

**APPENDIX E-1-C**  
**STAGE 2 CONSULTATION**

**Email and Written Correspondence  
April - October 2023**

## Alison Jakupca

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**From:** Jennifer Gut  
**Sent:** Friday, March 24, 2023 3:08 PM  
**Cc:** Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8); Jennifer Gut  
**Subject:** Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project Draft License Application

Good afternoon all,

Kleinschmidt Associates, on behalf of Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC), filed the Draft License Application (DLA) for the relicensing of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project) (FERC No. P-2535) with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) today, March 24, 2023.

An electronic copy of the DLA can be found on the Project relicensing website at [Milestone Documents | Stevens Creek Relicensing Website \(stevenscreekrelicense.com\)](#). The DLA will also be available at the FERC's eLibrary: <https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/search> (reference docket number P-2535).

In accordance with 18 C.F.R. §16.8 (c)(5), formal written comments specifically in reference to the DLA are due within 90 days of the date of this filing (**comments due June 22, 2023**). Please direct comments on the DLA to Amy Bresnahan at [Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:Amy.Bresnahan@dominionenergy.com) or Jenn Güt at [Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com](mailto:Jennifer.Gut@kleinschmidtgroup.com).

As you review the DLA package, please note that there are two new **draft** technical reports included for agency/stakeholder review and comment: the Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper and the Turbine Survival Technical Report. We look forward to meeting with you in the next couple of months to review comments on these draft reports, as well as review revised drafts of the Water Quality, Mussel, and Recreation Study Reports (which will address agency comments provided in the Fall of 2022). We will be reaching out with a Doodle Poll in the May 2023 time frame.

Please reach out with any questions or concerns in the meantime or if you have difficulty accessing the documents.

Best,

Jenn

**Jennifer A. Güt**  
Staff Licensing Coordinator

***Kleinschmidt***

**Office:** 803.904.8680

**Cell:** 706.294.3225

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**From:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**To:** [Derrick Miller - USFS](#); [Buckles, Samuel -FS](#); [Gregory.Cunningham@usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Cunningham@usda.gov); [Andrew.Holliday@usda.gov](mailto:Andrew.Holliday@usda.gov)  
**Cc:** [Amy Bresnahan](#); [Caleb Gaston](#); [Alison Jakupca](#); [Kelly Kirven](#)  
**Subject:** Stevens Creek Hydro Project - Fury's Ferry Meeting Notes and Conceptual Drawing  
**Date:** Thursday, June 8, 2023 10:50:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [Stevens Creek USFS Fury's Ferry Meeting\\_03072023\\_Notes and Conceptual Drawing.pdf](#)

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Good morning all,

I hope you're doing well. Please find attached for your review the notes from the meeting between DESC and the Forest Service held at the Fury's Ferry recreation site on March 7, 2023. We apologize for the delay in getting these notes to you, but we also wanted to include a conceptual drawing of proposed amenities at the site based on the discussion at the meeting. The drawing has been appended to the meeting notes. Please provide any comments to the meeting notes and/or drawing by COB June 22, 2023. Please reach out in the meantime if you have any questions/concerns.

Best,

Jenn

**Jennifer A. Güt**  
Staff Licensing Coordinator

***Kleinschmidt***

**Office:** 803.904.8680

**Cell:** 706.294.3225

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**From:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**To:** [John Luton - Columbia Co.](#); [dhodges@columbiacountyga.gov](mailto:dhodges@columbiacountyga.gov); [dsmith@columbiacountyga.gov](mailto:dsmith@columbiacountyga.gov); [dhorton@columbiacountyga.gov](mailto:dhorton@columbiacountyga.gov); [Shelly Blackburn - Columbia Co. GA](#); [Swain, Ashley](#)  
**Cc:** [Amy Bresnahan](#); [Alison Jakupca](#)  
**Subject:** DESC Betty's Branch Meeting Notes  
**Date:** Thursday, June 15, 2023 1:50:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Stevens Creek Columbia County Meeting Notes\\_04192023.doc](#)

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Good Afternoon All,

I hope this email finds you well. Please find attached for your review the notes from the meeting held between Columbia County and DESC staff in April regarding enhancements at Betty's Branch. I apologize for the delay in getting these notes to you. Please let me know if you have any edits. We also request that you forward any updated cost estimates when they are available to Amy Bresnahan (cc'd here). I hope you have a great rest of your week.

Best,

Jenn

**Jennifer A. Güt**  
Staff Licensing Coordinator

***Kleinschmidt***

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**From:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**To:** [Amy Bresnahan](#); [Andy Herndon - NMFS](#); [Bill Post - SCDNR](#); [Bryant Bowen - GADNR](#); [Caleb Gaston](#); [Chad Hendrix - City of Augusta](#); [Chris Howard](#); [Clint Peacock - GADNR](#); [David Hedeem - GAEPD](#); [David Moore - City of Augusta](#); [Derrick Miller - USFS](#); [Elizabeth Miller - SCDNR](#); [Ellen Waldrop - SCDNR](#); [Eric Bauer - USFWS \(GA\)](#); [Fritz Rohde - NMFS](#); [Jamie Sykes - USACE](#); [Jason Bettinger - SCDNR](#); [Jason Moak](#); [Jordan Johnson](#); [Keith Whalen - USFS](#); [Kevin Mack - NMFS](#); [Melanie Olds - USFWS \(SC\)](#); [Oscar Flite - City of Augusta](#); [Pace Wilber - NMFS](#); [Paul Vidonic \(Services - 6\)](#); [Paula Marcinek - TNC](#); [Ray Ammarell](#); [Rob Pavey](#); [Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC](#); [Stan Simpson - USACE](#); [Thom Litts - GADNR](#); [Tony Hicks](#); [Tony Hornbuckle](#); [Tonya Bonitatibus](#); [Twyla Cheatwood - NMFS](#); [Wes Byne - City of Augusta](#); [Will Pruitt](#); [Taylor K Allen \(Services - 6\)](#); [Bjorn Lake](#); [Jeffery Williams - GADNR](#); [Alison Jakupca](#)  
**Subject:** Stevens Creek Hydro Project - 2023 Water Quality Study Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 4:59:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [P-2535 Stevens Creek 2023 Water Quality Study Plan\\_Apr2023\\_Rev.1\\_Aug2023.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon Stevens Creek Water Quality Technical Working Committee,

Please find attached the final 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project. The plan was revised based on discussions during the April 17, 2023 water quality meeting and the follow-up email later that day from Caleb Gaston (Dominion). The study is currently underway and is being conducted as outlined in the document.

Best,

Jenn

**Jennifer A. Güt**  
Staff Licensing Coordinator



**Office:** 803.904.8680

**Cell:** 706.294.3225

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**From:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**To:** [Booth, Elizabeth](#); [Hedeen, David](#); [Zeng, Wei](#)  
**Cc:** [Alison Jakupca](#); [Amy Bresnahan \(DESC Generation - 8\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Stevens Creek Hydro 401 WQC Meeting Agenda  
**Date:** Thursday, August 31, 2023 5:08:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Stevens Creek GAEPD WQC Meeting Notes\\_08152023\\_DRAFT.doc](#)

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Good afternoon all,

I hope you are having a great a week so far. I apologize for the delay in getting back to you. We have provided thoughts to your questions in the red text below. I have also attached the notes from meeting on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Please let me know if you have any edits or additions to those by September 15<sup>th</sup>. We will follow up soon with information about the Project Boundary Line elevation designation. Please let us know if you have any additional questions in the meantime.

Best,

Jenn

---

**From:** Booth, Elizabeth <Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 21, 2023 11:19 AM  
**To:** Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Hedeen, David <david.hedeen@dnr.ga.gov>; Zeng, Wei <Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov>  
**Cc:** Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Stevens Creek Hydro 401 WQC Meeting Agenda

Looks like there are smaller swings in the water quality data on the Georgia side than on the South Carolina side. Any thoughts on why?

Water from upstream (Thurmond) preferentially flows through the west side of the river where it is deeper and more channelized. On the east side of the river, it is much shallower and has a lot more submerged aquatic vegetation, which can cause swings in dissolved oxygen due to plant photosynthesis and respiration.

Notice that the pH criteria upstream of the dam is low during the summer. Is this due to algae? Do you have any chlorophyll data?

We did not collect chlorophyll samples. If you are referring to Study Site 6, due to its shallow nature, there is a large amount of submerged and emergent aquatic vegetation. High levels of photosynthetic activity can deplete dissolved carbon dioxide levels in the water leading to elevated pH levels.

Notice high ammonia levels at Site 3. Is there a something upstream like a wastewater treatment plant? Also, TN levels are higher at Site 5. Any reasons why?

The high ammonia level at Site 3 was from a single detection in a June 2021 sample. That sample result was flagged by the analytical laboratory for matrix spike/matrix spike duplicate failure, so the result may not be reliable. Total nitrogen levels at Site 5 are likely influenced by high levels of organic

matter input from the watershed the 2006-2008 study conducted by Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy found high levels of total and dissolved organic carbon in Stevens Creek, and similar levels of total nitrogen. Additionally, the City of McCormick's wastewater treatment plant (NPDES Permit SC0030783) discharges into Rocky Creek, a tributary of Stevens Creek, upstream of the Project.

---

**From:** Jennifer Gut <[Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, August 18, 2023 4:23 PM

**To:** Hedeem, David <[david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov)>; Booth, Elizabeth <[Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov)>; Zeng, Wei <[Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Alison Jakupca <[Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)>

**Subject:** RE: Stevens Creek Hydro 401 WQC Meeting Agenda

**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 afternoon all and Happy Friday,

Please find attached the documents we discussed during last Tuesday's meeting regarding the WQC application for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project. The documents include the Draft 2021 Water Quality Study Report (final to be included in the Final License Application), Final 2023 Water Quality Study Plan (study currently underway), and the Operating Plan Revision 4 (awaiting approval from FERC). Please let me know if you have any questions or if I could provide you with additional information.

I hope you have a great weekend.

Best,

Jenn

**Jennifer A. Güt**

Staff Licensing Coordinator

***Kleinschmidt***

**Office:** 803.904.8680

**Cell:** 706.294.3225

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---

**From:** Hedeem, David <[david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 3:21 PM

**To:** Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)>

**Cc:** Booth, Elizabeth <[Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov)>; Zeng, Wei <[Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov)>; Alison Jakupca <[Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>; Jennifer Gut <[Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>



**Subject:** RE: Stevens Creek Hydro 401 WQC Meeting Agenda

Got it. (You anticipated my next question.) Thank you for this information.

David Hedeem  
Manager – Wetlands Unit  
Georgia Environmental Protection Division  
7 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive SW, Suite 450  
Atlanta, GA 30334

[david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov)

470-427-2730 (office)

678-483-2287 (cell)

---

**From:** AMY BRESNAHAN <[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 3:07 PM

**To:** Hedeem, David <[david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Booth, Elizabeth <[Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov)>; Zeng, Wei <[Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov)>;  
[Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com); Jennifer Gut <[Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>

**Subject:** RE: Stevens Creek Hydro 401 WQC Meeting Agenda

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On #2 let me clarify that both of these potential improvements will not be permitted by Dominion. Dominion would be supporting them financially through an MOA and Recreation Management Plan, but all the modifications/permitting would be the responsibility of either Columbia County, GA or the USFS on the SC side of the river.

**Amy Bresnahan, P.E.**  
Power Generation, Civil Engineering

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.  
601 Old Taylor Road, Cayce, SC 29033  
Mailing Address: 220 Operation Way, MC B223, Cayce, SC 29033  
O: (803)217-9965 C: (803)206-4667



Actions Speak Louder

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**From:** Alison Jakupca <[Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 17, 2023 2:01 PM

**To:** Hedeem, David <[david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov)>; Jennifer Gut  
<[Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>

**Cc:** Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)>; Booth,

Elizabeth <[Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov)>; Zeng, Wei <[Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Stevens Creek Hydro 401 WQC Meeting Agenda

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Good Afternoon David,

I apologize for my slow reply. I am still catching up on my emails after leaving town after our meeting Tuesday. Please see my answers to your questions below. Also, Jenn will be sending you a package of documents that we discussed for your review in the next few days. Happy to answer any questions that you may have as they arise. Nice to meet all of you Tuesday. Best, Alison

**Alison Jakupca**  
**Senior Regulatory Coordinator**  
**Office: 803 462 5628**  
**Mobile: 864 906 4119**  
[www.KleinschmidtGroup.com](http://www.KleinschmidtGroup.com)

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---

**From:** Hedeem, David <[david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 15, 2023 11:59 AM

**To:** Jennifer Gut <[Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>; Alison Jakupca <[Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>

**Cc:** Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)>; Booth, Elizabeth <[Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Booth@dnr.ga.gov)>; Zeng, Wei <[Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Stevens Creek Hydro 401 WQC Meeting Agenda

Hi Jennifer, Hi Alison – Thank you for the meeting this morning. It was tremendously informative for me. These questions are not time sensitive, but when you share additional information with EPD I would appreciate it if you would also address the two questions below, please:

1. Under the proposed project will any substantial changes will be made to the existing project in terms of configuration or operation? **Dominion is not proposing any changes to the project structures, reservoir levels, downstream flows or other operations through the new license term. We will send you a copy of their current operating plan that is reviewed with agencies on a regular basis and re-filed recently with FERC. Feel free to contact us with any questions.**
2. Will the proposed project require any dredge or fill (i.e., Section 404 regulated activities)? **There are potentially changes to the Betty's Branch Recreation site that would involve some recreational improvements/courtesy dock that would require Section 404 permitting. Additionally, the Forest Service would like to work with DESC to implement some boat launch improvements at Fury's Ferry on the South Carolina side. Aside from recreational**

improvements, no other Section 404 activities are being proposed by DESC for the new license term at this time (Amy, please correct me if I missed anything).

