betty's Branch Recreation Site	Recreation Days (All Project Recreation Sites)
2021		11,723	12,813	1,598	48,093	25,986	100,213
2025	10.93%	13,004	14,213	1,773	53,350	28,826	111,166
2030	7.28%	13,951	15,248	1,902	57,233	30,925	119,259
2035	6.32%	14,833	16,212	2,022	60,851	32,879	126,796

Estimated Future Average Non-Peak Weekend Capacity

Year	Population Growth Rates (3- County Subtotal)	Stevens Creek Recreation Site	Fury's Ferry Recreation Site	Chota Drive Recreation Site	Riverside Park Parking Lot	Betty's Branch Recreation Site
2021		61%	48%	21%	14%	33%
2025	10.93%	68%	54%	23%	16%	37%
2030	7.28%	73%	58%	25%	17%	40%
2035	6.32%	78%	61%	26%	18%	42%

Primary Activities

	Betty's	Stevens
	Branch	Creek
	Recreation	Recreation
Activity	Site	Site
Canoeing/Kayaking	71%	9%
Boat Fishing	12%	77%
Paddleboarding	7%	2%
Pier/Dock Fishing	4%	0%
Bank Fishing	1%	7%
Motor Boating	2%	0%
Walking/Hiking/	2%	0%
Backpacking		
Nature Study/Wildlife	1%	4%
Viewing/Photography		
Picnicking	1%	2%
Sightseeing	1%	0%
Other	1%	0%
Total	100%	100%



Crowdedness Rating	Betty's Branch	Stevens Creek
	Recreation Site	Recreation Site
1 – Light	50%	50%
2 – Light/Moderate	16%	2%
3 – Moderate	23%	21%
4 – Moderate/Heavy	6%	9%
5 – Heavy	5%	18%

Condition Rating	Betty's Branch Recreation Site	Stevens Creek Recreation Site
1 – Poor	0%	2%
2 – Poor/Fair	1%	4%
3 – Fair	7%	23%
4 – Good	29%	36%
5 – Excellent	64%	36%

Suggested Facilities or Improvements for Fury's Ferry and Chota Drive Recreation Sites

Suggested Facility/Improvement	Percent
Improved Security	29%
Bathroom	18%
New Pavement/Improved Access Road	12%
Improve Boat Ramp at Fury's Ferry	6%
Kayak Launch	6%
Lights	6%
More Picnic Tables	6%
Fix Bump in Boat Ramp	6%
Parking	6%
Trash Cans	6%
Total	100%



Likelihood of Visitors to Portage Around Stevens Creek Dam

Rating	Betty's Branch Recreati on Site	Stevens Creek Recreatio n Site	Total
1 – Very Unlikely	23%	38%	26%
2 – Somewhat Likely	6%	2%	5%
3 – Likely	10%	11%	11%
4 – Between Likely and Very Likely	16%	7%	14%
5 – Very Likely	45%	42%	44%
Total	100%	100%	100%



Suggested Additional Facilities or Boating Access Provisions at the Stevens Creek Project

Recommended Facilities/Boating Access	Percent
a dock	4.5%
finish the dam	4.5%
more places just for canoes and kayaks	13.5%
near the dam	9.0%
near sportsman's corner	9.0%
on the Carolina side of Steven's creek	4.5%
near the dam. Somewhere that provides fuel for boats	4.5%
not in the main river	4.5%
on Georgia side near the dam	4.5%
a checkpoint	4.5%
above the bridge by sportsman's corner	4.5%
between here (Stevens Creek recreation site) and sportsman's corner	4.5%
more piers	9.0%
one at deep step road (Hopewell Baptist church road)	4.5%
something similar outdoor augusta or remote water coolers along the waterway	4.5%
there are too many people here (Betty's Branch)	4.5%
less mud	4.5%
Total	100.0%

Questions?

Break



2021 Mussel Survey





Study

- Worked with this group to select focus areas for Inventory Survey
- Quantitative and Qualitative data
- Stevens Creek/Horn Creek
- Dry Branch/Cheves Creek/Big Branch
- Little Kiokee Creek
- Uchee Creek
- Alderman Env. Services paddling then wading/snorkeling/bathyscope, tactile searches
- October 2021
- Found shell of one Eastern Elliptio, two Eastern Creekshell in 3.7 hours of targeted effort
- No live specimens
- Generally poor habitat within PBL



Proposed Mussel Survey Area



Stevens Creek

Lotic Habitat (12-mile reconnaissance)

- Loose, shifty sands and sediments in channel
- Unconsolidated, silty, organic-rich substrates along margins
- Low flows, but is flashy during wet-weather events
- Poor, unstable mussel habitats

Targeted Survey (total=2.6 person-hours)

- 4 sites
- No live mussels found
- Eastern Creekshell Villosa delumbis- 2 shells
- Eastern Elliptio E. complanata- 1 shell







Stevens Creek and Horn Creek

Both species from Site 211019.2

Horn Creek- Alderman reconned from confluence with Stevens, deemed not suitable habitat: sediment deposition, evidence of flash floods





Proposed Mussel Survey Area



Dry Branch/Cheves Creek/Big Lotic Habitat Branch Confluence

- Braided, emergent wetland system with effects from impoundment (Stevens Creek Dam and beaver activity).
- Habitat assessment limited to publicly-available access. Stream margins heavily silted with clay substrates and some aquatic vegetation.

Targeted Survey

• Not performed. Publicly accessible areas poor mussel habitat.









Uchee Creek

Lotic Habitat (1-mile reconnaissance in publicly accessible area)

- Majority of substrates in broad wetland system are loose clay, with heavy sediment loads and silty substrates. Aquatic vegetation dense along margins. Poor mussel habitats, shallow areas have dense aquatic vegetation.
 - Location 1 had stable banks, but clay, silt, and organic substrates
 - Location 2 had placed boulders (protecting underwater pipe) with stable substrates and moderate flows

Mussel Survey (1.7 person-hours)

No mussels or shell fragments collected





Little Kiokee Creek

Lotic Habitat (0.25-mile reconnaissance in publicly accessible areas)

- Inaccessible upstream area is ponded with dense aquatic vegetation, heavy silt loads, and no welldefined stream channel.
- Accessible reach limited to more stream-like channel, which was incised with dense, slick clay substrates and banks.
- Occasional patch of stable areas with aquatic vegetation or root wads, but otherwise poor mussel habitat



Mussel Survey (0.7 person hours)

- No mussels or shell fragments collected
- Few Asiatic clams observed







Mussel Study Summary

- Assessed areas within the PBL are subject to water level fluctuations due to operations and heavy precipitation events.
 - can be subject to flashy flows and scouring events
- Mussel and habitat assessments were limited to publicly accessible areas within the Project area.
- The majority of areas exhibited poor mussel habitats
 - Unstable, loose, or mobile sandy substrates
 - Slick clay channels and banks with little inchannel refuge
 - Dense aquatic vegetation in shallow areas with heavy sediment loads
- No live mussels were observed in any sampling location
 - Two species considered extant within Stevens Creek based on dead shells
 - Over 12 miles of habitat
 - Total 3.7 person hours targeted survey





2021 Water Quality Study Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project

Methods

This Study:

Hourly Temp, DO, Specific Conductance, pH, and Turbidity at 5 sites

- Monthly discrete samples for Nitrate-Nitrite, Ammonia, TKN, Orthophoshpate, and Phosphorus at 5 sites
- Periodic sampling in Deep Step June-Oct

Existing License Sampling:

Sampling at 6 sites by USGS

- 2 consecutive days per month Nov May
- 2 consecutive days twice per month Jun Oct (diurnal)

USACE Sampling at JST Dam/Tailrace:

Monthly forebay profiles

• 15-min tailrace monitoring (Temp, DO, Specific Conductance)



Thurmond Reservoir Forebay



Thurmond Reservoir Tailrace



Table 4-14 Monthly DO (mg/L) in JST Tailrace

Month	Monthly DO (mg/L) Average (Min – Max)	
2021-01	9.8 (8.4 - 11.5)	
2021-02	10.8 (9.1 - 11.9)	
2021-03	10.2 (8.2 - 12.5)	
2021-04	7.9 (6.0 - 9.5)	
2021-05	4.5 (0.4 - 8.8)	
2021-06	3.6 (0.4 - 7.3)	
2021-07	4.0 (2.2 - 6.9)	
2021-08*	3.2 (0.5 - 5.4)	
2021-09	3.8 (1.9 - 9.1)	
2021-10	4.0 (1.8 - 6.9)	
2021-11	6.9 (4.4 - 8.6)	
2021-12	7.9 (6.7 - 9.5)	

Site 5 – Stevens Creek

Google Earth

Site 5

State

1 mi

Site 5 – Stevens Creek



Site 6 – Deep Step (Periodic Site)


Above and Below Stevens Creek Spillway



Above vs. Below Stevens Creek Powerhouse



Nutrient Sample Results

Parameter		Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6
Ammonia (mg/L)		N/D	N/D	0.68	N/D	N/D	N/D
	Min	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.09	0.03	0.10
Nitrate-Nitrite (mg/L)	Avg	0.16	0.17	0.18	0.19	0.19	0.18
	Max	0.24	0.35	0.34	0.34	0.41	0.30
Orthophosphate (mg/L)		N/D	0.19	N/D	N/D	0.16	N/D
	Min	-	-	-	-	0.055	-
Phosphorus (mg/L)	Avg	N/D	N/D	N/D	N/D	0.062	N/D
	Max	-	-	-	-	0.066	-
	Min	0.11	0.15	0.17	0.12	0.24	0.11
TKN (mg/L)	Avg	0.21	0.27	0.34	0.41	0.59	0.24
	Max	0.41	0.66	0.61	0.65	0.93	0.31
Total Nitrogen (mg/L) (TKN + Nitrate-Nitrite)	Avg	0.37	0.44	0.52	0.60	0.78	0.42

SC Nutrient Criteri	<u>a for Lakes</u>
Total Nitrogen	< 1.5 mg/L
Total Phosphorus	< 0.06 mg/L

N/D = Not Detected

Summary and Conclusions

- Continuous data collection provided information about water quality at the project that was not previously available
- Water discharged from Stevens Creek powerhouse meets applicable DO criteria
- Nutrient sample results indicate levels below established criteria for lakes, with the exception of phosphorus at the Stevens Creek site

MEETING NOTES Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Joint Meeting – Fish Passage TWC and Recreation TWC

September 20, 2022

ATTENDEES:

Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Andy Herndon (NMFS) Ashley Swain (Columbia Co. CVB) Bilal Harris (Earth and Water Group) Bill Post (SCDNR) Bjorn Lake (NMFS) Caleb Gaston (DESC) Chad Hendrix (City of Augusta) Cole Watkins (Stakeholder) Derrick Miller (USFS) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Eric Bauer (USFWS) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Iris Griffin (DESC) Jason Bettinger (SCDNR) Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Jay Payne (GADNR – WRD)

Jeffery Williams (GADNR – EPD) Jessica Crawford (Archeological Conservancy) John Craun (Stakeholder) Keith Whalen (USFS) Kevin Mack (NMFS) LeeAnne Wendt (Muscogee Creek Nation) Melanie Olds (USFWS) Oscar Flite (City of Augusta) Paul Vidonic (Dominion Energy) Pete Sturke (Dominion Energy) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Rusty Wenerick (SCDHEC) Santiago Martinez (GA DCA) Shelly Blackburn (Columbia Co. CVB) Tonya Bonitatibus (SRK) Wes Byne (City of Augusta) Will Pruitt (Kleinschmidt)

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.

Note: Please see agency comments appended to the end of these meeting notes. Some discussions within the body of the notes have been modified from the draft version based on meeting attendee comments, as indicated in BOLD and the appended notes.

INTRODUCTION

Alison J. provided the group with an introduction, overview, and a relicensing schedule/timetable. She explained that this meeting provides the opportunity for



stakeholders in attendance to present local-level goals and objectives, with local agencies, stakeholders, participants, to present local solutions prior to significant FERC involvement.

Alison noted that the Exhibit E of the Draft License Application, forthcoming in the 4th quarter of 2022, will include a FERC schedule and Project timeline, that will contain some detail about submittal dates and details of when respective agencies (i.e., USFS, SCDNR, USFWS, NFMS) need to have comments submitted back to Dominion Energy.

The group then opened into the first Resource Conservation Group discussion, the Fish Passage Technical Working Group, followed by Water Quality discussions and the Recreation Technical Working Group.

FISH PASSAGE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The group first discussed updates regarding fish passage at downstream facilities (NSBLD, Augusta Diversion Dam).

- Fish Passage at the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam (NSBLD) is currently undergoing legal proceedings. Mediations have halted without details on next steps. No current timeline for fish passage installation is known at this point in the process.
- There are historic fish passage structures currently in place at the Augusta Diversion Dam (ADD), including an inoperable fish passage structure in in the middle of the dam. Augusta is currently consulting with agencies regarding fish passage at ADD.

Two main questions were raised:

- 1. Is Stevens Creek Dam an impediment to eel passage?
 - a. Eels within the Savannah River are present, and migrating up through NSBLD, passing Augusta Shoals and are found in Stevens Creek Reservoir.
 - b. Are current eel numbers that can pass Stevens Creek Dam meeting resource agency objectives?
 - i. Current eel numbers above, below and passing at the project are unknown.
 - 1. Climbing up the dam face was suggested.

Page 2 of 12

- 2. Eels have been anecdotally noted congregating in the empty Stevens Creek Dam turbine bay and could use leakages for passage through the dam.
- ii. The group suggested conducting an eel population survey to answer this question. If the population (abundance and size distribution) of eels is similar above and below the dam, it would indicate eels are able to pass unimpeded.
- 2. Should there be an eel-specific passage or wait until a proper fish passage structure for other species (i.e., shads) takes place at NSBLD and Augusta Diversion Dam?
 - a. It was suggested that none of the current structures (i.e., NSBLD, Augusta Diversion Dam, or Stevens Creek Dam) are exclusion barriers to eels.
 - b. Suggestions included waiting for fish passage structures to be placed at downstream dams so that proper citing studies can be performed to see the success of those fish passage implementations, which species are using them and in what numbers, and if further passage upstream of Stevens Creek Dam is justified.
 - i. Flows and fish communities may change after implementation of downstream passage.
 - ii. Studies/data after implementation can be used to design a single fish passage structure and placement to accommodate multiple species of interest.
 - iii. Agency personnel with Section 18 prescriptive authority expressed intent to prescribe passage at the project, but the exact mechanism and triggers remain undecided.
- In the meantime, literature review of existing fisheries assessment data from upstream and downstream may aid in the appropriate timing of passage installation at Stevens Creek relative to passage installations downstream.
- The group agreed to continue with the Fish Passage Committee to discuss available data, data gaps, when to implement studies, design, and passage.

The group additionally discussed the downstream passage of eels.

Page 3 of 12

Kleinschmidt

- Blade strike analysis are currently being performed with results available to the committee for review in the upcoming months.
- Several studies at other hydropower projects show that eels move downstream primarily at night. The Project is currently operated so that the plant is constantly generating although generation may be reduced to allow the pool to fill. Spilling typically only occurs when there are high flows from Thurmond Dam (8,000 10,000 cfs). Site specific downstream entrainment studies conducted during the previous relicensing showed that should eels select the powerhouse for their route of downstream passage, the turbines are expected to have a minimal impact on survival (i.e., low turbine mortality). Dominion noted that the amount of leakage is substantial at Stevens Creek due to its age.
- Under the existing license, the Habitat Enhancement Fund was developed to off-set entrainment impacts of project operations. The fund is specific to fish entrainment, however, Forest Service suggested that this fund could be used to off-set upstream migration until downstream passage is installed.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided the Savannah River Restoration Plan that includes passage goals. This plan could be used to support discussions and goal under the fish passage technical committee.
 - NOAA Fisheries noted that the plan's discussion of the Stevens Creek Project is largely out of date. The plan calls for operating the locks as a fish passage mechanism, and this is no longer a desired passage method.

The group discussed several steps moving forward:

- Develop a plan for a post-license fish passage technical committee in the Draft License Application.
- Gather existing data on eels above and below Stevens Creek Dam and incorporate it into the Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper.

ACTION ITEMS

• Develop framework of Fish Passage Technical Committee.

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• Agencies (USFWS, NMFS, SCDNR, GDNR) to identify fish passage goals.

WATER QUALITY DISCUSSIONS

The group discussed comments received on the draft Water Quality Study Report. The main focus of the discussion was regarding the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir, including residence time, DO levels, and mixing.

The group discussed agency recommendations of additional water quality studies focused on Stevens Creek.

- Additional **residence time** studies could help identify adverse impacts and aid in an understanding of how the water quality in the reservoir is impacted by re-regulation operations and upstream flows, **and the Stevens Creek Dam**.
- Data can be collected next year in months of concern, potentially including a diurnal survey to depict what happens during flood flows.
- Data could be collected and submitted as a supplement after FLA is filed.
- A question arose as to whether this information will be needed for the Georgia EPD 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC). The 401 WQC needs to be applied for with 60 days of filing FLA with FERC.

Additional WQ Discussion:

The group hypothesized that organic rich waters within Stevens Creek are backed up, flooding the silty and organic-rich flats that are hypoxic, then draws that water out into the river during Stevens Creek generation. Pulses from Thurmond act like a tidal system that reverses flow in Stevens Creek, which is exacerbated by low-flow conditions. Study report comments are currently being considered, but a Water Quality group meeting could be held to further discuss water quality concerns within the project boundary.

ACTION ITEMS

• Assemble straw man of proposed 2023 study and schedule a Water Quality Group Meeting.

RECREATION

The purpose of the recreation discussion was to review current recreation opportunities, additional opportunities, and the feasibility of recreation enhancements (location, property ownership, safety).

Alison briefly presented the recreation study results and presented a spreadsheet that outlines Recreation Enhancement recommendations received thus far during the relicensing by stakeholders, including advantages, disadvantages, and notes. This spreadsheet has been included as the table below. Additionally, Columbia County provided DESC with the Improvement Plan developed for Betty's Branch Access Area. The plan includes an ADA kayak launching facility (constructed subsequent to the September meeting), parking and turn-around improvements, and courtesy dock. DESC partnership on planned facilities may be considered as enhancement measures for the new license term. Additionally, SCDNR recommended a maintenance plan be included in a Recreation Management Plan that would facilitate regular maintenance of the Stevens Creek Recreation Site and prevent them from falling into disrepair.

ACTION ITEMS

- Jay P. (GADNR) to check on GA boat ramp at Thurmond Dam (i.e., ownership, maintenance, potential for improvements).
- DESC investigate potential partnerships between DESC and private entities, stakeholders, others about land acquisition to provide new boat ramp on GA side.
- DESC to continue communications with Columbia County regarding Betty's Branch ramp and parking area.
- Wildlife Enhancement Opportunities: DESC/USFS/KA to discuss wildlife opportunities. Most USFS lands in SC are all under WMA and under SCDNR management, but there may be additional opportunities within Project boundary.

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Kleinschmidt

• Identify areas of targeted bank fishing. Contact GDNR and SCDNR to further discuss potential and if/what fish attractors can be used.

Kleinschmidt

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
Construct kayak launch at Betty's Branch	Takes advantage of existing GA access where DESC-owned properties is limited.	Land-acquisition of adjacent properties would be difficult.	High volume of recreation traffic is causing conflict/safety issues with boaters vs paddlers using the same ramps. Columbia County is making plans (Columbia County Recreation Development Plan) for an ADA compliant ramp and launch for canoes. Preliminary plans were shows on screen.
Extending boat ramp at Betty's Branch	Allows boat launching at lower water levels. In the current state, trailers tires/axles drop off the end of the ramp in lower water levels.		Could this be added to the Columbia County Recreation Development Plan?
Vegetation and/or sediment management at Betty's Branch	Allows easier paddler/boat navigation at ramp and out into the river.	Temporary.	Vegetation and sedimentation is limiting padding activities/access at certain water elevations. Currently being addressed by Columbia County.
Add parking at Betty's Branch for vehicles without trailers / prevent non- trailered vehicles from parking in designated trailer spaces.	Reduce confusion and maximize parking.		Parking lot or stripes should be modified to maximize parking spaces and install signage to direct people with/without trailers to the proper parking spaces. Try to reduce boat trailers at ball fields.

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
Install lighting (OVERALL IMPROVEMENTS) at Fury's Ferry	Lighting will increase sense of safety. Great location for potential bank fishing, wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing access.	Increased lighting and sense of safety also encourages more after-hours usage. Theft is a major issue. Poles needs to be metal (not wood). Lighting needs to be solar, need to be secure/theft proof.	Focus should be on Fury's Ferry, (no increases to traffic at Chota). Concerns that many items like benches, tables, lighting, fencing, bathrooms, might not work because of thieves and vandalism. USFS open to discussions about improvements such as canoe slides, bank fishing opportunities.
Construct tailrace fishing pier on GA side of dam below Stevens Creek Dam	Increased GA fishing access.	Property/project boundary concerns - still DESC property, but outside of SC project boundary (within Augusta DD project boundary). Would require access through DESC security gates, adjacent to SoCo property/facilities, limited parking. Access would need to be restricted to pier usage only (no launching allowed) to avoid	Savannah Rapids is very well advertised, very easily accessible, and used by many. Cultural resource concerns with Stalling Island - needing avoid increasing curiosity, looting, and vandalism.