Many thanks,

David Hedeem  
Manager – Wetlands Unit  
Georgia Environmental Protection Division  
7 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive SW, Suite 450  
Atlanta, GA 30334

[david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov)

470-427-2730 (office)

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---

**From:** Jennifer Gut <[Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, August 14, 2023 9:35 AM

**To:** Hedeem, David <[david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov)>; Zeng, Wei <[Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Wei.Zeng@dnr.ga.gov)>

**Cc:** Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)>; Alison Jakupca <[Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com](mailto:Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com)>

**Subject:** Stevens Creek Hydro 401 WQC Meeting Agenda

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Good morning,

I hope this email finds you well. On behalf of Amy Bresnahan with Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc., please find attached the agenda for this Tuesday morning's meeting regarding the 401 WQC for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project. We look forward to speaking with you in the morning.

Best,

Jenn

**Jennifer A. Güt**  
Staff Licensing Coordinator

***Kleinschmidt***

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**From:** [Olds, Melanie J](#)  
**To:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Stevens Creek Fish Passage TWC Meeting Notes for Review  
**Date:** Thursday, September 14, 2023 3:45:05 PM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-1vzu2scn.png](#)  
[Outlook-24vxag14.png](#)

---

Jennifer,

I have no edits to the notes.

*Melanie*

**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  
Phone: (843) 534-0403



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---

**From:** Jennifer Gut <Jennifer.Gut@KleinschmidtGroup.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 30, 2023 3:40 PM

**To:** Bill Post - SCDNR <postb@dnr.sc.gov>; Elizabeth Miller - SCDNR <millere@dnr.sc.gov>; Andy Herndon - NMFS <Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov>; bjorn.lake <bjorn.lake@noaa.gov>; Fritz Rohde - NMFS <Fritz.Rohde@noaa.gov>; Twyla Cheatwood - NMFS <twyla.cheatwood@noaa.gov>; Kevin Mack - NMFS <kevin.mack@noaa.gov>; Keith Whalen - USFS <james.whelen@usda.gov>; Bauer, Eric F <eric\_bauer@fws.gov>; Olds, Melanie J <melanie\_olds@fws.gov>; Clint Peacock - GADNR <Clint.Peacock@dnr.ga.gov>; Rusty Wenerick - SCDHEC <weneriwr@dhec.sc.gov>; Paula Marcinek - TNC <paula.marcinek@tnc.org>

**Cc:** Alison Jakupca <Alison.Jakupca@KleinschmidtGroup.com>; Caleb Gaston (Services - 6) <caleb.gaston@dominionenergy.com>; Raymond Ammarell (DESC Generation - 8) <raymond.ammarell@dominionenergy.com>; Paul Vidonic (Services - 6) <paul.vidonic@dominionenergy.com>; Taylor K Allen (Services - 6) <taylor.k.allen@dominionenergy.com>; Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Stevens Creek Fish Passage TWC Meeting Notes for Review

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Hi all,

I hope you're doing well and those of you in the path of Idalia are staying safe. Please find attached for your review the meeting notes from the Stevens Creek Project FPTWC meeting held August 16 in Charleston. Please let me know if you have any edits or additions by September 14, 2023.

Best,

Jenn

**Jennifer A. Güt**  
Staff Regulatory Consultant

***Kleinschmidt***

**Office:** 803.904.8680

**Cell:** 706.294.3225

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**From:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**To:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Stevens Creek question  
**Date:** Thursday, October 26, 2023 2:29:21 PM

---

**From:** Tony Hornbuckle <[thornbuckle61@gmail.com](mailto:thornbuckle61@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 24, 2023 7:45 AM  
**To:** Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Stevens Creek question

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In the past 3 years, the constant lowering and rising of the water level due to spillover door replacement, has caused considerable damage to homeowners docks. We've seen broken docks/slips float up and down the creek. My steel framed dock had broken welds that I had to repaired due to the stress caused by floating high and then dropping the water so low that my dock was sitting in the mud. Also, the lowering and rising has caused 2 huge sandbars in the creek behind my property in an are that used to be the boat ramp before Stevens Creek park and ramp were built. The current ramp needs work. It has a drop off that has causes boat trailers to bottom out causing several broken trailer axels. As to building a fishing pier, nice idea but it would probably cause more bad than good. It would collect floating debris/logs causing pile ups around the pier. The current ramp needs improvement for sure.

On Oct 24, 2023, at 7:23 AM, Tony Hornbuckle <[thornbuckle61@gmail.com](mailto:thornbuckle61@gmail.com)> wrote:

Amy,

Yes is the answer to damage/destruction to docks. Is it due to high flow

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 23, 2023, at 1:02 PM, AMY BRESNAHAN  
<[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)> wrote:

Mr. Hornbuckle,

I believe we met a few years ago when we were having a public meeting for the relicensing of our Stevens Creek hydro. I'm reaching out to you looking for information on the maintenance of docks on Stevens Creek. I'd like to know if docks are damaged

often by the high flows that occur in the creek.

We are currently discussing some improvements to the Stevens Creek boat ramp area. There have been some suggestions for a courtesy dock along the ramp or a fishing pier at that location. I know when the creek has high flows it can be full of woody debris. Have you or are you aware of anyone that has issues with maintaining docks on the creek? Do they get damaged often due to high flows?

Any information is appreciated. Thank you.

**Amy Bresnahan, P.E.**  
Power Generation, Civil Engineering

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.  
601 Old Taylor Road, Cayce, SC 29033  
Mailing Address: 220 Operation Way, MC B223, Cayce, SC 29033  
O: (803)217-9965 C: (803)206-4667  
<image001.jpg>

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**From:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**To:** [Jennifer Gut](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Re: Stevens Creek question  
**Date:** Thursday, October 26, 2023 2:33:15 PM  
**Attachments:** [EXTERNAL Re Stevens Creek question.msg](#)

---

**From:** Michael Arthur <[md\\_arthur@bellsouth.net](mailto:md_arthur@bellsouth.net)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 23, 2023 2:38 PM  
**To:** Amy Bresnahan (DESC Generation - 8) <[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Stevens Creek question

**CAUTION! This message was NOT SENT from DOMINION ENERGY**

Are you expecting this message to your DE email? Suspicious? Use PhishAlarm to report the message. Open a browser and type in the name of the trusted website instead of clicking on links. DO NOT click links or open attachments until you verify with the sender using a known-good phone number. Never provide your DE password.

Myself and most of my neighbors have floating docks. In fact there's a really nice one about 200' from the boat landing. Floating debris can be an issue depending on where and how they're installed. The problem is often made more frustrating due to the extreme fluctuations in water level. When unusually high water brings logs and trees into a cove or against a dock and aren't pushed out before the water resides they can become stuck in the mud. Especially trees with large root balls attached. In my case they often get lodged across the entrance to the cove and sink deep into the mud when the level is allowed to drop to 182' to reset the flaps on the dam. If I don't push them out while the water is high I usually have to saw them into short lengths that will be able to float out at night when the level goes back up to 185' or more.

If one is installed at the landing it will be sitting on the mud, like most docks on the creek, for the majority of the daylight hours due to the level being allowed to fall to less than 184'.

Hope that helps,  
Mike

On Oct 23, 2023, at 12:21 PM, AMY BRESNAHAN  
<[amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com](mailto:amy.bresnahan@dominionenergy.com)> wrote:

Mr. Arthur,  
You and I have had some correspondence over the past few years regarding water levels but this time I'd like your input on something.

It's my understanding that your property is located on Stevens Creek. We are currently discussing some improvements to the Stevens Creek boat ramp area. There have been some suggestions for a courtesy dock along the ramp or a fishing pier at that location. I know when the creek had high flows it can be full of woody debris. Have you or any of your neighbors had issues with maintaining docks on the creek? Do they get damaged often due to high

flows?

**Amy Bresnahan, P.E.**  
Power Generation, Civil Engineering

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.  
601 Old Taylor Road, Cayce, SC 29033  
Mailing Address: 220 Operation Way, MC B223, Cayce, SC 29033  
O: (803)217-9965 C: (803)206-4667  
<image001.jpg>

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**Meeting Notes**  
**April - October 2023**

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

**Dominion Energy South Carolina**  
**Fury's Ferry Site Visit with the USFS**

**March 7, 2023**

Draft JAG 6/8/23

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**ATTENDEES:**

Amy Bresnahan – DESC

Caleb Gaston – DESC

Alison Jakupca – Kleinschmidt

Jenn Güt – Kleinschmidt

Kelly Kirven – Kleinschmidt

Derrick Miller – USFS

Andrew Holliday – USFS

Gray Buckles – USFS

Greg Cunningham – USFS

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

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (DESC) and the United States Forest Service (USFS) met on site at the Fury's Ferry Recreation Area to discuss potential enhancements for the site that would increase safety and promote better use of accessibility for boating, kayaking, and fishing.

The USFS noted their desire to install lighting. Potential options include running an underground or above-ground line for lighting, installing motion-activated solar lighting at the boat ramp, and installing reflectors along the boat ramp. Some considerations of installing lighting include: light pollution; possibly encouraging nighttime use (the USFS would prefer it to be day-use area only); and the potential of requiring a full biological evaluation. In addition to lighting, the USFS noted their intent to increase security at Fury's Ferry by monitoring the site regularly, keeping the site visually opened through vegetation management, and installing additional signage. Bathrooms and trash cans are not preferred in order to minimize vandalism and dumping of trash.

In addition to installing lighting, other improvement ideas discussed at the Fury's Ferry site included the following:

- Widening the boat ramp
- Adding a courtesy dock to the boat ramp
- Adding an ADA-accessible kayak/canoe launch
- Adding an ADA-accessible bank fishing platform (discussed the Woods Ferry design)

- Adding an ADA parking spot for a vehicle with trailer on the right side of the boat ramp with a hardened path leading to boat ramp
- Adding an ADA parking spot for a vehicle-only on the left side of the boat ramp with a hardened path leading to fishing platform
- Moving the project recreation site signage (i.e., "Welcome to Stevens Creek...") to a less scenic area, as views are currently obstructed (discussed signage closer to parking area)
- Adding a short trail for walking, scenic viewing, etc. (noted to be kept within the existing Project Boundary Line [PBL], if possible; however, the USFS mentioned interest in having the trail near the wetlands, which would be outside of the PBL)
- Installing benches along the shoreline
- Adding an interpretive/historical sign near the trail or elsewhere at the site
- Building a kiosk with information on safety, invasive species, etc.
- Planting a pollinator garden in the middle of the turnaround circle
- Paving all, or portions of, the site, potentially focusing on parking areas and turnaround; the paving would need to stay within the existing roadbed