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
		additional traffic at Stallings Island.	
Improve boat ramp at Stevens Creek site (extend, widen, etc.)	Takes advantage of DESC-owner properties. Recommendations through RUNS.	Widening cannot occur at the expense of parking, fishing, or pier usage.	
Improve/re-line parking lot at Stevens Creek site, expand parking	Improve parking arrangement to maximize spaces and reduce confusion or double parking.	Property will need to be examined, but space is relatively limited to see if parking can be expanded.	Perceptions of crowdedness during recreation studies could have been influenced by people parking incorrectly.
Provide bank fishing/pier fishing at Stevens Creek site	Increased fishing opportunities.	Flash flooding and woody debris drift could be a maintenance or safety issue. Would these need to be ADA compliant, wheelchair stops, paved paths, etc.?	Consistent with community input on need for increased bank fishing. Allow more standing room along water's edge near boat ramps and launches - this would allow less conflict at ramp itself.
Construct canoe portage on SC side of dam	Increased connectivity for paddlers.	Any increase in boat/paddler traffic is an increased risk to Stallings Island and a major concern the Muscogee Nation. Safety concerns, which violates DESC adherence to safety precautions, and will not promote the usage of portage area so steep and rocky.	An increase in traffic could include increased curiosity, looting, vandalism. Cultural/historical/tribal issues are almost always the deciding factor regarding recreation issues in the FERC process. Muskogee Nation in discussion about how to increase security when dealing with future/long-term/projected increase in the paddling traffic.

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
		Property concerns.	
Construct canoe portage on GA side of dam	Increased connectivity for paddlers.	Any increase in boat/paddler traffic is an increased risk to Stallings Island and a major concern of the Muscogee Nation. Concerns around DESC/SoCo facilities (length of portage and safety/security concern).	An increase in traffic could include increased curiosity, looting, vandalism. Cultural/historical/tribal issues are almost always the deciding factor regarding recreation issues in the FERC process. Muskogee Nation in discussion about how to increase security when dealing with future/long-term/projected increase in the paddling traffic.
Implement canoe shuttle around dam	Increased connectivity for paddlers.	Costly. Observed paddler traffic does not justify such a need. Plenty of paddling opportunities downstream.	Was mentioned that a handful of times, DESC has given paddlers rides around dam, but never enough to consider.
Open locks to allow boating through the dam	Connectivity for paddlers, fishes.	Safety and security concerns. To function as needed, rock ramp would need to extend all the way to Stallings Island, which is a concern already discussed earlier.	Originally explored as a ramp structure to allows fish passage and slide kayaks downstream.

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
			USACE ramp on SC side, with GDNR ramp on
New recreation access area		Lack of DESC-owned properties	GA side that needs
on GA side of reservoir	Increased GA access.	to use as new launch	improvements/maintenance. Solution may
on GA side of reservoir			require multiple players (private,
			stakeholders, DESC partnerships).
		Difficulties keeping structures in	Team should explore exactly where these
Fish structure installation	Potential increase in fishing	place during high flows.	structures should be placed and
to benefit bank fishing.	success from bank.	Potential obstructions at	communicate with GDNR, SCDNR, and
		boat/canoe launches.	others to see if such placement is feasible.
	Increase wildlife viewing		Explore areas to increase wildlife viewing
Wildlife enhancements,	apportunities, onbanco wildlife	Detential land acquisition issues	(i.e., observation platforms), waterfowl
viewing opportunities.	babitate		management areas, nesting boxes, dove
	Haulals.		perches, etc.

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MEETING NOTES Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Joint Meeting – Fish Passage TWC and Recreation TWC

September 20, 2022

ATTENDEES:

Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Andy Herndon (NMFS) Ashley Swain (Columbia Co. CVB) Bilal Harris (Earth and Water Group) Bill Post (SCDNR) Bjorn Lake (NMFS) Caleb Gaston (DESC) Chad Hendrix (City of Augusta) Cole Watkins (Stakeholder) Derrick Miller (USFS) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Eric Bauer (USFWS) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Iris Griffin (DESC) Jason Bettinger (SCDNR) Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Jay Payne (GADNR – WRD)

Jeffery Williams (GADNR - EPD) Jessica Crawford (Archeological Conservancy) John Craun (Stakeholder) Keith Whalen (USFS) Kevin Mack (NMFS) LeeAnne Wendt (Muscogee Creek Nation) Melanie Olds (USFWS) Oscar Flite (City of Augusta) Paul Vidonic (Dominion Energy) Pete Sturke (Dominion Energy) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Rusty Wenerick (SCDHEC) Santiago Martinez (GA DCA) Shelly Blackburn (Columbia Co. CVB) Tonya Bonitatibus (SRK) Wes Byne (City of Augusta) Will Pruitt (Kleinschmidt)

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.

INTRODUCTION

Alison J. provided the group with an introduction, overview, and a relicensing schedule/timetable. She explained that this meeting provides the opportunity for stakeholders in attendance to present local-level goals and objectives, with local agencies, stakeholders, participants, to present local solutions prior to significant FERC involvement.

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Alison noted that the Exhibit E of the Draft License Application, forthcoming in the 4th quarter of 2022, will include a FERC schedule and Project timeline, that will contain some detail about submittal dates and details of when respective agencies (i.e., USFS, SCDNR, USFWS, NFMS) need to have comments submitted back to Dominion Energy.

The group then opened into the first Resource Conservation Group discussion, the Fish Passage Technical Working Group, followed by Water Quality discussions and the Recreation Technical Working Group.

FISH PASSAGE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The group first discussed updates regarding fish passage at downstream facilities (NSBLD, Augusta Diversion Dam).

- Fish Passage at the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam (NSBLD) is currently undergoing legal proceedings. Mediations have halted without details on next steps. No current timeline for fish passage installation is known at this point in the process.
- There are historic fish passage structures currently in place at the Augusta Diversion Dam (ADD), including an inoperable fish passage structure in in the middle of the dam. Augusta is currently consulting with agencies regarding fish passage at ADD.

Two main questions were raised:

- 1. Is Stevens Creek Dam an impediment to eel passage?
 - a. Eels within the Savannah River are present, and migrating up through NSBLD, passing Augusta Shoals and are found in Stevens Creek Reservoir.
 - b. Stevens Creek Dam does not appear to be a significant barrier for cels, but are currentCurrent eel numbers above, below, and passing at the project are unknown. meeting resource agency objectives?

When asked, Dominion was unsure how eels may be passing at the dam.
 Climbing up the dam face was suggested, but has not been observed.

 ii. Eels have been anecdotally noted congregating in the empty Stevens Dam turbine bay and could use leakages for passage through the dam.

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Kleinschmidt

Commented [KM1]: You can't include this statement, without providing evidence. I recall a paper from the 90s being mentioned at the meeting.

b.d. The group suggested conducting an eel population survey to answer this question. If the population (abundance and size distribution) of eels is similar above and below the dam, it would indicate eels are able to pass unimpeded.

2. Should there be an eel-specific passage or wait until a proper fish passage structure for other species (i.e., shads) takes place at NSBLD and Augusta Diversion Dam?

a. <u>Dominion suggested</u> The group determined that none of the current structures (i.e., NSBLD, Augusta Diversion Dam, or Stevens Creek Dam) are exclusion barriers to eels.

b. Suggestions included waiting for fish passage structures to be placed at downstream dams so that proper citing studies can be performed to see the success of those fish passage implementations, which species are using them and in what numbers, and if further passage upstream of Stevens Creek Dam is justified.

- i. Flows and fish communities may change after implementation of downstream passage.
- ii. Studies/data after implementation can be used to design a single fish passage structure and placement to accommodate multiple species of interest.

ii.c.U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries expressed their intent to prescribe passage at the project, but the exact mechanism and triggers remain undecided.

- In the meantime, literature review of existing fisheries assessment data from upstream and downstream may aid in the appropriate timing of passage installation at Stevens Creek relative to passage installations downstream.
- What we know so far: Eels have been anecdotally noted congregating in the empty Stevens Dam turbine bay and could use leakages for passage over the dam and additionally passing over the face of the spillway. One suggestion was that the group use existing information to characterize the eel fishery in its current state.
- The group agreed to continue with the Fish Passage Committee to discuss available data, data gaps, when to implement studies, design, and passage.

The group additionally discussed the downstream passage of eels.

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Commented [KM2]: A determination implies a decision based on data.

Commented [KM3]: Incorporated these concepts above where they have direct relevance

- Blade strike analysis are currently being performed with results available to the committee for review in the upcoming months.
- Several studies at other hydropower projects show that eels move downstream primarily at night. The Project is currently operated so that the plant is constantly generating although it is often reduced to allow the pool to fill. Spilling typically only occurs when there are high flows from Thurmond Dam (8,000 10,000 cfs). Site specific downstream entrainment studies showed that should eels select the powerhouse for their route of downstream passage, the turbines are expected to have a minimal impact on survival (i.e., low turbine mortality). Dominion noted that the amount of leakage is substantial at Stevens Creek due to its age. Therefore, eels have a variety of passage options from which to move upstream and downstream of the dam.
- Under the existing license, the Habitat Enhancement Fund was developed to off-set entrainment impacts of project operations. The fund is specific to fish entrainment, however, Forest Service suggested that this fund could be used to off-set upstream migration until downstream passage is installed.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided the Savannah River Restoration Plan that includes passage goals. This plan could be used to support discussions and goal under the fish passage technical committee.
 - •• NOAA Fisheries noted that the plan's discussion of the Stevens Creek Project is largely out of date. The plan calls for operating the locks as a fish passage mechanism, and this is no longer a desired passage method.

The group discussed several steps moving forward:

- Develop a plan for a post-license fish passage technical committee in the Draft License Application.
- Gather existing data on eels above and below Stevens Creek Dam and incorporate it into the Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper.

ACTION ITEMS

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Commented [KM4]: I recall numbers being presented at the meeting, but perhaps its best to leave them out until the report has been reviewed. I also recall they were anomalously high for American eel

Commented [KM5]: It modifies generating?

Commented [KM6]: What studies does this refer to, and what sites are they specific to? Does this reference entrainment studies at other sites that have shown cels use the powerhouse? Or is it a study done at Stevens Creek? I'm aware of a 1994 study that examined juvenile herring and sunfish, but nothing that investigated eel survival.

Commented [KM7]: If this references the forthcoming blade strike analysis, I'd suggest removing until that study has been reviewed.