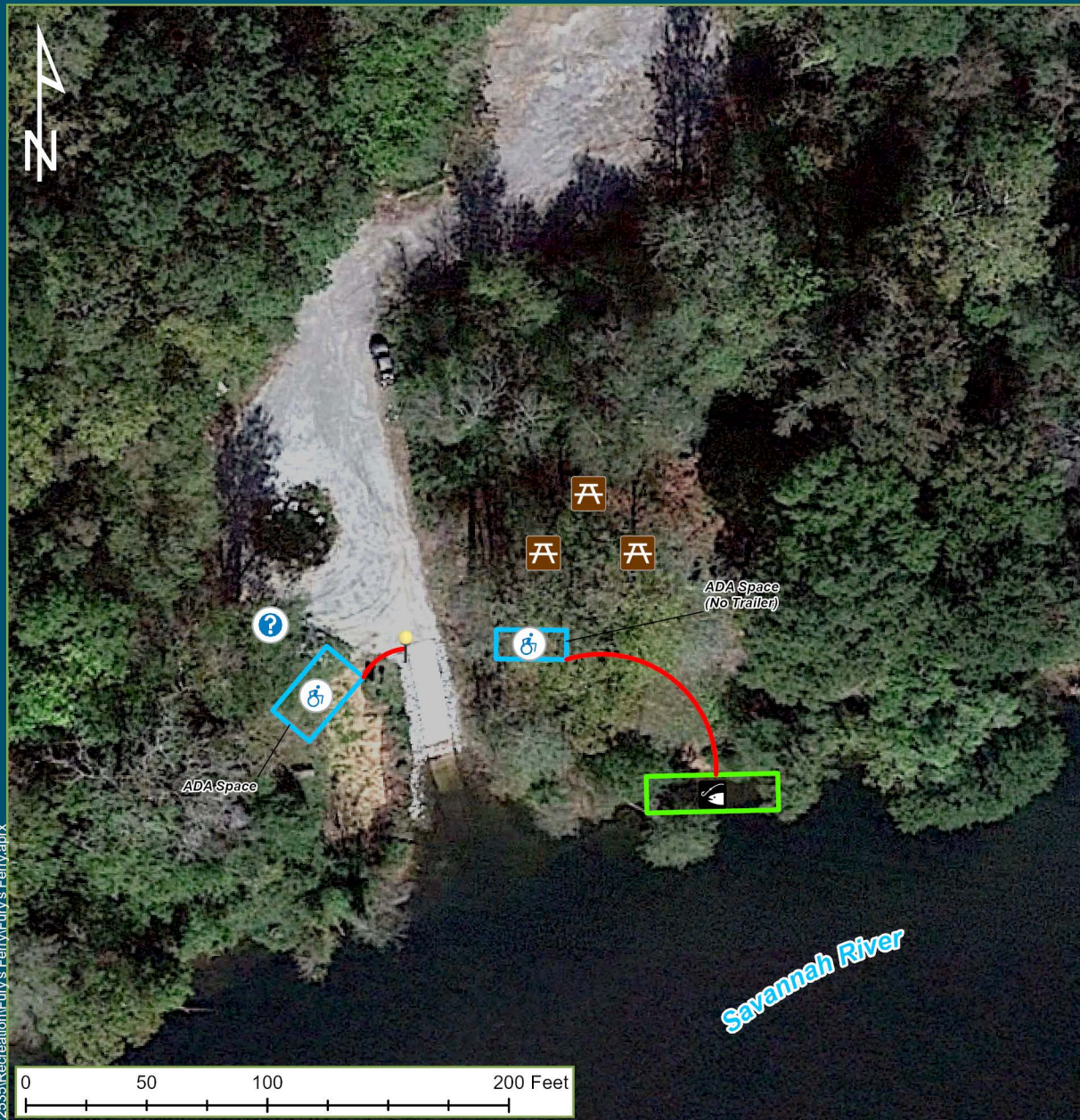
The USFS also mentioned removing additional privet, an invasive plant species, along the shoreline, keeping vegetation maintained, and improving and/or replacing the bollards. DESC to meet with the USFS following distribution of meeting notes and mock-ups of amenities discussed.

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**ACTION ITEMS:**

- DESC/Kleinschmidt to create mock-ups of potential site amenities discussed and distribute to the USFS

# Recreation Resources- Fury's Ferry



**Legend**

- Picnic Table
- Fishing Platform
- Info Kiosk
- Parking Spaces
- Solar Light
- Hardened Path
- Links

**Dominion Energy**  
 Augusta, GA

Drawn By: NXG	Date Drawn: 06-01-2023	Checked By: KPN	Date Checked: 06-05-2023
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**Kleinschmidt**  
 141 Main St., PO Box 650  
 Pittsfield, Maine 04967  
 Telephone: (207) 487-3328  
 Fax: (207) 487-3124  
 www.KleinschmidtGroup.com

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Path: Q:\Client\_Data\IERC\_Projects\26535\Recreation\Fury's Ferry\Fury's Ferry.aprx

Date Printed: 6/5/2023

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

**Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.**  
**Columbia County/Betty's Branch Consultation**

**April 19, 2023**

Final JAG 6/30/23

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**ATTENDEES:**

Amy Bresnahan – DESC	Dennis Smith – Columbia Co.
Alison Jakupca – Kleinschmidt	Wes Horton – Columbia Co.
Jenn Güt – Kleinschmidt	Shelly Blackburn – CCVB
John Luton – Columbia Co.	Ashley Swain – CCVB
Dennis Hodges – Columbia Co.	

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

Dominion Energy South Carolina (DESC), Columbia County, and the Columbia County Visitor's Bureau (CCVB) met on location at the Betty's Branch recreation site, which is associated with the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project. The purpose of the meeting was for DESC and Columbia County to consult regarding future plans and needs for Betty's Branch as well as the development of a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between DESC and Columbia County.

Columbia County stated the biggest issue at Betty's Branch is congestion and their major goal is to improve flow at the site. The group reviewed the conceptual drawing developed by Columbia County consultants for enhancements at Betty's Branch. Columbia County is proposing a new road with a one-way traffic pattern to solve the congestion problem. In addition, the county is proposing a courtesy dock abutting the existing boat ramp and restriped parking for vehicles with trailers. The proposed ADA kayak launch and floating dock with pilings have already been installed.

Columbia County voiced their desire to accomplish the remainder of the enhancements as soon as funding was available. If funding was gradual, it is the county's plan to add the amenities first and pave last. Columbia County could start the enhancements rather immediately once funding is secured. Amy B., DESC, asked if there was an estimate of the cost to complete the enhancements. John L., Columbia County, said the project was

contracted out and they would gather the information and provide it to DESC. Amy requested the county separate the cost of the water amenities from the paving.

Shelly B., CCVB, noted the improvements to the body of water with the vegetation removal and asked if that was something that could occur regularly. DESC discussed the costs and would take the recommendation into consideration.

Ashley S., CCVB, noted the kiosks being placed at recreation sites across the county. It is their intention to also place one at Betty's Branch.

Andy C., operator of Outdoor Augusta which rents canoes and kayaks out of Betty's Branch, joined the group towards the end of the meeting. Andy commented on the possibility of placing mats at the beach area for a better kayak launch. Wes H., Columbia County, stated that altering that particular area would require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The group discussed the timeline moving forward. DESC would like to work through developing an MOA in July 2023 and have something more finalized by the end of August. The meeting was adjourned.

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**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Columbia County to provide DESC with cost estimates of enhancements at Betty's Branch (provided 5/17/23).



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

**Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.**  
**Fish Passage Technical Working Committee**

**May 9, 2023**

Final JAG 7/27/2023

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*ATTENDEES:*

Amy Bresnahan – DESC  
Caleb Gaston – DESC  
Ray Ammarell – DESC  
Paul Vidonic – Dominion  
Taylor Allen – Dominion  
Alison Jakupca – Kleinschmidt  
Jason Moak\* – Kleinschmidt  
Jenn Güt – Kleinschmidt  
Will Pruitt – Kleinschmidt  
Bill Post – SCDNR  
Elizabeth Miller – SCDNR

Ellen Waldrop – SCDNR  
Jason Bettinger\* – SCDNR  
Andy Herndon\* – NMFS  
Twyla Cheatwood – NMFS  
Kevin Mack – NMFS  
Derrick Miller\* – USFS  
Melanie Olds – USFWS  
Clint Peacock\* – GADNR  
Paula Marcinek\* – GADNR  
Rusty Wenerick\* – SCDHEC

\* attended virtually

---

*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 develop the framework, goals, and charter of the Fish Passage Technical Working Committee (FPTWC)<sup>1</sup> that would be a component of the new license for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project).

Following a welcome and introduction, Alison, Kleinschmidt, began the meeting by requesting recent developments from the group regarding the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam (NSBLD). In summary, a federal appeals court struck down a U.S. District Court ruling that blocked the demolition of the NSBLD, allowing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to proceed with their plan to replace the NSBLD with a rock weir. There are still a number of hurdles for USACE including receiving the Water Quality Certification from SCDHEC. Andy, NMFS, stated that he believed USACE's conceptual design of the fish passage spans the entire width of the Savannah River, and it is a nature-like fishway.

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the committee is likely to change prior to license implementation.

An update on the Augusta Diversion Dam (ADD) was provided by NMFS. A draft Biological Opinion (BiOp) for sturgeon is being developed and NMFS plans to file the BiOp and an updated fishway prescription for the ADD with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) by the end of June 2023. The prescription includes the ADD fish passage being constructed simultaneously with the fish passage at the NSBLD. NMFS assumes both fish passages (at NSBLD and ADD) will be built within 50 years.

The group then discussed what the target species for fish passage at the Project would be. NMFS is not anticipating sturgeon getting above the ADD. Blueback Herring was discussed as there are dam-locked, self-sustaining populations in the USACE reservoirs upstream of the Project. Blueback Herring are also present throughout the mainstem of the Savannah River within the Project reservoir, but under low flow conditions are not able to travel from the tailrace of the Thurmond Dam downstream. The Robust Redhorse was also discussed as the species is of interest in the older fishway prescription for the ADD. The USFWS is in the process of conducting a Special Status Assessment (SSA) on the Robust Redhorse (Eric Bauer with USFWS is the lead). Melanie, USFWS, explained that for an SSA the life history information is reviewed along with the current and immediate future conditions of the species based on the most recent and available scientific data. The SSA will go out for review and the FPTWC will have the opportunity to comment on it – Melanie stated she would keep the FPTWC in the loop. If the Robust Redhorse was listed as a species of interest for fish passage at the Project, the concern would be passing the species back downstream so there would likely be an incidental take statement. Striped Bass was not listed in the ADD prescription. American Shad and American Eel are currently the primary species of interest for fish passage at the Project.

Next, the group discussed the Diadromous Fish Restoration Plan for the Middle Savannah River: Strategy and Implementation Schedule (MSR Diadromous Fish Plan) document. Kevin, NMFS, noted that the overall goals of diadromous fish restoration in the Middle Savannah River has not generally changed since the document's publication, with the exception that dissolved oxygen enhancements have already been implemented. Kevin observed that what has changed is how to implement the goals and objectives.

The group discussed the potential trigger for fish passage, particularly of American Shad, at the Project. Essentially, monitoring would need to be conducted directly downstream of the Project to determine if/when American Shad were present. SCDNR agreed that monitoring was the best determination; however, Bill, SCDNR, inquired from NMFS about their purpose of getting American Shad above the Project as the species is currently successfully spawning below the NSBLD. Twyla, NMFS, replied that the population status and reproduction potential of American Shad in the Savannah River is unknown at this

time. The group discussed the American Shad data currently being collected through funding from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. GADNR has been conducting abundance sampling below the NSBLD since approximately 2008 and SCDNR has been conducting juvenile monitoring (relative abundance) since approximately 2011. Bill confirmed that the data should be publicly available; DESC will add discussion on these two studies to the Project Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper. Bill commented that having a target number of adult spawning fish that triggers passage implementation seems appropriate. Twyla expressed concern about a target number being the trigger as NMFS does not want the Project fishway prescription to be similar to the one issued to the Parr Hydroelectric Project in that regard. Both Bill and NMFS agreed that fry augmentation is likely no longer necessary for the system, contrast to what is stated in the MSR Diadromous Fish Plan.

The group discussed what further research may be needed on the species of interest. NMFS stated that water quality was a concern in Stevens Creek regardless of the passage of fish above the Project because of the relative importance and biodiversity of the Stevens Creek subbasin, especially for mussels. The group was asked to consider the implications of both passing and not passing fish above the Project.

NMFS and USFWS further discussed plans for filing fishway prescriptions for the Project. NMFS is currently planning on filing whereas USFWS is considering a reservation of authority, which would give the agency the right to prescribe a fishway at such time they deem necessary. The group discussed the new language being proposed in the Federal Power Act for federal agencies prescribing fish passages. It does not change the agency's authority, but the new language requires more justification for the fishway prescription. It is NMFS belief that the process for executing a reservation for authority is not as clearly defined as the process for prescribing fish passage during relicensing, and NMFS has not exercised a reservation of authority for fish passage to date.

Alison asked Dominion to explain in more detail their involvement with the Diadromous Fish Restoration and Technical Advisory Committee (DFRTAC) for the Roanoke Rapids Hydroelectric Project in North Carolina. The DFRTAC makes decisions that are driven by science; if they do not possess the data to support a decision, the data is collected. For example, Dominion is conducting eel siting and population studies at Roanoke Rapids along with passage effectiveness studies. The DFRTAC structure allows more flexibility and approaches fish passage through an adaptive management process. The DFRTAC meets quarterly to discuss American Eel and annually to discuss American Shad.

Caleb, DESC, asked what monitoring is currently being done to monitor passage at downstream dams on the Savannah River and if that data could be used to inform passage at the Project. SCDNR stated that the agency has been charged with conducting pre-, during, and post-fish passage studies at the NSBLD (pre-data has already been collected). Monitoring at the ADD will be built into its fishway prescription.

The group discussed the FPTWC mission statement, a draft of which is attached to these notes.

It was asked if DESC plans for the FPTWC to be incorporated into the Project license, which it is. DESC prefers the FPTWC be incorporated as a license article rather than through a settlement agreement.<sup>2</sup> DESC did not pursue a settlement agreement because of the operational limitations of the Project due to its function as a re-regulation facility. NMFS believes that USACE has some ability to change operations, but USACE has previously stated that maintaining stable flows downstream of the Thurmond Dam is not a priority to them. Ray, DESC, noted that Thurmond Dam is a peaking facility and USACE operates it according to direction from the Southeastern Power Administration (SEPA). Ray is unsure of the process for approaching USACE operational changes with SEPA. Amy noted that during the recent dam anchoring project for the Stevens Creek Project, DESC management reached out to SEPA management to request assistance with flows. SEPA agreed to temporarily reduce their maximum generation limit as often as possible to minimize high flow delays for the Project. However, there were several instances when SEPA needed to exceed temporary reductions to meet energy demands.

NMFS asked if there were upgrades being proposed at the Project that would benefit fish passage, such as upgrading gates and adding more efficient turbines. Ray stated that DESC investigated the possibility of Obermeyer gates but that has not been economically justified as it would require significant dam work. Increasing storage at the Project was briefly discussed as it would potentially provide DESC with a greater band of operational flexibility within the reservoir (i.e., larger reservoir fluctuations) within which to regulate flow downstream. NMFS would consider an objective of the FPTWC to review operational alternatives.

The group discussed the membership of the FPTWC. Permanent members will likely include Dominion, NMFS, USFWS, USFS, GADNR, SCDNR, and SCDHEC. Dominion explained that the DFRTAC has a process for adding and subtracting members to the group and inviting guests to present information and/or consult. It was determined that

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<sup>2</sup> Subsequent to this meeting, NMFS staff commented that NMFS continues to support the use of a settlement agreement for fish passage at the Stevens Creek Project.

USACE was not to be a member of the FPTWC. Paula, GADNR, informed the group that she was leaving GADNR for a position at The Nature Conservancy (TNC), a non-governmental organization, and expressed her desire to remain a member of the FPTWC while employed with TNC. Paula and Twyla explained that the TNC leads the Sustainable Rivers Program, is involved in the Uncommon Dialogue discussions, and is very familiar with FERC processes. The FPTWC will continue to discuss membership moving forward.

The group discussed future meeting frequency and decided to meet quarterly until the issuance of the FERC license for the Project. Following license issuance, the FPTWC would likely meet quarterly to discuss passage of American Eel and annually to discuss American Shad. There was a concern expressed that FERC would not include the FPTWC in the Project license and/or require the MSR Diadromous Fish Plan to be the framework for the FPTWC since it is on FERC's list of comprehensive plans. The group discussed steps to ensure the FPTWC's preferences are included in the Project license, including both 10(j) recommendations by fish and wildlife agencies for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of fish and wildlife (including spawning grounds), and 10(a) recommendations for consideration of FERC-accepted comprehensive plans for the basin. It was suggested that whatever details on the FPTWC that have been produced so far could be provided to FERC within the Final License Application. Additionally, NMFS and USFWS could write the FPTWC into their respective fishway prescriptions.<sup>3</sup>

The group set a date and time for the next FPTWC meeting to be held in Charleston, South Carolina, on August 16, 2023. The meeting was then adjourned.

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#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- FPTWC members to review DFRTAC implementation materials to gather information to use as a baseline for the FPTWC.
- FPTWC members to review the DFRTAC for information that could benefit inclusion of FPTWC as a license article and/or fishway prescription.
- DESC/Kleinschmidt to review information on whether the FPTWC would be most appropriately considered under 10(a) and/or 10(j) of the Federal Power Act.
- DESC/Kleinschmidt to clean up the document outline and add an introduction.
- DESC to add American Shad data to the Project Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper.

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<sup>3</sup> Subsequent to this meeting, NMFS staff commented that NMFS supports providing the details of the FPTWC to FERC within the Final License Application. The fishway prescription will not include a requirement for the FPTWC but can include requirements for consulting through adaptive management processes.

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

**Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.**  
**Fish Passage Technical Working Committee**

**May 9, 2023**

Draft JAG 6/9/2023

---

*ATTENDEES:*

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Caleb Gaston – DESC  
Ray Ammarell – DESC  
Paul Vidonic – Dominion  
Taylor Allen – Dominion  
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NMFS and USFWS further discussed plans for filing fishway prescriptions for the Project. NMFS is currently planning on filing whereas USFWS is considering a reservation, which would give the agency the right to prescribe a fishway at such time they deem necessary. The group discussed the new language being proposed in the Federal Power Act for federal agencies prescribing fish passages. It does not change the agency's authority, but the new language requires more justification for the fishway prescription. It is Twyla's opinion that reservations are incredibly difficult to execute as FERC often denies them; it is not believed that executing a reservation has been successful to date.

Alison asked Dominion to explain in more detail their involvement with the Diadromous Fish Restoration and Technical Advisory Committee (DFRTAC) for the Roanoke Rapids Hydroelectric Project in North Carolina. The DFRTAC makes decisions that are driven by science; if they do not possess the data to support a decision, the data is collected. For example, Dominion is conducting eel siting and population studies at Roanoke Rapids along with passage effectiveness studies. The DFRTAC structure allows more flexibility and approaches fish passage through an adaptive management process. The DFRTAC meets quarterly to discuss American Eel and annually to discuss American Shad.

Caleb, DESC, asked what monitoring is currently being done to monitor passage at downstream dams on the Savannah River and if that data could be used to inform passage at the Project. SCDNR stated that the agency has been charged with conducting pre-



during, and post-fish passage studies at the NSBLD (pre-data has already been collected). Monitoring at the ADD will be built into its fishway prescription.

The group discussed the FPTWC mission statement, a draft of which is attached to these notes.

It was asked if DESC plans for the FPTWC to be incorporated into the Project license, which it is. Inclusion would ideally happen through a license article and not through a settlement agreement. DESC did not pursue a settlement agreement because of the operational limitations of the Project due to its function as a re-regulation facility. NMFS believes that USACE has some ability to change operations, but USACE has previously stated that maintaining stable flows downstream of the Thurmond Dam is not a priority to them. Ray, DESC, noted that Thurmond Dam is a peaking facility and USACE operates it according to direction from the Southeastern Power Administration (SEPA). Ray is unsure of the process for approaching USACE operational changes with SEPA.

NMFS asked if there were upgrades being proposed at the Project that would benefit fish passage, such as upgrading gates and adding more efficient turbines. Ray stated that DESC investigated the possibility of Obermeyer gates but that has not been economically justified as it would require significant dam work. Increasing storage at the Project was briefly discussed as it would potentially provide DESC with a greater band of operational flexibility within the reservoir (i.e., larger reservoir fluctuations) within which to regulate flow downstream. NMFS would consider an objective of the FPTWC to review operational alternatives.

The group discussed the membership of the FPTWC. Permanent members will likely include Dominion, NMFS, USFWS, USFS, GADNR, SCDNR, and SCDHEC. Dominion explained that the DFRTAC has a process for adding and subtracting members to the group and inviting guests to present information and/or consult. It was determined that USACE was not to be a member of the FPTWC. Paula, GADNR, informed the group that she was leaving GADNR for a position at The Nature Conservancy (TNC), a non-governmental organization, and expressed her desire to remain a member of the FPTWC while employed with TNC. Paula and Twyla explained that the TNC leads the Sustainable Rivers Program, is involved in the Uncommon Dialogue discussions, and is very familiar with FERC processes. The FPTWC will continue to discuss membership moving forward.

The group discussed future meeting frequency and decided to meet quarterly until the issuance of the FERC license for the Project. Following license issuance, the FPTWC would likely meet quarterly to discuss passage of American Eel and annually to discuss American

Shad. There was a concern expressed that FERC would not include the FPTWC in the Project license and/or require the MSR Diadromous Fish Plan to be the framework for the FPTWC since it is on FERC's list of comprehensive plans. The group discussed steps to ensure the FPTWC's preferences are included in the Project license, including both 10(j) recommendations by fish and wildlife agencies for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of fish and wildlife (including spawning grounds), and 10(a) recommendations for consideration of FERC-accepted comprehensive plans for the basin. It was suggested that whatever details on the FPTWC that have been produced so far could be provided to FERC within the Final License Application. Additionally, NMFS and USFWS could write the FPTWC into their respective fishway prescriptions.

The group set a date and time for the next FPTWC meeting to be held in Charleston, South Carolina, on August 16, 2023. The meeting was then adjourned.

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#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- FPTWC members to review DFRTAC implementation materials to gather information to use as a baseline for the FPTWC.
- FPTWC members to review the DFRTAC for information that could benefit inclusion of FPTWC as a license article and/or fishway prescription.
- DESC/Kleinschmidt to review information on whether the FPTWC would be most appropriately considered under 10(a) and/or 10(j) of the Federal Power Act.
- DESC/Kleinschmidt to clean up the document outline and add an introduction.
- DESC to add American Shad data to the Project Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper.

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

**Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.**  
**Fish Passage Technical Working Committee**

**August 16, 2023**

Final JAG 9/15/23

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**ATTENDEES:**

Caleb Gaston – DESC	Andy Herndon* – NMFS
Ray Ammarell – DESC	Bjorn Lake* – NMFS
Paul Vidonic – Dominion	Fritz Rohde* – NMFS
Taylor Allen – Dominion	Twyla Cheatwood – NMFS
Alison Jakupca – Kleinschmidt	Kevin Mack – NMFS
Henry Mealing – Kleinschmidt	Keith Whalen – USFS
Jason Moak* – Kleinschmidt	Eric Bauer* – USFWS
Jenn Güt – Kleinschmidt	Melanie Olds – USFWS
Will Pruitt – Kleinschmidt	Clint Peacock* – GADNR
Bill Post – SCDNR	Rusty Wenerick* – SCDHEC
Elizabeth Miller – SCDNR	Paula Marcinek – TNC

\* attended virtually

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

The purpose of the meeting was to continue to develop the Fish Passage Technical Working Committee (FPTWC) Charter and work plan for fish passage implementation during the new license term of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Stevens Creek Project or Project).

Following a welcome and introduction, Paul, Dominion, provided the committee with a safety moment regarding cautious driving. Alison, Kleinschmidt, stated the purpose of the meeting, with the particular goal of filling out Section 8.2, *Implementation Methodology – Study Planning*. Alison requested a basin status update from members of the FPTWC regarding the Robust Redhorse (RR) Species Status Assessment (SSA), the Augusta Canal Hydropower Project (Augusta Project) fishway prescription, and the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam (NSBLD) legal proceedings. Melanie, USFWS, stated that the RR SSA was ongoing but that she could not provide any updates at the time. Andy, NMFS, provided an update on the Augusta Project fishway prescription. NMFS had provided FERC and the City

of Augusta with a courtesy copy of the draft Biological Opinion (BiOp). The City provided comments back that have raised some questions. There is a follow-up meeting scheduled for late September to discuss the Augusta Project BiOp. It is anticipated that FERC will public notice the meeting but may or may not be taking comments. Regarding the NSBLD, Andy informed the committee that a federal appeals court hearing in January 2023 ruled in favor of USACE sending the suit back to the U.S. District Court.

Twyla, NMFS, requested a status update on the Stevens Creek Project 2023 Water Quality Study Plan. Jenn, Kleinschmidt, stated that the plan would be sent to stakeholders by August 18, 2023. Jason, Kleinschmidt, provided a progress report on the study. Provisional data has indicated so far that dissolved oxygen (DO) in the Stevens Creek arm of the reservoir is better in 2023 than it was during the 2021 study; DO levels have not been recorded below 4 milligrams per liter during longitudinal profiles performed during the 2023 study. Some off-channel habitats appear to be contributing higher DO water whereas others are contributing low DO water to the creek. Alison noted that the study would be complete after the Final License Application has been submitted. DESC will host a meeting to review the results, and the final report will be submitted to FERC as supplemental information.

Alison reviewed the FPTWC Charter introduction. As is currently drafted, the introduction section includes information on current legal proceedings (NSBLD and Augusta Project). The question was raised as to whether to leave the document with the current information or revise it to be more general. Caleb, DESC, said that provided the document is dated, there should be no issues. The introduction could remain as is with a statement that the presented information is representative of the date on the document.