Commented [KM8]: This was also included in the NMFS comments on the Pre-Application Document

- Develop framework of Fish Passage Technical Committee.
- Agencies (USFWS, NMFS, SCDNR, GDNR) to identify fish passage goals.

WATER QUALITY DISCUSSIONS

The group discussed comments received on the draft Water Quality Study Report. The main focus of the discussion was regarding the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir, including residence time, DO levels, and mixing.

The group discussed agency recommendations of additional water quality studies focused on Stevens Creek.

- Additional <u>residence time</u> studies could help identify adverse impacts and aid in an understanding of how the water quality in the reservoir is impacted by re-regulation operations and upstream flows.
- Data can be collected next year in months of concern, potentially including a diurnal survey to depict what happens during flood flows.
- Data could be collected and submitted as a supplement after FLA is filed.
- A question arose as to whether this information will be needed for the Georgia EPD 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC). The 401 WQC needs to be applied for with 60 days of filing FLA with FERC.

Additional WQ Discussion:

The group hypothesized that organic rich waters within Stevens Creek are backed up, flooding the silty and organic-rich flats that are hypoxic, then draws that water out into the river during Stevens Creek generation. Pulses from Thurmond act like a tidal system that reverses flow in Stevens Creek, which is exacerbated by low-flow conditions. Study report comments are currently being considered, but a Water Quality group meeting could be held to further discuss water quality concerns within the project boundary.

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ACTION ITEMS

• Assemble straw man of proposed 2023 study and schedule a Water Quality Group Meeting.

RECREATION

The purpose of the recreation discussion was to review current recreation opportunities, additional opportunities, and the feasibility of recreation enhancements (location, property ownership, safety).

Alison briefly presented the recreation study results and presented a spreadsheet that outlines Recreation Enhancement recommendations received thus far during the relicensing by stakeholders, including advantages, disadvantages, and notes. This spreadsheet has been included as the table below. Additionally, Columbia County provided DESC with the Improvement Plan developed for Betty's Branch Access Area. The plan includes an ADA kayak launching facility (constructed subsequent to the September meeting), parking and turn-around improvements, and courtesy dock. DESC partnership on planned facilities may be considered as enhancement measures for the new license term.

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- DESC investigate potential partnerships between DESC and private entities, stakeholders, others about land acquisition to provide new boat ramp on GA side.
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•	Identify areas of targeted bank fishing. Contact GDNR and SCDNR to further discuss
	potential and if/what fish attractors can be used.

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
Construct kayak launch at Betty's Branch	Takes advantage of existing GA access where DESC-owned properties is limited.	Land-acquisition of adjacent properties would be difficult.	High volume of recreation traffic is causing conflict/safety issues with boaters vs paddlers using the same ramps. Columbia County is making plans (Columbia County Recreation Development Plan) for an ADA compliant ramp and launch for canoes. Preliminary plans were shows on screen.
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	Page 9 of 12	Kleinschmidt	

Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
		additional traffic at Stallings Island.	
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	Page 11 of 12	Kleinschmidt	

Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
New recreation access area on GA side of reservoir	Increased GA access.	Lack of DESC-owned properties to use as new launch.	USACE ramp on SC side, with GDNR ramp on GA side that needs improvements/maintenance. Solution may require multiple players (private, stakeholders, DESC partnerships).
Fish structure installation to benefit bank fishing.	Potential increase in fishing success from bank.	Difficulties keeping structures in place during high flows. Potential obstructions at boat/canoe launches.	Team should explore exactly where these structures should be placed and communicate with GDNR, SCDNR, and others to see if such placement is feasible.
Wildlife enhancements, viewing opportunities.	Increase wildlife viewing opportunities, enhance wildlife habitats.	Potential land acquisition issues.	Explore areas to increase wildlife viewing (i.e., observation platforms), waterfowl management areas, nesting boxes, dove perches, etc.

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MEETING NOTES Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

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success of those fish passage implementations, which species are using them and in what numbers, and if further passage upstream of Stevens Creek Dam is justified.

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- The group agreed to continue with the Fish Passage Committee to discuss available data, data gaps, when to implement studies, design, and passage.

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Kleinschmidt

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- Data can be collected next year in months of concern, potentially including a diurnal survey to depict what happens during flood flows.
- Data could be collected and submitted as a supplement after FLA is filed.
- A question arose as to whether this information will be needed for the Georgia EPD 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC). The 401 WQC needs to be applied for with 60 days of filing FLA with FERC.

Additional WQ Discussion:

The group hypothesized that organic rich waters within Stevens Creek are backed up, flooding the silty and organic-rich flats that are hypoxic, then draws that water out into the river during Stevens Creek generation. Pulses from Thurmond act like a tidal system that reverses flow in Stevens Creek, which is exacerbated by low-flow conditions. Study report comments are currently being considered, but a Water Quality group meeting could be held to further discuss water quality concerns within the project boundary.

ACTION ITEMS

• Assemble straw man of proposed 2023 study and schedule a Water Quality Group Meeting.

RECREATION

The purpose of the recreation discussion was to review current recreation opportunities, additional opportunities, and the feasibility of recreation enhancements (location, property ownership, safety).

Alison briefly presented the recreation study results and presented a spreadsheet that outlines Recreation Enhancement recommendations received thus far during the relicensing by stakeholders, including advantages, disadvantages, and notes. This spreadsheet has been included as the table below. Additionally, Columbia County provided DESC with the Improvement Plan developed for Betty's Branch Access Area. The plan includes an ADA

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kayak launching facility (constructed subsequent to the September meeting), parking and turn-around improvements, and courtesy dock. DESC partnership on planned facilities may be considered as enhancement measures for the new license term.

ACTION ITEMS

- Jay P. (GADNR) to check on GA boat ramp at Thurmond Dam (i.e., ownership, maintenance, potential for improvements).
- DESC investigate potential partnerships between DESC and private entities, stakeholders, others about land acquisition to provide new boat ramp on GA side.
- DESC to continue communications with Columbia County regarding Betty's Branch ramp and parking area.
- Wildlife Enhancement Opportunities: DESC/USFS/KA to discuss wildlife opportunities. Most USFS lands in SC are all under WMA and under SCDNR management, but there may be additional opportunities within Project boundary.
- Identify areas of targeted bank fishing. Contact GDNR and SCDNR to further discuss potential and if/what fish attractors can be used.

Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
Construct kayak launch at Betty's Branch	Takes advantage of existing GA access where DESC-owned properties is limited.	Land-acquisition of adjacent properties would be difficult.	High volume of recreation traffic is causing conflict/safety issues with boaters vs paddlers using the same ramps. Columbia County is making plans (Columbia County Recreation Development Plan) for an ADA compliant ramp and launch for canoes. Preliminary plans were shows on screen.
Extending boat ramp at Betty's Branch	Allows boat launching at lower water levels. In the current state, trailers tires/axles drop off the end of the ramp in lower water levels.		Could this be added to the Columbia County Recreation Development Plan?
Vegetation and/or sediment management at Betty's Branch	Allows easier paddler/boat navigation at ramp and out into the river.	Temporary.	Vegetation and sedimentation is limiting padding activities/access at certain water elevations. Currently being addressed by Columbia County.
Add parking at Betty's Branch for vehicles without trailers / prevent non- trailered vehicles from parking in designated trailer spaces.	Reduce confusion and maximize parking.		Parking lot or stripes should be modified to maximize parking spaces and install signage to direct people with/without trailers to the proper parking spaces. Try to reduce boat trailers at ball fields.

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
Install lighting (OVERALL IMPROVEMENTS) at Fury's Ferry	Lighting will increase sense of safety. Great location for potential bank fishing, wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing access.	Increased lighting and sense of safety also encourages more after-hours usage. Theft is a major issue. Poles needs to be metal (not wood). Lighting needs to be solar, need to be secure/theft proof.	Focus should be on Fury's Ferry, (no increases to traffic at Chota). Concerns that many items like benches, tables, lighting, fencing, bathrooms, might not work because of thieves and vandalism. USFS open to discussions about improvements such as canoe slides, bank fishing opportunities.
Construct tailrace fishing pier on GA side of dam below Stevens Creek Dam	Increased GA fishing access.	Property/project boundary concerns - still DESC property, but outside of SC project boundary (within Augusta DD project boundary). Would require access through DESC security gates, adjacent to SoCo property/facilities, limited parking. Access would need to be restricted to pier usage only (no launching allowed) to avoid	Savannah Rapids is very well advertised, very easily accessible, and used by many. Justification for another fishing pier ~1 mile upstream is lacking. Cultural resource concerns with Stalling Island - needing avoid increasing curiosity, looting, and vandalism.

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes		
		additional traffic at Stallings Island.			
Improve boat ramp at Stevens Creek site (extend, widen, etc.)	Takes advantage of DESC-owner properties. Recommendations through RUNS.	Widening cannot occur at the expense of parking, fishing, or pier usage.			
Improve/re-line parking lot at Stevens Creek site, expand parking	Improve parking arrangement to maximize spaces and reduce confusion or double parking.	Property will need to be examined, but space is relatively limited to see if parking can be expanded.	Perceptions of crowdedness during recreation studies could have been influenced by people parking incorrectly.		
Provide bank fishing/pier fishing at Stevens Creek site	Increased fishing opportunities.	Flash flooding and woody debris drift could be a maintenance or safety issue. Would these need to be ADA compliant, wheelchair stops, paved paths, etc.?	Consistent with community input on need for increased bank fishing. Allow more standing room along water's edge near boat ramps and launches - this would allow less conflict at ramp itself.		
Construct canoe portage on SC side of dam	Increased connectivity for paddlers.	Any increase in boat/paddler traffic is an increased risk to Stallings Island and a major concern the Muscogee Nation. Safety concerns, which violates DESC adherence to safety precautions, and will not promote the usage of portage area so steep and rocky.	An increase in traffic could include increased curiosity, looting, vandalism. Cultural/historical/tribal issues are almost always the deciding factor regarding recreation issues in the FERC process. Muskogee Nation in discussion about how to increase security when dealing with future/long-term/projected increase in the paddling traffic.		

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Kleinschmidt

Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes
		Property concerns.	
Construct canoe portage on GA side of dam	Increased connectivity for paddlers.	Any increase in boat/paddler traffic is an increased risk to Stallings Island and a major concern of the Muscogee Nation. Concerns around DESC/SoCo facilities (length of portage and safety/security concern).	An increase in traffic could include increased curiosity, looting, vandalism. Cultural/historical/tribal issues are almost always the deciding factor regarding recreation issues in the FERC process. Muskogee Nation in discussion about how to increase security when dealing with future/long-term/projected increase in the paddling traffic.
Implement canoe shuttle around dam	Increased connectivity for paddlers.	Costly. Observed paddler traffic does not justify such a need. Plenty of paddling opportunities downstream.	Was mentioned that a handful of times, DESC has given paddlers rides around dam, but never enough to consider.
Open locks to allow boating through the dam	Connectivity for paddlers, fishes.	Safety and security concerns. To function as needed, rock ramp would need to extend all the way to Stallings Island, which is a concern already discussed earlier.	Originally explored as a ramp structure to allows fish passage and slide kayaks downstream.

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Recreation PMEs	Advantages	Drawbacks	Notes		
	Increased GA access.		USACE ramp on SC side, with GDNR ramp or		
New recreation access area on GA side of reservoir		Lack of DESC-owned properties	GA side that needs		
		to use as new launch	improvements/maintenance. Solution may		
			require multiple players (private,		
			stakeholders, DESC partnerships).		
Fish structure installation to benefit bank fishing.		Difficulties keeping structures in	Team should explore exactly where these		
	Potential increase in fishing success from bank.	place during high flows.	structures should be placed and		
		Potential obstructions at	communicate with GDNR, SCDNR, and		
		boat/canoe launches.	others to see if such placement is feasible.		
Wildlife enhancements, viewing opportunities.	Increase wildlife viewing opportunities, enhance wildlife habitats.		Explore areas to increase wildlife viewing		
		Potential land acquisition issues	(i.e., observation platforms), waterfowl		
			management areas, nesting boxes, dove		
			perches, etc.		

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Kleinschmidt

MEETING NOTES Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. U.S. Forest Service 4e Conditions Meeting

October 5, 2022

Final JAG 10/18/22

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan – DESC Paul Vidonic – DESC* Ray Ammarell – DESC* Alison Jakupca – Kleinschmidt Jenn Güt – Kleinschmidt

Kelly Kirven – Kleinschmidt Derrick Miller – USFS Gray Buckles – USFS* Keith Whalen – USFS Roderick Alfred – USFS*

*Attended virtually via Microsoft Teams

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.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the meeting was to discuss preliminary U.S. Forest Service (USFS) 4e conditions for the relicensing of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project).

Alison, Kleinschmidt, began the meeting with a welcome and introductions. Although 4e conditions are not due until the filing of the Final License Application (FLA), expected by October 30, 2023, Derrick, USFS, noted his appreciation in starting the process early due to various other large activities that the USFS is currently handling.

Alison reviewed aspects of the current Project license related to National Forest System lands. There were no 4e conditions but there were agreements with the USFS, including the Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP), annual erosion surveys, and funding. Additionally, the Recreation Management Plan (RMP) included recreation enhancements on USFS-managed land for sites #2 (commonly known as Fury's Ferry Recreation Area), #3 and #4, and the Forks Area Trail Systems (FATS). The CRMP and annual erosion surveys are likely to continue through to new the license. The RMP will need to be revised to reflect changes in USFS management goals since the current license was issued. The funding amount will likely reflect the changes in USFS initiatives and include 2022 dollars to account for inflation.

Initial discussions focused on recreation at the Project. The Fury's Ferry site will be the focus for recreation enhancement on National Forest System lands. Gray, USFS, stated the goal for Fury's Ferry is to add amenities such as a canoe/kayak launch, floating pier, and/or bank fishing area and improve site that it does not attract unwanted activities such as dumping, etc. Any amenities would need to be fire and tamper proof and the lighting would likely need to be solar. Adding a light pole and transmission line would require the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. DESC and the USFS plan to hold a meeting at the Fury's Ferry site in December 2022 to further discuss the feasibility of various amenities. Kelly, Kleinschmidt, sent Gray a copy of the Recreation Use and Needs (RUN) Study Report recently completed at the Project.

The USFS does not support enhancements at Chota Drive moving forward in the relicensing due to budget constraints and Section 106 concerns. DESC will draft language to remove the Chota Drive site from the RMP.

The Parr Hydroelectric Project 4e conditions were reviewed to assess what conditions might be a part of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project license. Some conditions may be tweaked somewhat for the Project to address new USFS initiatives since the issuance of the Parr license. The Fire and Fuels Management Plan, Erosion and Sediment Control Management Plan, and Invasive Species Management Plan will be a standard condition for the Project. DESC to develop "strawman" management plans for USFS review prior to FLA submission.

Invasive species on National Forest System lands, particularly at Fury's Ferry, were discussed. There are no aquatic concerns; however, privet, a terrestrial species, is a problem at the Fury's Ferry site, which would likely require prolonged maintenance for it to be controlled. The Invasive Species Management Plan will require a monitoring component of both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species but may also need to the address the privet issue at Fury's Ferry.

Special Status species conditions also likely to change. For example, the tri-colored bat is in the process of being listed and, therefore, bat surveys prior to construction activities are likely to be required. A population of endangered red-cockaded woodpecker located at Fort Gordon along the Savannah River has experienced a significant increase – a condition of the new Project license may also be to survey for this species.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Kleinschmidt to send USFS the Stevens Creek Project RUN Study Report COMPLETE.
- DESC and Kleinschmidt to coordinate Fury's Ferry site visit for December 2022.
- DESC and Kleinschmidt to develop "strawman" management plans for USFS review.





MEETING NOTES

Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535)

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Water Quality Technical Working Committee Meeting

December 13, 2022

Final JAG 1/18/23

ATTENDEES:

Amy Bresnahan (DESC) Caleb Gaston (DESC) Ray Ammarell (DESC) Paul Vidonic (Dominion) Keith Whalen (USFS) Eric Bauer (USFWS) Bjorn Lake (NMFS) Kevin Mack (NMFS) Twyla Cheatwood (NMFS) Jamie Sykes (USACE) Jeffery Williams (GADNR-EPD)

Paula Marcinek (GADNR) Rusty Wenerick (SCDHEC) Elizabeth Miller (SCDNR) Chad Hendrix (City of Augusta) Tonya Bonitatibus (SRK) Alison Jakupca (Kleinschmidt) Henry Mealing (Kleinschmidt) Jason Moak (Kleinschmidt) Jenn Güt (Kleinschmidt) Jordan Johnson (Kleinschmidt)

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.

Alison J., Kleinschmidt, provided the group with an introduction. Caleb G., DESC, reviewed the 2021 water quality data, with a focus on Stevens Creek, which experienced dissolved oxygen (DO) levels below the SC state criteria during the summer. It is hypothesized that organic rich waters within Stevens Creek may, during certain operational conditions, back up, flooding the silty and organic-rich hypoxic flats, which then draws water out into the creek. Pulses from J. Strom Thurmond act like a tidal system, reversing the flow in Stevens Creek, which is exacerbated by low-flow conditions. DESC is proposing to conduct a water quality study in Stevens Creek during the summer of 2023 to attempt to gauge the extent of the area of poor water quality. Study Site 5 from the 2020 and 2021 studies will be continuously sampled at hourly internals from May 1 through October 31, 2023, for temperature, DO, specific conductance, pH, and turbidity. Four longitudinal studies were proposed to be conducted between August and September. While traveling in a boat upstream at idle speed, DO and temperature will be taken at 30-second intervals until the DO recovers. Six locations near the hypoxic flats between 4 and 7 river miles (RMs) from the creek mouth will be monitored to determine the role of these areas on the low DO



conditions observed in the creek. The sites will be monitored for four 48-hour periods, collecting temperature and DO in 15-minute intervals. Jason M., Kleinschmidt, noted that a previous water quality study conducted in Stevens Creek by Phinizy Center for Water Sciences, indicated the elevation fluctuation from the Project was 7-8 RMs upstream of the creek mouth.

Caleb reminded the group of some ongoing sampling being conducted in the vicinity of the Project. The USGS samples two consecutive days per month from November through May and two consecutive days twice per month from June through October (diurnal). The USACE collects monthly profile data in the J. Strom Thurmond tailrace along with temperature, DO, and specific conductance in 15-minute intervals.

Caleb asked the agencies to provide their opinion on the proposed methodology for the Stevens Creek water quality study. Elizabeth M., SCDNR, inquired if a continuous monitor should be placed closer to 8 RMs upstream of the mouth to determine if low DO was present there. Jason stated that 8 RMs is where previous research indicates DO is fully recovered, but the longitudinal surveys will map the distance upstream to where the DO recovers. Continuous monitors are between RM 4 and 7 as that is where water drains out of backwatered locations. There are not a lot of good placements for monitors upstream of the current continuous monitor at Site 5 (located at approximately RM 4.5) due to high flow events washing large trees downstream, destroying equipment.

Tonya B., SRK, inquired what the outcome of the water quality study was. For instance, what happens if it is found out that the flats are playing a role in DO. Alison stated that the overall goal of the study was to gather enough information to quantify the effects of the Project's operational regime for FERC's NEPA analysis. In this case, the Project's reregulation function may be contributing to water quality issues observed in the creek, which ultimately may be determined to be an unavoidable adverse effect of the reregulation function of the Project. Tonya noted the question stemmed from determining what is historically recognized as "healthy" DO in Stevens Creek, and if it was a blackwater creek with naturally low DO, that would matter in terms of identifying whether the current DO levels are necessarily abnormal. There is no data to indicate what the historic DO in the creek was, but Keith W., USFS, commented that the presence of the Carolina Heelsplitter mussel in the creek likely means DO was not historically an issue.

Keith agreed with the longitudinal and off-channel surveys. He asked if the longitudinal surveys would be timed with releases from Thurmond. Jason said they would try to time the surveys during the time of day when DO is the lowest, which is during daylight hours. Keith noted that it would be beneficial to be consistent with the time of day or release when doing the surveys. Keith also asked for the scientists to look for a similar site as close to 8 RMs that would be off channel. If nothing is above there, Keith noted it is probably okay without a monitor. A reconnaissance trip might be of use, which Jason agreed with.



Rusty W., SCDHEC, inquired whether multi-parameter probes could be used to collect pH and specific conductance in addition to temperature and DO. Jason said it would be possible to do for the longitudinal survey but that the multi-parameter sondes are much more expensive, and he would be concerned with destruction of the equipment if they were to be used for the off-channel surveys. Elizabeth inquired about the possibility of additional continuous monitors somewhere, maybe different ones, because SCDNR is concerned about low DO cutting off fish passage through the creek. HOBO loggers are a possibility, but they would need to be serviced every two weeks, especially during the middle of the summer, due to biofouling issues in the creek.