The committee discussed example material from which to base the FPTWC Charter, including Proposed License Article 1 in the Roanoke Rapids and Gaston Power Stations (Roanoke-Gaston Project) Settlement Agreement, which led to the creation of the DFRTAC. However, the group had trouble at that time finding the document<sup>1</sup> and proceeding forward in the meeting.

Alison asked NMFS and USFWS if they had intentions of including the Charter into either 10(j) recommendations or Section 18 prescriptions. Twyla said that Section 18 only allows NMFS to include a fishway prescription. There was concern with using 10(j) as FERC has leeway not to include 10(j) provisions. NMFS noted that ideally members would sign the Charter so that there is an agreement in place. Alison noted that in that case, settlement agreement language may need to be added to the Charter. Henry, Kleinschmidt, expressed that during the settlement agreement process for the Parr Hydroelectric Project (Parr

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<sup>1</sup> Taylor, Dominion, sent the referenced information to members of the FPTWC during the meeting.

Project), the longest part was getting signatory legal counsel to agree to the language in the document. He noted that the sooner that counsel is consulted, the better.

Twyla asked DESC why NMFS was not consulted on the recent revised Operations Plan filed with FERC. Ray, DESC, located the current license requiring the development of the Operations Plan (Article 403); it required that USFWS, GADNR, SCDNR, and USACE be included in consultation of the plan.

The committee circled back to the DFRTAC as guidance to the Charter. Fritz, NMFS, said that the main component of the fishway prescription for the Roanoke-Gaston Project, which formed the DFRTAC, was the dispute resolution. This was due to some initial disagreements regarding the bypass reach.

The committee worked on revisions to the Charter mission statement and general objectives. "Safe, timely, and effective" fish passage was added to the mission statement based on feedback. The current mission statement is provided in full in the attached Charter (Attachment A). For the general objectives, Kevin, NMFS, commented that a good rule to follow is to have SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, reasonable, timely) objectives. Twyla noted that the general objectives as they were currently written were aimed toward the beginning studies but that they should also include implementation of fish passage and an adaptive management process. Henry discussed that the trigger for fish passage at the Parr Project is a specific number of fish and he asked NMFS if they had similar goals or triggers for the Stevens Creek Project. Twyla stated that the Project fishway prescription would not be drafted like the one for the Parr Project. Passage for American Eel would be prescribed immediately, and other passage would be triggered with passage at NSBLD. The committee continued to work on drafting the objectives, which are provided in the attached Charter.

The committee had further discussion on the Roanoke-Gaston Project fishway document. Fritz noted that the referenced project is the first dam for passage, unlike the Stevens Creek Project. Therefore, it was understood that passage would be implemented at the Roanoke-Gaston Project; the adaptive management component was added later. Twyla commented that because the Stevens Creek Project is not the most downstream dam, the process is starting adaptively (dependent on proceedings for NSBLD and the Augusta Project).

Twyla read some of the goals from the Diadromous Fish Restoration Plan for the Middle Savannah River, pointing out that the document lists the objective of restoring and/or maintaining habitat for diadromous fishes. Habitat language was added to the FPTWC Charter objectives.

The committee moved to Section 8.2 in the Charter. Henry asked if the group wanted specifics in the document regarding the studies to be conducted, such as whether it would be density, siting, etc. Based on discussions from the May 2023 FPTWC meeting, the Charter was split on discussing American Eel from the other species because passage of these other species is tied to downstream actions. NMFS stated that they believe eel are directly below the Project dam and studies could be conducted immediately upon license issuance. The committee discussed how downstream fish passage would impact passage at the Project. NMFS believes downstream passage would affect a density study as the volume of upstream passage would increase; however, the eel would likely pass at the same location at the Project during siting studies pre and post downstream passage. Following some back and forth between DESC and NMFS, it was determined that a siting study should be the first study. Bill, SCDNR, expressed that the Charter should stand on its own and separate study plans should be developed as a group at a later date, as downstream actions will change in the future. Rather than making implementation of the Charter time dependent, it could be more general. The Charter was revised to reflect a Year 0, Year 1, etc.

It was asked if a future fish passage structure would serve eels in addition to other fishes. Kevin said that a nature-like fishway would but that, typically, eels and Alosines (shad) would use different passages from one another. Taylor, Dominion, asked if for shad, a transfer and dump from below the Augusta Project dam to above the Project dam would be feasible. NMFS noted that this was not the ideal solution.

Kevin noted that previous Project relicensing meetings had discussed conducting an eel population survey both above and below the dam. If eel numbers are higher below the dam than above it, then there may be an obstruction to passage. If there are equal numbers both above and below the dam, then perhaps current passage is effective enough. Melanie stated that if eels are in equal numbers, then the study results would lend itself to the Project not needing eel passage. Paula, TNC, said that she believes previous research indicates that eels are more abundant below the Project dam; it would be an extensive survey to find out for sure. Melanie articulated that the USFWS would like to assume that the Stevens Creek Project dam is causing some sort of impediment to fish passage and to develop a study plan that implements passage. Henry noted that eel could be stacking up at the Augusta Project dam and asked NMFS if the Augusta Project's fishway prescription will require a siting study below their dam. NMFS did not require eel studies for the Augusta Project as it is the assumption that eels would use the proposed fishway and existing, historic fishway to get over the dam. Paul stated that if we knew the population above and below the Project dam, it could mean that only a slight modification to the Project dam structure would be needed for eel passage. Bjorn, NMFS, expressed that he was confident that eels can crawl over the Augusta Project dam and are likely getting over the Stevens Creek Project dam as well. Bjorn suggested conducting a siting study first

and then the group could determine if passage is meeting species goals. Bjorn referenced guidance developed by Alex Haro and Steve Gephard<sup>2</sup>.

The group moved to Section 8.3, *Dispute Resolution*. After working through some language, the committee concluded that the language from the Roanoke-Gaston Project fishway prescription was too elaborate for the purposes of the FPTWC Charter. As stated previously, there were some contentious issues with the bypass of the Roanoke-Gaston Project leading to the involved dispute resolution language.

The committee discussed implementation of the Charter. As stated previously, the Charter could not be included in Section 18 but could be included in 10(j) recommendations or 10(a) relating to the comprehensive plan for the basin. Bjorn pointed out the language in the Charter about the Federal Advisory Committee Act and his hesitancy to include it as it would require each meeting to be public noticed and put on the Federal Register. The language was deleted from the Charter.

It was mentioned that the Roanoke-Gaston Settlement Agreement included language for specific license articles to be included in that project license. Alison stated the same could be done for the Charter if the FPTWC wanted to go in that direction.

Fritz brought up the Santee Cooper Hydroelectric Project (Santee Cooper Project) Resource Management Team Rules of Operation (RMT Rules). In addition to the section on dispute resolution, other parts of the RMT Rules applicable to the Charter according to Elizabeth are the designation of a representative and alternate for each member and the requirement for a quorum for voting purposes. The verbiage of "rules of operation" compared to "charter" was discussed. Melanie noted that at the time the RMT Rules were drafted, it was USFWS guidance that "rules of operation" held less legal significance than "charter" requiring less detailed agency review. Melanie will investigate current USFWS guidance on the different terms. The "reserve authority" section of the RMT Rules was also mentioned. There was discussion if the RMT Rules could be shared with the FPTWC. Access was granted by Santee Cooper Project representatives and the RMT Rules was shared by SCDNR with the FPTWC. Kleinschmidt will add the dispute resolution, designation of member and alternate, and reserve authority language to the Charter.

The frequency of the meetings was discussed next by the committee. During the May 2023 meeting, the FPTWC considered holding a meeting quarterly until license issuance and then quarterly for eel and annually for shad. Melanie inquired about other species. The Charter language was revised to reflect more general language that the FPTWC would meet regularly following license issuance and that additional meetings could be requested by members of the committee.

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<sup>2</sup> Twyla, NMFS, shared the guidance with Dominion.

The committee circled back to the Charter implementation methodology section. The group reviewed Appendix B of the Roanoke-Gaston Project Technical Settlement Agreement. Paula pointed out language in the document that lists all diadromous fishes as target species but that initial management objectives are for eel and shad. Alison asked Melanie about the inclusion of the RR in the Charter. Melanie answered that the USFWS is interested in preserving the habitat downstream but unsure about passing them upstream. Language in the implementation methods was revised to reflect "target species" rather than specific species to ensure RR could be considered at a later date. NMFS confirmed that while siting study length differs based on the project, many studies are conducted over a five-year period. The Charter was drafted for the siting study to be conducted from Year 1 to Year 5 (Year 0 was to form the FPTWC and review newly available information). Fish passage would be implemented and effectiveness studies conducted from Year 6-10 and Year 10-40 was for an adaptive management approach. Twyla noted that typically effectiveness studies are a set period rather than grouped but Keith, USFS, provided an explanation that the grouping allowed for more flexibility.

Since implementation within the Charter was not separated by species, the group discussed how shad would be addressed during Year 0 since upstream passage at downstream projects would not yet be implemented. It was determined that separate implementation could be done for shad and Year 0 would be when passage is implemented downstream. Along this topic, further discussion took place about the generalization of the Charter based on Bill's previous comment. Rather than call out the species by name (eel or shad), the language in the Charter implementation methodology was changed to "target species" and steps replaced years. Twyla commented that FERC will likely require a timeline, and it was determined that years could be identified in the study plans.

Alison asked the FPTWC their opinions of the literature review section. The group noted that the Project Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper contains most of the information and could serve as the location to compile and maintain it. The literature review section will be removed from the Charter and Kleinschmidt will review the Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper for what has already been included and what will need to be added.

Paula identified that many charters include specifics regarding the meeting schedule to establish that they are conducted at times to appropriately inform studies. This is mainly in reference to a "passage season". Language was added to the Charter to ensure appropriately timed meetings. Caleb suggested that language be added that states progress reports can be issued in lieu of meetings if approved by the FPTWC; the committee agreed and language was added. It was noted that the RMT Rules were developed post license; therefore, language should likely be added to the FPTWC Charter stating that members are not limited to information in the Charter (i.e., documents related



to fish passage at the Augusta Project and/or NSBLD issued after the Charter's approval may inform fish passage at the Project).

The committee had further discussion on incorporation of the Charter into the Stevens Creek Project license. Twyla believed that the Charter in its current state could not be something signed by NMFS as its primary focus was the formation of a group. Alison asked if the FPTWC would like to present license article language to FERC regarding the formation of the committee. The proposed license article could include language that states the article is intended to be incorporated into the Project license without modification and if FERC were to modify the article, the FPTWC would need to meet to discuss modifications (similar to the Saluda Hydroelectric Project Comprehensive Relicensing Settlement Agreement). Melanie would prefer the Charter not be a settlement agreement (something that needs signatures) as it would require another level of review and work. Henry suggested that the FPTWC could be included in the Final License Application under the Proposed Action, which would not require signatures. Twyla explained that as the Charter exists now it is not enforceable by FERC, and she thinks it will be kicked back as an off-license agreement. Henry agreed and expressed that the inclusion of the FPTWC in the Proposed Action along with agency 10(j) recommendations would make it difficult for FERC to not approve the Charter. Keith may be able to include it in USFS 4(e) conditions to further solidify the groups inclusion in the Project license. Keith will discuss the possibility internally with USFS staff. Language could also be added to the proposed license article that if it is not incorporated into the Project license, that Dominion agrees to make it an off-license agreement.

The committee discussed the development of an Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) regarding fish passage implementation. If an AMP is developed, it could be used as a Protection, Mitigation, and Enhancement measure. The Parr Project West Channel AMP was recommended as a potential example of the general structure of an appropriate AMP. The question was raised as to whether development of the AMP should wait until the BiOp for the Project is issued. Alison said AMP language could be added to the Charter with a footnote that it may be further informed by the BiOp. Alison asked the committee if they thought an AMP would be more enforceable by FERC if it included a requirement to submit annual reports to them (see Wallace Dam Hydroelectric Project license). Henry stated that in either case, the AMP could be appended to the Charter as a lot of work had already gone into planning for passage implementation via the Charter. The committee's final decision was to develop the skeleton of an AMP to be included with the FPTWC Charter. It could have rules of operation and include the report requirement. If FERC were to not include it in the Project license, Dominion would work through the AMP via an off-license agreement.

Elizabeth asked if Dominion intended to develop AMPs for other Project resources. Alison answered that currently, only an AMP for fish passage was planned. However, the AMP could incorporate other related resources, such as habitat and water quality.