Kevin M., NMFS, stated that he thought the longitudinal and off-channel surveys were a good idea. He asked if there were any plans to conduct a residence time study as that was discussed at the September RCG meeting. Jason noted potential methodology for such a study is modeling or the use of fluorescent dye. Henry M., Kleinschmidt, stated residence time in Stevens Creek would be highly variable and dependent on rain events and seasonal flow. It was suggested that an additional longitudinal survey in May or June may help provide more information on how the system may be functioning from month to month. Henry asked the agencies if they are worried about residence time being a barrier to fish passage. Paula M., GADNR, commented that her agency is worried about the area of poor water quality acting as a barrier to fish movement. Residence time would get at the duration of the impact and studying the impact could lead to mitigation efforts. GADNR would endorse an additional May/June longitudinal survey, and Paula noted that adding a monitor to Site 4, on the east side upriver of the dam, may allow for the opportunity to relate what is going on at the mouth with what is going on upstream.

Tonya asked if it has been decided that Dominion does not think that there is an issue with water quality in Betty's Branch, and if there was a reason to just focus on Stevens Creek. She noted that SRK collected water quality data in the Betty's Branch area and that there is an interest in knowing any impacts. Alison stated that there is a lot of water quality monitoring being conducted in the main stem of the Savannah River, and the goal of the Stevens Creek study is to have a complete final license application for NEPA analysis.

The group discussed that the timing of the recon trip should occur during spring and during a non-high flow event at least one month prior to the start of the study. DESC will plan to hold a meeting in the spring with the Water Quality TWC to review the monitoring sites and methodology.

ACTION ITEMS:

• DESC to schedule Water Quality TWC meeting in spring 2023 to review study sites and methodology.



Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project Water Quality TWC

13 December 2022



2021 Study Results and Recommendations

- Continuous data collection provided information about water quality at the project that was not previously available
- Water discharged from Stevens Creek powerhouse meets applicable DO criteria
- Persistent low DO conditions continue to occur in Stevens Creek

Commentors recommended a second year of study with focus on Stevens Creek



Review of 2021

Study sites

Nutrient Sample Results

Parameter		Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6
Ammonia (mg/L)		N/D	N/D	0.68	N/D	N/D	N/D
	Min	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.09	0.03	0.10
Nitrate-Nitrite (mg/L)	Avg	0.16	0.17	0.18	0.19	0.19	0.18
	Max	0.24	0.35	0.34	0.34	0.41	0.30
Orthophosphate (mg/L)		N/D	0.19	N/D	N/D	0.16	N/D
	Min	-	-	-	-	0.055	-
Phosphorus (mg/L)	Avg	N/D	N/D	N/D	N/D	0.062	N/D
	Max	-	-	-	-	0.066	-
	Min	0.11	0.15	0.17	0.12	0.24	0.11
TKN (mg/L)	Avg	0.21	0.27	0.34	0.41	0.59	0.24
	Max	0.41	0.66	0.61	0.65	0.93	0.31
Total Nitrogen (mg/L) (TKN + Nitrate-Nitrite)	Avg	0.37	0.44	0.52	0.60	0.78	0.42

SC Nutrient Criteri	<u>a for Lakes</u>
Total Nitrogen	< 1.5 mg/L
Total Phosphorus	< 0.06 mg/L

N/D = Not Detected

Above vs. Below Stevens Creek Powerhouse





Review of 2021

Study sites

Site 6 – Deep Step (Periodic Site)





Review of 2021

Study sites

Above and Below Stevens Creek Spillway





Review of 2021

Study sites

Site 5 – Stevens Creek



Stevens Creek DO Dynamics

Site 5 – Stevens Creek



DO Dynamics and Water Level

















2023 Study Discussion

Methods

- Study Site 5 (Stevens Creek)
 - May 1 October 31
 - Hourly Temp, DO, Specific Conductance, pH, and Turbidity
- Longitudinal surveys
 - 4 surveys between August and September
 - DO and temperature at 30-second intervals while traveling upstream until DO recovery
- Off-channel surveys
 - 6 locations
 - 4 48-hour periods between August and September
 - DO and temperature at 15-minute intervals

Water Quality Study Sites SC-6.70 SC-5.80 SC-5.60 SC-5.25 SC-4.70 Site 5 - Continuous Monitor SC-4.25 Legend Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. Cayce, South Carolina Continuous Monitor Off-Channel Sites Kleinschmid unid makes no samanty, expre

Other Ongoing Sampling

Existing License Sampling:

- Sampling at 6 sites by USGS
 - 2 consecutive days per month Nov May
 - 2 consecutive days twice per month Jun Oct (diurnal)

USACE Sampling at JST Dam/Tailrace:

- Monthly forebay profiles
- 15-min tailrace monitoring (Temp, DO, Specific Conductance)

Email and Written Correspondence January - March 2023

<u>s -</u>
<u>nan</u>
<u>1</u>

Hello.

GADNR participated in the agency coordination regarding the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the SCHP and concurs with the NMFS comments, recommendations, and modifications for the 2023 Study Plan.

Best, Paula Marcinek Manager, Freshwater Biodiversity Program

Wildlife Resources Division M: (404) 323-7751

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A division of the GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

From: Twyla Cheatwood - NOAA Federal <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>

Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 11:01 AM

To: Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com>

Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <andrew.herndon@noaa.gov>; David Eargle - SCDHEC <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller - USFS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Elizabeth Miller - SCDNR <millere@dnr.sc.gov>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger -SCDNR <bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov>; Keith Whalen - USFS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; Kevin Mack -NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; Melanie Olds <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern - SCDNR <kernm@dnr.sc.gov>; Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Bjorn Lake <bjorn.lake@noaa.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric_bauer@fws.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8) <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <fritz.rohde@noaa.gov> Subject: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning Jennifer,

The NMFS reviewed the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on behalf of Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC). The current license for the project expires October 31, 2025. In 2021, the first water quality study related to relicensing was conducted, and the results of that effort have been considered in the design of the 2023 Plan. In coordination with the resource agencies, the NMFS provides the following comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan.

If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your continued coordination.

Twyla

Twyla H Cheatwood Fishery Biologist Southeast Region, Habitat Conservation Division NOAA Fisheries Beaufort, NC 28516 Office: (252) 666-7484 <u>Twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>



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2023 Water Quality Study Plan Comments for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) Provided by NMFS HCD staff on February 9, 2023

The Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project impounds the Savannah River at its confluence with Stevens Creek. The project is approximately one mile upstream of the Augusta Diversion Dam and approximately 13 river miles downstream of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) J. Storm Thurmond (JST) Dam. DESC operates the Stevens Creek Project to produce hydroelectric energy and reregulate the flows discharged from JST Dam. Low concentrations of dissolved oxygen (DO) are the primary water quality concern. As water temperatures warm, the JST Reservoir stratifies resulting in discharges of hypoxic/anoxic waters into the Savannah River. Similar but less severe low DO conditions occur in Stevens Creek during late summer and persist into fall. Based on the results of the 2021 water quality studies, resource agencies recommended focusing subsequent efforts on the Stevens Creek branch of the reservoir with the goals of identifying the cause of hypoxic conditions and determining their extent upstream.

Stevens Creek project boundary contains 12.77 river miles of mainstem Stevens Creek, and 1.44 river miles of Horn Creek. Identifying the upstream extent of hypoxic water conditions in the project boundary is one of the main goals of the study. Previous work identified persistent hypoxic conditions at a monitoring station approximately 4.5 river miles upstream from the confluence with the Savannah River. There are two SC DHEC monitoring stations further upstream where DO is believed to remain above state standards throughout the year. One in Horn Creek (within the project boundary), and another in Stevens Creek, approximately 4 river miles upstream of the project boundary. It seems that the hypoxic conditions are produced somewhere within the project boundary.

DESC proposed three efforts that together constitute the 2023 Water Quality Study. The first effort is hourly water quality monitoring at two sites in the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir that were also monitored during 2022 studies. The second, is a longitudinal survey of temperature and DO through the Stevens Creek arm of the project area. The third, is occasional monitoring of DO and temperature at a number of sites off the main channel of the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir that are a suspected source of anoxic water. The stated goal of the study is to "assess the dissolved oxygen dynamics in the Stevens Creek arm of the Project impoundment, as well as the temporal and longitudinal extent of low DO levels". The resource agencies believe the proposed study will successfully meet that goal, provided the following recommendations and modifications are implemented.

To better conceptualize the extent of hypoxic conditions in Stevens Creek, and describe the DO dynamics within the reservoir, we propose dividing the Stevens Creek branch of the reservoir into 3 reaches (Upper, Middle, and Lower), each approximately 4 river miles in length (Figure 1). The lower reach begins at the confluence with the Savannah River and extends a little over 4 river miles upstream, terminating downstream of the proposed continuous monitoring site. The middle reach extends from the lower reach 4.6 river miles upstream, terminating just downstream of the confluence with Horn Creek. The middle reach would contain all of the proposed off-channel survey sites. The Upper reach extends from the middle reach another 4.16 river miles, terminating at the project boundary.


Figure 1. Map of the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir depicting the proposed upper, middle, and lower reaches, the continuous monitoring station in each reach, and the longitudinal survey path through the project area.

Continuous Monitoring:

We recommend modifying the proposed Plan to include a continuous monitoring station at the lower bound of each reach. The two stations proposed in the Plan would serve the lower and middle reaches. An additional continuous monitoring station will need to be established in the upper reach. The agencies propose placing it just downstream of the confluence with Horn Creek. We propose deploying all three continuous monitoring stations year round, recording WQ data every hour. Those data will be used as the lowest-resolution method of tracking hypoxic conditions as they move through the system.

Longitudinal Surveys:

The longitudinal surveys represent the highest-resolution method of tracking hypoxic conditions and will be key in determining their upstream extent. We recommend modifying the proposed Plan to conduct a longitudinal survey once per month for the period from May through November. Additionally, we recommend conducting two surveys during months when hypoxic conditions typically do not occur (December - April) in order to enable comparisons to "healthy" river conditions. Surveys should begin at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River and sample the entire 12.77 river miles of Stevens Creek within the project boundary.

Surveys should be planned around discharges from Thurmond and standardized throughout the study period. One of the goals of the longitudinal surveys is to capture the maximum extent of hypoxic water. Therefore, the upstream survey should be conducted during the morning as DO is at its lowest around 11am. The other goal is to track changes in DO as they occur through the system. Therefore, it would be necessary to survey the area while Thurmond is actively discharging and water begins to push up into Stevens Creek, which occurs in the afternoon, around 2 pm. We propose modifying the proposed Plan to conduct a tow in both directions (up and downstream) during each survey. The upstream tow should be conducted in the morning, and the downstream tow in the afternoon. Surveys should also be coordinated with the off-channel monitoring so that monitors are in position and recording while the longitudinal surveys are being conducted. This will allow additional synthesis of data between the two efforts.