Melanie asked Dominion if there are certain measures that could be incorporated into a fishway prescription that are concerning and that Dominion considers "hard 'no's'". She indicated that she thought the present meeting may have gone into further discussions about attraction flows, structures, etc. She requested Dominion consider its options when developing the AMP and decide what they are willing and not willing to do. Ray answered that his biggest concern is that the Operations Plan is tied to USACE releases and that alterations to flow and/or reservoir levels may be sticking points, particularly during the low-flow season, due to the Project's re-regulation function. Caleb also noted that Obermeyer gates may not be a feasible option due to economic concerns with implementation costs. Elizabeth expressed that CHEOPS<sup>3</sup> modeling may be potentially helpful in visualizing flow. Ray indicated that he did not envision flows for eels (which are anticipated to be insignificant) during the high-flow season initially being an issue. Timing of passage implementation would be the hardest "no" if it was to occur before passage at downstream facilities was proven effective. In addition, Dominion is not interested in rehabilitating the lock structure. Previous discussions indicated that the agencies agree rehabilitating the lock is not a preferred option.

Melanie inquired why Robust Redhorse (RR) habitat was not assessed during relicensing. Alison answered that it was intended for the Aquatic Habitat Whitepaper to inform the species' available habitat within the Project area. Will, Kleinschmidt, explained that a reconnaissance survey of the Project substrates was conducted, and substrates were assessed during mussel surveys. The only available spawning habitat within the Stevens Creek Project reservoir is just below the J. Strom Thurmond Dam. The sediment in the Stevens Creek arm is very sandy and not conducive to RR spawning. Melanie indicated that data is showing that shad might be migrating earlier, overlapping with RR movement; they begin migrating in March and spawn in May. These changes in shad movement may result in a longer duration of passage operation. Melanie noted that the Augusta Shoals are a primary spawning location for RR and the Savannah River population is the most stable and does not currently need human intervention; it is USFWS's desire to keep it that way.

Henry asked NMFS if they intended to include prescribe flows for sturgeon for the Project. Andy commented that the draft BiOp for the Augusta Project includes a flow requirement, but it is unknown how that may play into Stevens Creek Project releases. NMFS conducted instream flow analysis in the vicinity and determined that the City of Augusta should be able to provide adequate flows to the canal and the shoals approximately 99 percent of the time.

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<sup>3</sup> CHEOPS modeling is proprietary to HDR, Inc. Kleinschmidt's HEC-RAS modeling is comparable.

Henry asked if the agencies would be willing to share some bullet points on what they are hoping to see with fishway passage at the Project so Dominion could prepare. Melanie likes this approach as USFWS would prefer to have the FPTWC essentially draft the prescription together on the front end. Twyla indicated she would need to consult internally before agreeing to share information upfront.

The committee agreed to continue to meet quarterly. The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 8, 2023 in Columbia, South Carolina.

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

**Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.**  
**Water Quality Certification Meeting with the GAEPD**

**August 15, 2023**

Final JAG 9/16/23

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**ATTENDEES:**

Amy Bresnahan – DESC  
Alison Jakupca – Kleinschmidt  
Jenn Güt – Kleinschmidt

David Hedeem – GAEPD  
Liz Booth – GAEPD  
Wei Zheng – GAEPD

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

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the forthcoming request for Section 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) for the continued operation and FERC relicensing of the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project).

Following introductions, Alison, Kleinschmidt, provided the group with the purpose of the meeting and a brief review of the Project relicensing process to date. The SCDHEC has been involved in the relicensing since the beginning from an oversight perspective, but DESC will be seeking a WQC from the GAEPD due to the Project's powerhouse location on the Georgia side of the Savannah River. After some discussion, Wei, GAEPD, explained that the agency would refer to the water that passes through the powerhouse as the Project's "release" and not "discharge", as "discharge" carries other connotations from the agency's perspective. The group reviewed the Project Exhibit G, which displays the Project Boundary Line (PBL). Questions were raised by GAEPD about the different PBL numbers and how the PBL was determined. Amy pointed out that there were several different datums used in various project documents. Alison added that FERC often performs inundation studies when deciding the PBL but Kleinschmidt and DESC will investigate and inform the GAEPD.

The group had further discussion related to GAEPD terminology. "Re-regulation" projects, as defined by the Project's function of re-regulating the releases from Thurmond Dam, are referred to as "basin equalization" projects by the GAEPD. The agency refers to "pumped storage" projects as "re-regulation" projects.

Amy, DESC, provided the group with an explanation of Project operations. The Project targets to release USACE's projected daily average release from the Thurmond Dam. Liz, GAEPD, asked if the Operations Plan in which the Project operates is flexible or has hard-wired release numbers. Amy noted that Stevens Creek releases were intricately linked to USACE releases, +/- 15 percent to allow operational flexibility at Stevens Creek. Amy shared the latest revised Operations Plan on file with FERC. Liz commented that the manual in which USACE operates may consider drought to be defined as inflow less than 3,600 cubic feet per second (cfs) rather than the 3,800 cfs listed in the Operations Plan. Liz explained that the Operations Plan defining drought as 3,600 cfs, assuming that number is consistent with the USACE manual, would mean the Project is likely in drought less often. She suggested the Operations Plan be consistent with how USACE defines drought under the 2012 Drought Contingency Plan.

Liz asked if there were Rare, Threatened, or Endangered (RTE) species downstream of the Project. DESC and Kleinschmidt answered that the Augusta Shoals are downstream and provides important habitat for some RTE species. However, the Augusta Canal Hydroelectric Project is one mile downstream of the Project and impacts habitat at the Augusta Shoals. Liz stated that the endangered Spider Shoals Lily is present within the Augusta Shoals.

Alison briefly reviewed relicensing studies that have been completed and are currently ongoing for the Project. Extensive water quality monitoring is completed annually by the USGS under the existing license. The USACE also conducts monthly forebay profiles and monitoring in the Thurmond Dam tailrace. Alison reviewed results from the 2021 Water Quality Study Report for the Project, including nutrient samples and dissolved oxygen (DO) both above and below the Stevens Creek dam. Alison also reviewed the 2023 Water Quality Study Plan with the group. In summary, DESC will be conducting continuous monitoring, longitudinal surveys, and off-channel surveys in Stevens Creek, which is located on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River. Kleinschmidt will distribute both the 2021 Report and 2023 Plan to GAEPD subsequent to the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

Wei and David, GAEPD, explained that one of their immediate information needs is to know whether DESC intends to change operations at the Project and/or do any construction under the term of the new license. Alison stated that Project operations are not proposed to be changed. There are some recreation enhancements being proposed at multiple sites within the Project reservoir, including Betty's Branch located on the Georgia side of the Savannah River. Amy clarified that DESC would be supporting Columbia County with enhancement construction at that site and that necessary permitting would be done by the County.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2021 Water Quality Study Report and 2023 Water Quality Study Plan for the Stevens Creek Project were distributed to GAEPD staff by Kleinschmidt staff via email dated August 18, 2023.

Liz asked if it was known how far Thurmond Dam releases travel up Stevens Creek. She noted a potential way to find out was to deploy HOBO depth loggers in the creek. Kleinschmidt stated that the answer may already be known, and they will consult with scientists involved with Project studies and will share information with the GAEPD.

Alison reviewed the Project relicensing schedule and document submittal timeline with the group. DESC will be filing the Final License Application (FLA) for the Project by October 31, 2023. Over the course of approximately one year, FERC will review the FLA and issue additional information requests. It is expected that FERC will issue the Ready for Environmental Analysis (REA) in quarter 4 of 2024. From the date that FERC issues the REA, DESC will have 60 days to file verification of application submittal for the 401 WQC. From the date DESC files this information with FERC, the GAEPD will have one year to approve or issue a waiver of the WQC. The WQC requirement will be waived automatically if the GAEPD does not respond within the required timeframe. The GAEPD expressed that they do not currently intend to waive the WQC requirement for the Project. They wish to continue to have informal meetings/discussion with DESC until the regulatory clock starts with the issuance of the REA.

Liz stated the water quality parameters she would be reviewing regarding the WQC for the Project are pH, temperature, and DO. It was noted that DO does not initially appear to be an issue at the Project as DO is shown to improve as water passes through the Project's turbines or over the spillway.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:30 AM.

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

**Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.**  
**Recreation Resource Conservation Group**

**October 2, 2023**

Final JAG 10/26/23

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**ATTENDEES:**

Amy Bresnahan – DESC	Clint Peacock – GADNR
Ray Ammarell – DESC	Bryant Bowen – GADNR
Billy Chastain – DESC	Dewey Richardson – GAEPD
Alison Jakupca – Kleinschmidt	Elizabeth Miller – SCDNR
Kelly Kirven – Kleinschmidt	Jason Bettinger – SCDNR
Jenn Güt – Kleinschmidt	John Luton – Columbia Co.
Twyla Cheatwood – NMFS	Dennis Hodges – Columbia Co.
Craig Clarke – USACE	Wes Horton – Columbia Co.
Stan Simpson – USACE	Wes Byne – City of Augusta
Gray Buckles – USFS	Oscar Flite – City of Augusta
Olivia Kendrick – GADCA	

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

The purpose of the meeting was to review and discuss the draft Recreation Management Plan (RMP) for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project), allow the opportunity for questions and discussion, and review next steps moving forward in the relicensing process.

Alison, Kleinschmidt, began the meeting with a safety moment and then went through introductions, during which, Clint, GADNR, informed the group that Paula Marcinek, previously with GADNR, has been replaced by Bryant Bowen. Clint further informed the group that Jay Payne, also formerly with GADNR, has been replaced by Aaron Gray; contact information will be provided for Aaron soon. Following introductions, Alison reviewed the meeting agenda.

The purpose of an RMP was discussed by Alison, including FERC's history of regulations.

Alison then reviewed a figure with the group that displayed the lands surrounding the Project reservoir, including recreation sites, DESC property, and USFS lands with and

without pre-existing easements. Amy, DESC, clarified that the easements displayed on the figure are for flowage. Elizabeth, SCDNR, asked if the figure could be sent to the group subsequent to the meeting. She further went on to ask if it was DESC's intent to replace the present figure with the one in the Draft License Application. Alison answered that yes, the presentation could be provided to the group, and that yes, this figure will be included in the Final License Application (FLA).

A stepwise process diagram of how RMPs are developed was presented by Alison in addition to the outline of the Project draft RMP.

The facilities and proposed enhancements at the Stevens Creek Recreation Site were reviewed by Alison. DESC is currently proposing to re-line and maximize spaces in the parking lot, improve the boat ramp, and investigate bank fishing enhancements. It is proposed that the enhancements would be completed within two years of DESC receiving the new license for the Project from FERC. Alison explained that this timeframe is as soon as reasonable based on the timing of finalization of construction drawings and obtaining permits. Elizabeth asked if non-trailer parking spaces and ADA spaces were explored at the site. DESC staff explained that there is no room to expand at the site but that they could consider non-trailer parking spaces and ADA spaces when working on designs for the parking lot. These drawings could be distributed for Recreation RCG group review and comment prior to construction at the site. Elizabeth also asked about the barrier free picnic table at the site and suggested DESC produce a sign indicating that the site has barrier free amenities. Elizabeth asked if a courtesy dock was considered for the site. Amy answered that DESC is concerned about debris and high flows in the creek causing damage to hard structures. Elizabeth asked if DESC knew how upstream landowners with docks deal with these issues, to which DESC will explore.

Alison reviewed the facilities and proposed enhancements at Betty's Branch. DESC is currently proposing to develop a Memorandum of Agreement with Columbia County to provide funding for enhancements in the Project boundary that is consistent with the County's Master Plan. Alison displayed a figure of the County's Master Plan and explained that DESC-funded enhancements could include an improved fishing pier, improved boat ramp, and/or courtesy dock. No further discussion was had on Betty's Branch.

The facilities and proposed enhancements for Fury's Ferry were presented to the group. DESC is proposing the following at the site: installation of lighting near the boat ramp to improve visibility in the area; two ADA parking spaces, including one for a vehicle with trailer; hardened barrier free path to amenities, as appropriate; three picnic tables; and an information kiosk. Due to the need to consult with the USFS, it is expected that proposed enhancements would be completed within four years of DESC receiving the new Project license. Elizabeth asked if restrooms were considered for the site. Gray, USFS, explained that the USFS does not currently have staffing to monitor and clean the restrooms and that



is not expected to change. Additionally, Gray explained that the site is continuously misused, leading to the USFS being concerned with vandalism and destruction of property. Elizabeth asked about the consideration of a courtesy dock at the site. Alison explained that option had been considered during the previous relicensing but was ultimately not recommended due to concern with flows. DESC could investigate how homeowners on this stretch of the Project reservoir deal with these issues.

Alison reviewed the relicensing schedule update, noting several opportunities for the group and other stakeholders to comment on relicensing proceedings.

Following these discussions, Jenn, Kleinschmidt, provided a comment regarding the canoe portage on behalf of Tonya Bonitatibus, Savannah Riverkeeper, who could not attend the meeting. Tonya wished to state that canoe/kayak portage through the locks of the dam should be the alternative. No further discussion on portage was had.

The meeting was adjourned.

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#### ACTION ITEMS:

- DESC/Kleinschmidt to distribute the recent Project Recreation Use and Needs Study Report and this meeting presentation to the Recreation RCG.
  - This information was sent by Jenn, Kleinschmidt, via email on October 4, 2023.

The image is a cover page for a project report. It features a background photograph of a gravel path leading through a wooded area towards a body of water. The path is on the left side of the image. The right side is dominated by a dark, semi-transparent overlay with green geometric shapes. The title 'Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project' is written in a large, light green font across the center of the dark overlay. Below the title, the subtitle 'Recreation Resource Conservation Group Draft Recreation Management Plan Review' and the date 'October 2, 2023' are written in a smaller, white font. In the bottom right corner, there is a faint, semi-transparent image of a sign that reads 'STEVENS CREEK PROJECT' and 'DOMINION'.

# Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project

Recreation Resource Conservation Group  
Draft Recreation Management Plan Review

October 2, 2023



Welcome,  
Introductions,  
Safety Moment

# Meeting Purpose

To review and discuss the draft Recreation Management Plan for the Stevens Creek Hydroelectric Project, allow the opportunity for questions and discussion and review next steps moving forward in the relicensing process.

# Meeting Agenda

- DISCUSS THE PURPOSE OF THE RMP
- REVIEW THE DRAFT RMP OUTLINE
- REVIEW RECREATION SITE FACILITIES AND PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS
- RMP SCHEDULE FOR UPDATES
- RELICENSING PROCESS SCHEDULE REVIEW
- CLOSING DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS

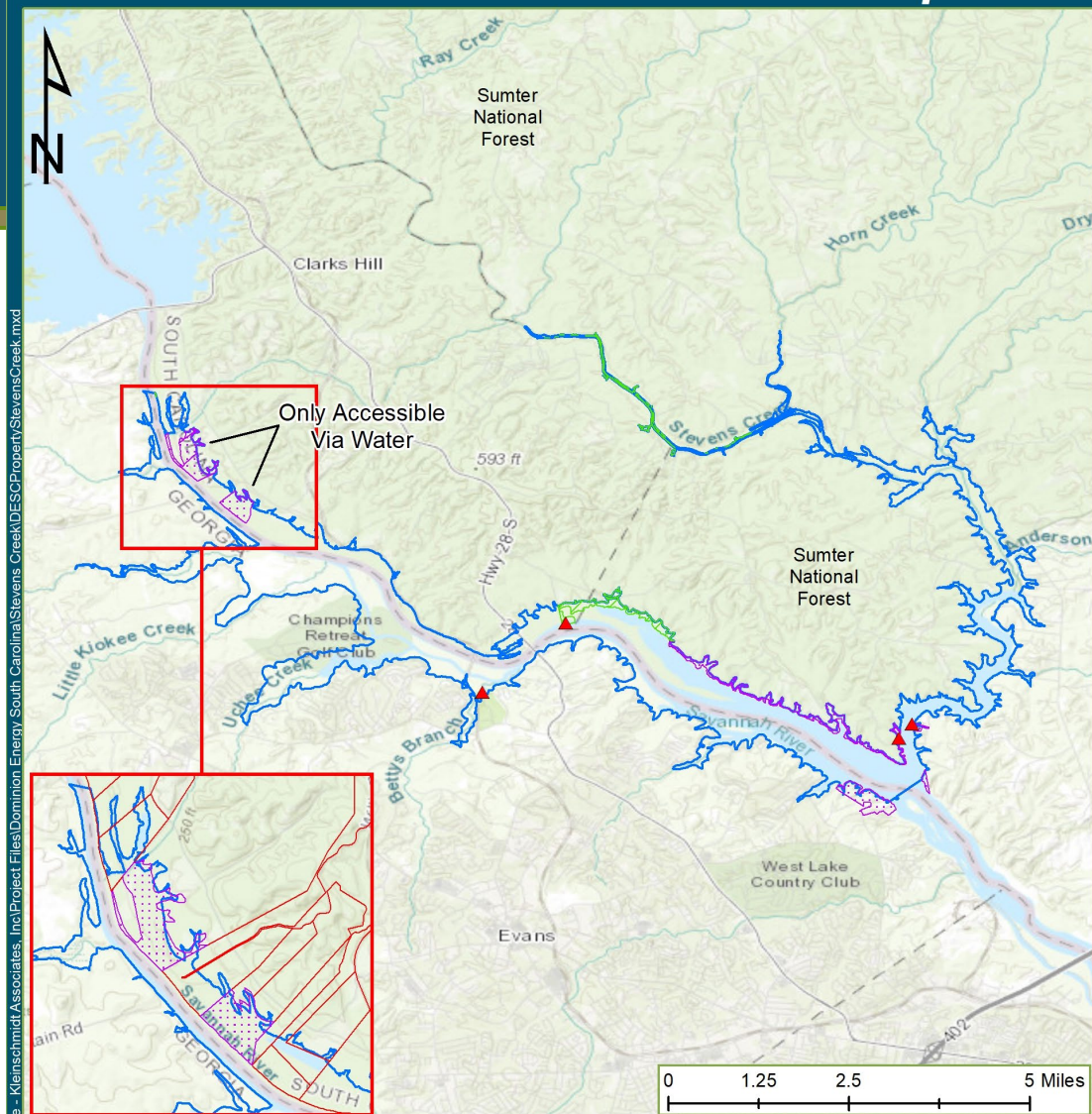
# Purpose of Recreation Management Plan (RMP)

- ▶ Section 10(a)(1) of the FPA requires the Commission to ensure that any licensed project is best adapted to a comprehensive plan for improving and developing a waterway for a variety of beneficial public uses, including recreational use.
- ▶ Pursuant to this obligation, the Commission required licensees to allow public access to project lands and waters for recreational use and began to include standard conditions in licenses for the provision of recreational facilities.

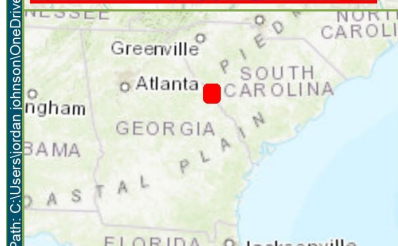
# Purpose of Recreation Management Plan (RMP)

- ▶ In the 1960s, the Commission developed specific policies and practices to ensure that licensees provided reasonable recreational opportunities and notice of such opportunities to the public.
- ▶ The Commission began requiring recreation plans for the public utilization of project water and land, and in 1965 amended its regulations by adding part 8, entitled “Recreation Opportunities and Development at Licensed Projects,” in order to require licensees to widely publicize to the general public recreational opportunities at individual projects.
- ▶ Order 313, issued on December 27, 1965, amended the Commission's general policy regulations (18 CFR part 2) by adding § 2.7 to clarify that licensees whose projects include land and water resources with outdoor recreational potential have a responsibility to develop those resources in accordance with area needs, to the extent that such development is not inconsistent with the primary purpose of the project.

# Lands Surrounding the Project Reservoir



Path: C:\Users\jordanjohnson\OneDrive - Kleinschmidt Associates, Inc\Project Files\Dominion Energy South Carolina\Stevens Creek\DESC\Property\StevensCreek.mxd



**Legend**

- ▲ Existing Recreation Sites
- ▨ DESC Property
- ▧ USFS Land with Pre-Existing Easement
- ▩ USFS Land without Pre-Existing Easement
- ▭ Project Boundary

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc.  
Augusta, Georgia

Drawn By: JJJ	Date Drawn: 03-15-2023	Checked By: KPN	Date Checked: 03-15-2023
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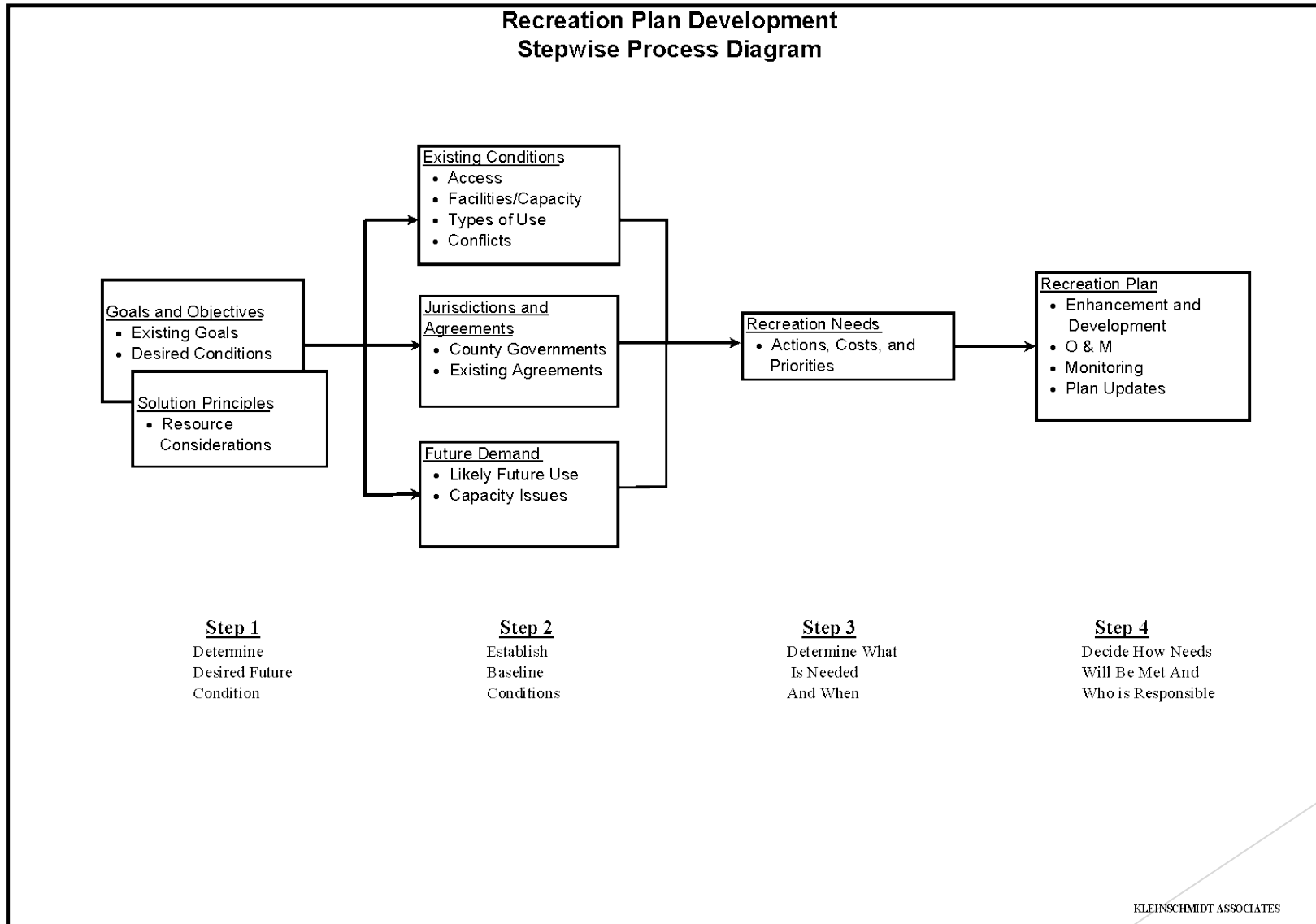
141 Main St., PO Box 639  
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# How do we develop RMP's?



# Outline of the Stevens Creek Draft RMP

Introduction

Project Recreation Site Management Policies

Public Recreation Sites: Overview and  
Proposed Enhancements

Design and Construction Procedures

Summary

# Facilities and Proposed Enhancements: Stevens Creek Recreation Site

## ► Facilities:

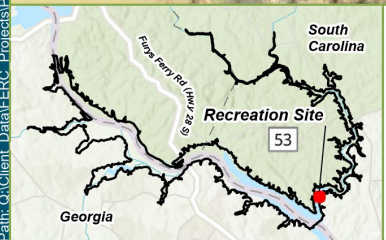
- A single-lane concrete boat ramp;
- A paved turn-around area;
- A parking area for approximately six vehicles with trailers;
- Three picnic tables (one barrier free);
- One vault restroom;
- A paved access road; and
- A safety sign.

## ► Proposed Enhancements w/in 2 yrs:

- Re-line and maximize spaces in the parking lot;
- Improve the boat ramp; and
- Investigate bank fishing enhancements.