Off-Channel Monitoring:

Another key goal of the project is identifying the source of hypoxic waters that persist in the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir. The current hypothesis is that discharges from Thurmond Dam are impounded by the Stevens Creek Dam and redirected up the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir. Those waters then flush a series of shallow ponds that are situated off the mainstem of the middle reach of Stevens Creek. The stagnant water in those ponds is believed to be lowering the DO concentration in the reservoir. Previous work indicates that DO concentrations in the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir improve as discharges from Thurmond enter the system, between afternoon and midnight. As water level declines from midnight to noon the next day, so does DO. Monitoring DO at the mouths of those shallow ponds will help determine if they are the source of hypoxic waters entering the system. Offchannel monitoring should be coordinated with the longitudinal surveys so that monitoring stations are established and recorded while the longitudinal tows are being conducted.

Specific Comments:

- In section 1.1, the discussion of how DO changes with temperature throughout the day is highly relevant to understanding the water quality dynamics at this project. We suggest including those analyses in revisions to the 2022 water quality report. As it stands, section 1.1 of this report is the first time these data are presented to the record.
- 2. Section 2.0 presents the overall objective of the study. Because the study consists of three distinct efforts, the objective of each effort should be stated.
 - a. The continuous monitoring is being conducted to enable comparisons to 2022, and can be used to track changes in DO as they occur through the system.
 - b. The longitudinal survey is being conducted to determine the upstream extent of hypoxic conditions and can also be used to track changes in DO as they occur through the system.
 - c. The off-channel surveys are being conducted to pinpoint a suspected source of hypoxic water being flushed into the system
- 3. Section 3.0 should be revised to address all three efforts distinctly and completely.

- 4. Section 4.0, in general, requires more detail. In describing the data collection methods, provide the specific data that will be produced by each effort. Describe how those data will be summarized. What calculations will be done? What tables will be included? Describe how trends in the data will be visualized. What figures will be produced? What will the axes present? How will those figures address the effort's objectives? Describe what statistical analyses, if any, will be performed.
- 5. In addition to the above, Section 4.1 should be revised to contain the following information:
 - a. How long continuous monitors will be deployed throughout the year.
 - b. Approximate depth of the stream channel of each monitor's location, the sonde placement depth, and the typical minimum and maximum range of the water level.
 - c. How the data collected will be synthesized with the other efforts of the study. For example, the hourly measurements should be compared with the longitudinal survey at the appropriate dates, times, and locations. Similarly, hourly measurements could be used to track discharges from JST as they push into the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir.
 - d. State the statistical analyses that will be performed. For example, correlating DO, temperature, and gauge height at each monitoring station.
- 6. In addition to #4 above, section 4.2 should be revised to contain the following information:
 - a. What the approximate speed of the boat towing the YSI will be. How many points will be collected along the survey.
 - b. The approximate depth of the YSI as it is towed through each data logging point.
 - c. How longitudinal surveys will be scheduled throughout the study period. Is the intent to coordinate with releases from Thurmond?
 - d. How longitudinal surveys will be standardized throughout the study period. Will they be conducted at the same time of day? Same time of the month?
 - e. How the data collected will be synthesized with the other efforts of the study. For example, the measurements taken during the longitudinal study should be compared with those at the continuous monitoring station as the survey passes those locations. Additionally, longitudinal surveys should be scheduled to occur at the same time as the off-channel monitoring effort.
- 7. In addition to #4 above, section 4.3 should be revised to contain the following information:
 - a. How off-channel surveys will be scheduled throughout the study period. Is the intent to coordinate with releases from Thurmond?
 - b. How off-channel surveys will be standardized throughout the study period. Will monitors be placed at the same time of day? Same time of the month?
 - c. How the data collected will be synthesized with the other efforts of the study. For example, the off-channel monitors should be deployed at the same time as the longitudinal surveys so the two efforts can be directly compared. Similarly, hourly DO measurements at the off-channel monitoring sites should be compared to the hourly measurements at the continuous monitoring sites.
- 8. Section 5.0, in general, requires more detail. A number of the recommendations in #4 above are pertinent to this section of the study Plan. For each of the three efforts, provide the specific data that will be produced by each effort. Describe how those data will be summarized. What

tables will be included? What figures will be produced? Describe what statistical analyses, if any, will be performed.

Specific Modifications:

- 1. For continuous monitoring
 - a. Establish an additional continuous monitoring station just below the confluence of Stevens Creek and Horn Creek.
 - b. Deploy continuous monitoring stations year-round.
- 2. For Longitudinal Surveys
 - a. Each survey should consist of an up- and downstream tow, beginning at the confluence of Stevens Creek and the Savannah River and sampling the entire 12.77 river miles of Stevens Creek within the project boundary (or vice versa).
 - b. Conduct one survey each month from May through November, and conduct an additional two surveys between December and April for a total of 9.

From:	Twyla Cheatwood - NOAA Federal
To:	Jennifer Gut
Cc:	Andy Herndon - NMFS; David Eargle - SCDHEC; Derrick Miller - USFS; Elizabeth Miller - SCDNR; Jamie Sykes - USACE; Jason Bettinger - SCDNR; Keith Whalen - USFS; Kevin Mack - NMFS; Melanie Olds - USFWS (SC); Morgan Kern - SCDNR; Paula Marcinek - GADNR; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC; Bjorn Lake; Eric Bauer - USFWS (GA); Jay Payne; Jeffery Williams - GADNR; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8); Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8); Alison Jakupca; Jason Moak; Caleb Gaston (Services - 6); Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal
Subject:	NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project
Date:	Thursday, February 9, 2023 11:01:48 AM
Attachments:	NMFS Comments on Stevens Creek 2023 Water Quality Study Plan Final02092023.pdf

Good Morning Jennifer,

The NMFS reviewed the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on behalf of Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC). The current license for the project expires October 31, 2025. In 2021, the first water quality study related to relicensing was conducted, and the results of that effort have been considered in the design of the 2023 Plan. In coordination with the resource agencies, the NMFS provides the following comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan.

If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your continued coordination.

Twyla

Twyla H Cheatwood Fishery Biologist Southeast Region, Habitat Conservation Division NOAA Fisheries Beaufort, NC 28516 Office: (252) 666-7484 Twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov

?

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From:	Wenerick, William "Rusty"
To:	<u>Elizabeth Miller; Marcinek, Paula; Jennifer Gut</u>
Cc:	Andy Herndon - NMFS; Eargle, David A.; Derrick Miller - USFS; Jamie Sykes - USACE; Jason Bettinger; Keith
	Whalen - USFS; Kevin Mack - NMFS; melanie_olds@fws.gov; Morgan Kern; Bjorn Lake; Bauer, Eric F; Payne,
	Jason; Williams, Jeffery; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8); Peacock, Clint; twyla.cheatwood; Raymond
	Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8); Alison Jakupca; Jason Moak; Caleb Gaston (Services - 6); Pace Wilber - NOAA
	Federal; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal
Subject:	Re: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project
Date:	Friday, February 10, 2023 7:27:45 AM
Attachments:	Outlook-1469104240.png

Good morning Jennifer,

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) also participated in the agency coordination regarding the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project's 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan). The SCDHEC concurs with the comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Respectfully,

William R. "Rusty" Wenerick Project Manager S.C. Dept. of Health & Environmental Control Office: (803) 898-4266 Fax: (803) 898-7344 Connect: www.scdhec.gov Facebook LinkedIn



From: Elizabeth Miller <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov> Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 5:45 PM To: Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com> Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <andrew.herndon@noaa.gov>; Eargle, David A. <EARGLEDA@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller - USFS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger <BettingerJ@dnr.sc.gov>; Keith Whalen - USFS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; Kevin Mack - NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; melanie_olds@fws.gov <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Wenerick, William "Rusty" <WENERIWR@dhec.sc.gov>; Bjorn Lake <bjorn.lake@noaa.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric_bauer@fws.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Peacock, Clint <Clint.Peacock@dnr.ga.gov>; twyla.cheatwood <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8) <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <fritz.rohde@noaa.gov> **Subject:** RE: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

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The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) also participated in the agency coordination regarding the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project's 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan). The SCDNR concurs with the comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth C. Miller SCDNR Office: 843-953-3881 Cell: 843-729-4636

From: Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>

Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 11:58 AM

To: Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com>

Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <andrew.herndon@noaa.gov>; David Eargle - SCDHEC <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller - USFS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Elizabeth Miller <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger <BettingerJ@dnr.sc.gov>; Keith Whalen - USFS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; Kevin Mack - NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; Olds, Melanie J <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Bjorn Lake <bjorn.lake@noaa.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric_bauer@fws.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Peacock, Clint <Clint.Peacock@dnr.ga.gov>; twyla.cheatwood <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8) <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <fritz.rohde@noaa.gov> Subject: RE: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

Hello.

GADNR participated in the agency coordination regarding the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the SCHP and concurs with the NMFS comments, recommendations, and modifications for the 2023 Study Plan.

Best, Paula Marcinek Manager, Freshwater Biodiversity Program

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From: Twyla Cheatwood - NOAA Federal <<u>twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>>

Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 11:01 AM

To: Jennifer Gut <<u>Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>>

Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <<u>andrew.herndon@noaa.gov</u>>; David Eargle - SCDHEC <<u>eargleda@dhec.sc.gov</u>>; Derrick Miller - USFS <<u>derrick.miller@usda.gov</u>>; Elizabeth Miller - SCDNR <<u>millere@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <<u>james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil</u>>; Jason Bettinger -SCDNR <<u>bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Keith Whalen - USFS <<u>james.whalen@usda.gov</u>>; Kevin Mack -NMFS <<u>kevin.mack@noaa.gov</u>>; Melanie Olds <<u>melanie_olds@fws.gov</u>>; Morgan Kern - SCDNR <<u>kernm@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Marcinek, Paula <<u>Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov</u>>; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC <<u>weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov</u>>; Bjorn Lake <<u>bjorn.lake@noaa.gov</u>>; Bauer, Eric F <<u>eric_bauer@fws.gov</u>>; Payne, Jason <<u>Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov</u>>; Williams, Jeffery <<u>Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov</u>>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <<u>amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u>>; Alison Jakupca <<u>Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>>; Jason Moak <<u>Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>>; CALEB GASTON <<u>caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com</u>>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <<u>Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov</u>>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <<u>fritz.rohde@noaa.gov</u>> **Subject:** NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

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Good Morning Jennifer,

The NMFS reviewed the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on behalf of Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC). The current license for the project expires October 31, 2025. In 2021, the first water quality study related to relicensing was conducted, and the results of that effort have been considered in the design of the 2023 Plan. In coordination with the resource agencies, the NMFS provides the following comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan.

If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your continued coordination.

Twyla

Twyla H Cheatwood Fishery Biologist Southeast Region, Habitat Conservation Division NOAA Fisheries Beaufort, NC 28516 Office: (252) 666-7484 <u>Twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>



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From:	Elizabeth Miller
То:	Marcinek, Paula; Jennifer Gut
Cc:	Andy Herndon - NMFS; David Eargle - SCDHEC; Derrick Miller - USFS; Jamie Sykes - USACE; Jason Bettinger; Keith Whalen - USFS; Kevin Mack - NMFS; Olds, Melanie J; Morgan Kern; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC; Bjorn Lake; Bauer, Eric F; Payne, Jason; Williams, Jeffery; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8); Peacock, Clint; twyla.cheatwood; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8); Alison Jasupca; Jason Moak; Caleb Gaston (Sanuices - 6); Daos Williams, Poderal: Fitz Robde, NOAA Enderal
Subject: Date:	RE: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project Thursday, February 9, 2023 5:45:51 PM

Hi Jen,

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) also participated in the agency coordination regarding the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project's 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan). The SCDNR concurs with the comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth C. Miller SCDNR Office: 843-953-3881 Cell: 843-729-4636

From: Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>

Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 11:58 AM

To: Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com>

Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <andrew.herndon@noaa.gov>; David Eargle - SCDHEC <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller - USFS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Elizabeth Miller <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger <BettingerJ@dnr.sc.gov>; Keith Whalen - USFS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; Kevin Mack - NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; Olds, Melanie J <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Bjorn Lake <bjorn.lake@noaa.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric_bauer@fws.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Peacock, Clint <Clint.Peacock@dnr.ga.gov>; twyla.cheatwood <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8) <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <fritz.rohde@noaa.gov> Subject: RE: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

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From: Twyla Cheatwood - NOAA Federal <<u>twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>>

Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 11:01 AM

To: Jennifer Gut <<u>Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>>

Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <<u>andrew.herndon@noaa.gov</u>>; David Eargle - SCDHEC <<u>eargleda@dhec.sc.gov</u>>; Derrick Miller - USFS <<u>derrick.miller@usda.gov</u>>; Elizabeth Miller - SCDNR <<u>millere@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <<u>james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil</u>>; Jason Bettinger -SCDNR <<u>bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Keith Whalen - USFS <<u>james.whalen@usda.gov</u>>; Kevin Mack -NMFS <<u>kevin.mack@noaa.gov</u>>; Melanie Olds <<u>melanie_olds@fws.gov</u>>; Morgan Kern - SCDNR <<u>kernm@dnr.sc.gov</u>>; Marcinek, Paula <<u>Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov</u>>; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC <<u>weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov</u>>; Bjorn Lake <<u>bjorn.lake@noaa.gov</u>>; Bauer, Eric F <<u>eric_bauer@fws.gov</u>>; Payne, Jason <<u>Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov</u>>; Williams, Jeffery <<u>Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov</u>>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <<u>amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u>>; Alison Jakupca <<u>Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>>; Jason Moak <<u>Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>>; CALEB GASTON <<u>caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com</u>>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <<u>Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov</u>>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <<u>fritz.rohde@noaa.gov</u>> **Subject:** NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

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If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your continued coordination.

Twyla

Twyla H Cheatwood Fishery Biologist Southeast Region, Habitat Conservation Division NOAA Fisheries Beaufort, NC 28516 Office: (252) 666-7484 <u>Twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>



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From:	Olds, Melanie J
To:	Jennifer Gut
Cc:	Andy Herndon - NMFS; Eargle, David A.; Derrick Miller - USFS; Jamie Sykes - USACE; Jason Bettinger; Keith Whalen - USFS; Kevin Mack - NMFS; Morgan Kern; Wenerick, William "Rusty"; Bjorn Lake; Bauer, Eric E; Elizabeth Miller; Payne, Jason; Williams, Jeffery; Marcinek, Paula; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8); Peacock, Clint; twyla.cheatwood; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8); Alison Jakupca; Jason Moak; Caleb Gaston (Services - 6); Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal
Subject:	Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project
Date:	Friday, February 10, 2023 7:44:48 AM
Attachments:	Outlook-1469104240.png Outlook-2hmrjirnh.png

Morning Jennifer,

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also participated in the agency coordination regarding the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project's 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan) and concurs with the comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Melaníe



Melanie Olds Fish & Wildlife Biologist Regulatory Team Lead/FERC Coordinator U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office 176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200 Charleston, SC 2940

Phone: 843-300-0413

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From: Wenerick, William "Rusty" < WENERIWR@dhec.sc.gov>

Sent: Friday, February 10, 2023 7:27 AM

To: Elizabeth Miller <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com>

Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <andrew.herndon@noaa.gov>; Eargle, David A.

<EARGLEDA@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller - USFS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger <BettingerJ@dnr.sc.gov>; Keith Whalen - USFS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; Kevin Mack - NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; Olds, Melanie J <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; bjorn.lake <bjorn.lake@noaa.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric_bauer@fws.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8)

<amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Peacock, Clint <Clint.Peacock@dnr.ga.gov>;

twyla.cheatwood <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8) <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Alison Jakupca

<Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com>;

CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal

<Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <fritz.rohde@noaa.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens

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Respectfully,

William R. "Rusty" Wenerick Project Manager S.C. Dept. of Health & Environmental Control Office: (803) 898-4266 Fax: (803) 898-7344 Connect: www.scdhec.gov Facebook LinkedIn



From: Elizabeth Miller <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov> Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 5:45 PM To: Marcinek, Paula < Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>; Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com> **Cc:** Andy Herndon - NMFS <andrew.herndon@noaa.gov>; Eargle, David A. <EARGLEDA@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller - USFS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger <BettingerJ@dnr.sc.gov>; Keith Whalen - USFS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; Kevin Mack - NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; melanie_olds@fws.gov <melanie olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Wenerick, William "Rusty" <WENERIWR@dhec.sc.gov>; Bjorn Lake <bjorn.lake@noaa.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric_bauer@fws.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Peacock, Clint <Clint.Peacock@dnr.ga.gov>; twyla.cheatwood <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8) <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com>;

CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <fritz.rohde@noaa.gov> **Subject:** RE: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

*** Caution. This is an EXTERNAL email. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email. *** Hi Jen,

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) also participated in the agency coordination regarding the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project's 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan). The SCDNR concurs with the comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth C. Miller SCDNR Office: 843-953-3881 Cell: 843-729-4636

From: Marcinek, Paula <Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov>

Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 11:58 AM

To: Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com>

Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <andrew.herndon@noaa.gov>; David Eargle - SCDHEC <eargleda@dhec.sc.gov>; Derrick Miller - USFS <derrick.miller@usda.gov>; Elizabeth Miller <MillerE@dnr.sc.gov>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil>; Jason Bettinger <BettingerJ@dnr.sc.gov>; Keith Whalen - USFS <james.whalen@usda.gov>; Kevin Mack - NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; Olds, Melanie J <melanie_olds@fws.gov>; Morgan Kern <KernM@dnr.sc.gov>; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Bjorn Lake <bjorn.lake@noaa.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric_bauer@fws.gov>; Payne, Jason <Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov>; Williams, Jeffery <Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>; Peacock, Clint <Clint.Peacock@dnr.ga.gov>; twyla.cheatwood <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8) <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; Jason Moak <Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com>; CALEB GASTON <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <fritz.rohde@noaa.gov> Subject: RE: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

Hello.

GADNR participated in the agency coordination regarding the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the SCHP and concurs with the NMFS comments, recommendations, and modifications for the 2023 Study Plan.

Best, Paula Marcinek Manager, Freshwater Biodiversity Program

Wildlife Resources Division

M: (404) 323-7751

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A division of the GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

From: Twyla Cheatwood - NOAA Federal <<u>twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>>
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 11:01 AM
To: Jennifer Gut <<u>Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>>

Cc: Andy Herndon - NMFS <<u>andrew.herndon@noaa.gov</u>; David Eargle - SCDHEC <<u>eargleda@dhec.sc.gov</u>; Derrick Miller - USFS <<u>derrick.miller@usda.gov</u>; Elizabeth Miller - SCDNR <<u>millere@dnr.sc.gov</u>; Jamie Sykes - USACE <<u>james.a.sykes@usace.army.mil</u>; Jason Bettinger -SCDNR <<u>bettingerj@dnr.sc.gov</u>; Keith Whalen - USFS <<u>james.whalen@usda.gov</u>; Kevin Mack -NMFS <<u>kevin.mack@noaa.gov</u>; Melanie Olds <<u>melanie_olds@fws.gov</u>; Morgan Kern - SCDNR <<u>kernm@dnr.sc.gov</u>; Marcinek, Paula <<u>Paula.Marcinek@dnr.ga.gov</u>; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC <<u>weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov</u>; Bjorn Lake <<u>bjorn.lake@noaa.gov</u>; Bauer, Eric F <<u>eric_bauer@fws.gov</u>; Payne, Jason <<u>Jason.Payne@dnr.ga.gov</u>; Williams, Jeffery <<u>Jeffery.Williams@dnr.ga.gov</u>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <<u>amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com</u>; Alison Jakupca <<u>Alison.Jakupca@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>; Jason Moak <<u>Jason.Moak@kleinschmidtgroup.com</u>; CALEB GASTON <<u>caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com</u>; Pace Wilber - NOAA Federal <<u>Pace.Wilber@noaa.gov</u>; Fritz Rohde - NOAA Federal <<u>fritz.rohde@noaa.gov</u>> Subject: NMFS comments on the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project

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Good Morning Jennifer,

The NMFS reviewed the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (Plan) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2535) on behalf of Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC). The current license for the project expires October 31, 2025. In 2021, the first water quality study related to relicensing was conducted, and the results of that effort have been considered in the design of the 2023 Plan. In coordination with the resource agencies, the NMFS provides the following comments, recommendations, and modifications for the Plan.

If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your continued coordination.

Twyla

Twyla H Cheatwood Fishery Biologist Southeast Region, Habitat Conservation Division NOAA Fisheries Beaufort, NC 28516 Office: (252) 666-7484 <u>Twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov</u>

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From:	Jennifer Gut
To:	Amy Bresnahan; Caleb Gaston; Ray Ammarell; Derrick Miller - USFS; Buckles, Samuel -FS; Alison Jakupca; Kelly
	<u>Kirven</u>
Subject:	Stevens Creek-Fury"s Ferry Site Visit
Start:	Tuesday, March 7, 2023 9:00:00 AM
End:	Tuesday, March 7, 2023 12:00:00 PM
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting

Good afternoon all,

Thank you so much for your prompt reply on your availability for a site visit to Fury's Ferry. It looks like March 7 works for everyone, but I may also put a calendar hold for March 14 from 1-4 which also works in case the weather on the 7th doesn't cooperate. Please let me know if you have any questions prior to the site visit.

Thanks!

Jenn

Microsoft Teams meeting

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