# Recreation Resources- Stevens Creek



Legend (Proposed Features)

- Turnaround Area
- Extended Boat Ramp

**Pink Text -Proposed Features**

**Dominion Energy**  
Augusta, GA

Drawn By: NXG	Date Drawn: 09-20-2023	Checked By: KPN	Date Checked: 09-21-2023
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Path: Q:\Client\_Data\FERC - Projects\22535\Recreation\Stevens Creek Recreation Site\Stevens Creek Recreation Site.aprx

Date Printed: 10/2/2023

Source:

PN: 0455108.01



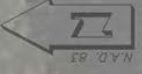
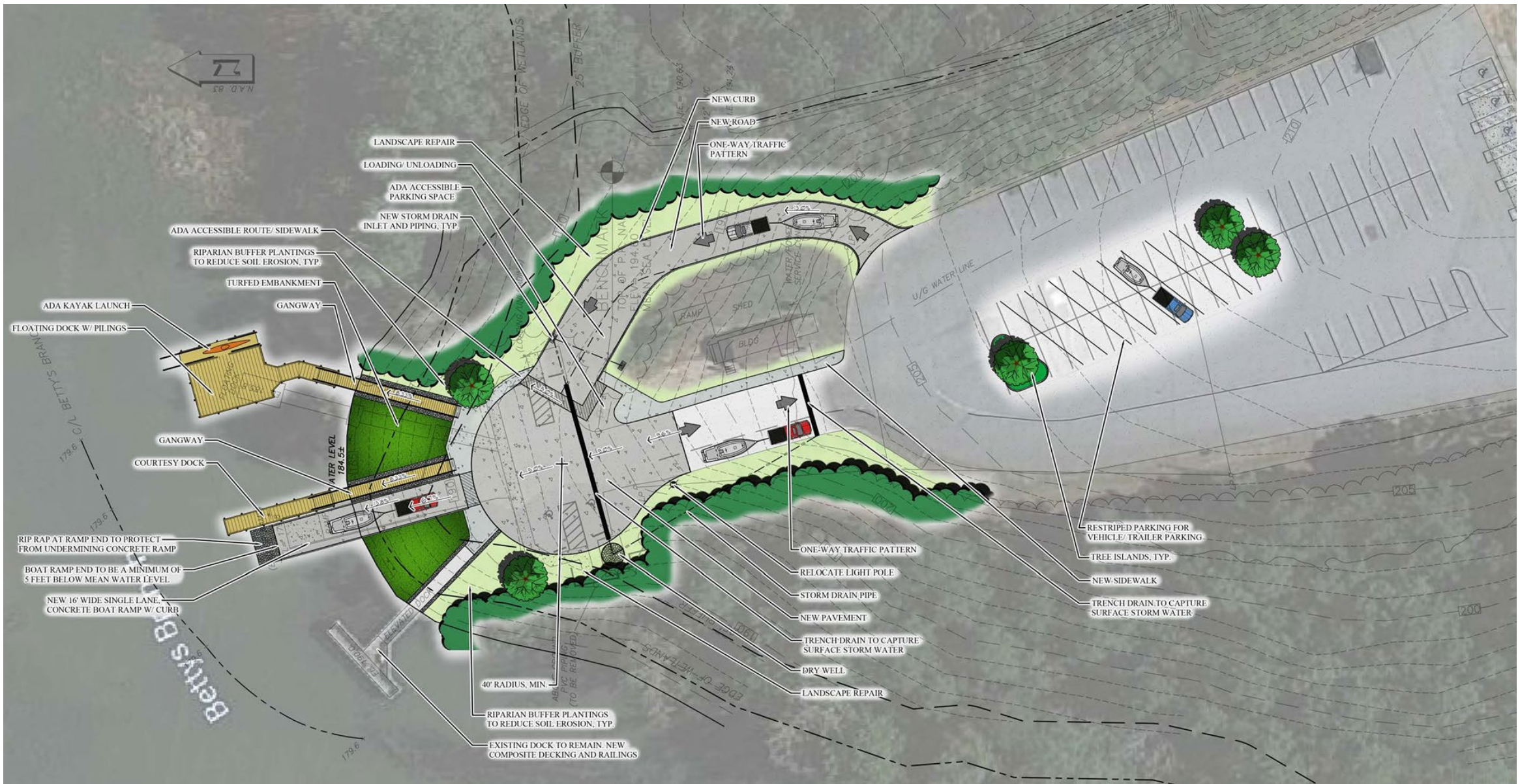
# Facilities and Proposed Enhancements: Betty's Branch

## ▶ Facilities:

- ▶ A small parking lot with four ADA-compliant parking spaces;
- ▶ One concrete boat ramp;
- ▶ One barrier free fishing pier;
- ▶ An ADA-compliant canoe/kayak launch; and
- ▶ Two picnic tables.

## ▶ Proposed Enhancements:

- ▶ MOA with Columbia County to provide funding for enhancements in the Project Boundary consistent with County's Master Plan



LANDSCAPE REPAIR  
LOADING/ UNLOADING  
ADA ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACE  
NEW STORM DRAIN INLET AND PIPING, TYP.

ADA KAYAK LAUNCH  
FLOATING DOCK W/ PILINGS

ADA ACCESSIBLE ROUTE/ SIDEWALK  
RIPARIAN BUFFER PLANTINGS TO REDUCE SOIL EROSION, TYP.

GANGWAY  
COURTESY DOCK

RIP RAP AT RAMP END TO PROTECT FROM UNDERMINING CONCRETE RAMP  
BOAT RAMP END TO BE A MINIMUM OF 5 FEET BELOW MEAN WATER LEVEL  
NEW 16' WIDE SINGLE LANE CONCRETE BOAT RAMP W/ CURB

WATER LEVEL 194.54

40' RADIUS, MIN.  
RIPARIAN BUFFER PLANTINGS TO REDUCE SOIL EROSION, TYP.  
EXISTING DOCK TO REMAIN. NEW COMPOSITE DECKING AND RAILINGS

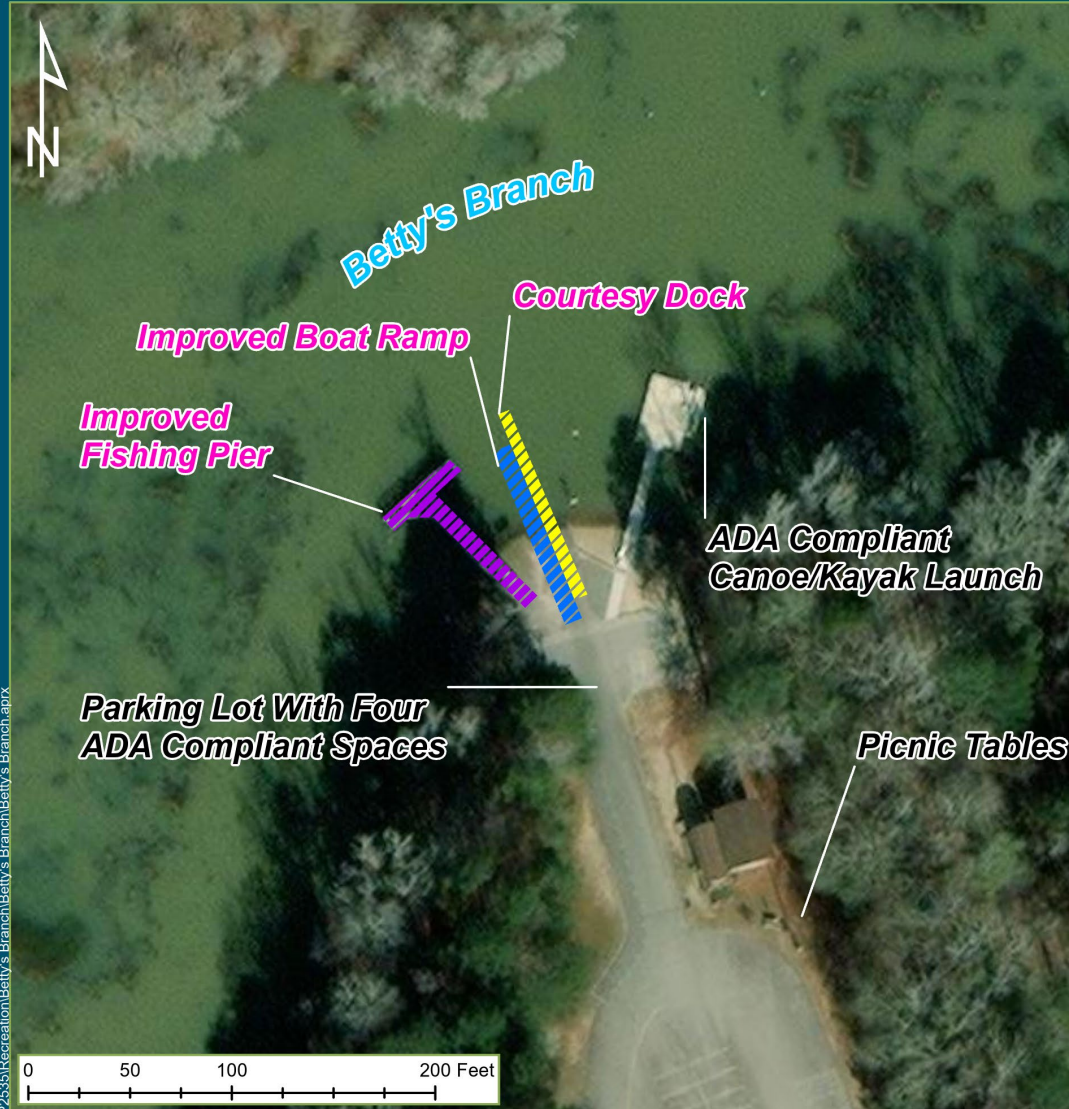
NEW CURB  
NEW ROAD  
ONE-WAY TRAFFIC PATTERN

ONE-WAY TRAFFIC PATTERN  
RELOCATE LIGHT POLE  
STORM DRAIN PIPE  
NEW PAVEMENT  
TRENCH DRAIN TO CAPTURE SURFACE STORM WATER  
DRY WELL  
LANDSCAPE REPAIR

RESTRIPED PARKING FOR VEHICLE/ TRAILER PARKING  
TREE ISLANDS, TYP.  
NEW SIDEWALK  
TRENCH DRAIN TO CAPTURE SURFACE STORM WATER

Bettys Branch

# Recreation Resources- Betty's Branch



Path: Q:\Client\_Data\FERC - Projects\22638\Recreation\Betty's Branch\Betty's Branch.aprx



**Legend**

▨ Boat Ramp     ▨ Fishing Pier  
▨ Courtesy Dock

**Pink Text - Proposed Features**

**Dominion Energy**  
Augusta, GA

Drawn By: NXG	Date Drawn: 09-20-2023	Checked By: KPN	Date Checked: 09-21-2023
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Date Printed: 10/2/2023

Source:

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# Facilities and Proposed Enhancements: Fury's Ferry

## ► Facilities:

- A single-lane concrete boat ramp;
- Two picnic tables;
- An unpaved turn-around area;
- A gravel access road;
- An unpaved parking area for approximately eight vehicles, including a mix of vehicles with and without trailers; and
- Safety signage.

## ► Proposed Enhancements (w/in 4 yrs.):

- Installation of lighting near the boat ramp to improve visibility in the area (DESC will consult with the USFS to determine the type and positioning of lighting);
- Two ADA parking spaces, including one for a vehicle with a trailer;
- Hardened barrier free path to amenities, as appropriate;
- Three picnic tables; and
- An information kiosk.



# Recreation Resources- Fury's Ferry



Legend (Proposed Features)

- Proposed Picnic Tables
- Info Kiosk
- Lighting
- Hardened Path
- Parking Spaces

**Pink Text - Proposed Features**

**Dominion Energy**  
Augusta, GA

Drawn By:	Date Drawn:	Checked By:	Date Checked:
NXG	06-01-2023	KPN	06-05-2023

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Path: Q:\Client\_Data\FERC - Projects\22638\Recreation\Fury's Ferry\Fury's Ferry.aprx

Date Printed: 10/2/2023

# Relicensing Schedule Update

Activity	Approx. Timeframe
File Final License Application with FERC	October 27, 2023
FERC Issue Tendering Notice	W/in 14 days
Comments on FLA and Additional Study Requests	60 days after application is filed
FERC Review for Deficiencies	4 months subsequent to filing
FERC Application Acceptance Letter and Intervention Notice	March 1, 2024
NEPA Scoping	Approx. June - October 2024
REA Notice Issued	Approx. February 2025
Comments, Terms, and Conditions/4(e)/10(j)/401 App	60 days after REA
Draft EA Issued	60 days after Ts&Cs Filed
Comments Filed on DEA	w/in 60 days
Final EA and License Issued	October 31, 2025

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the frame, leaving a large white central area. The shapes are composed of triangles and polygons, some of which are semi-transparent, creating a layered effect.

Questions?