

<u>Commenting Entity</u>	<u>Date of Comment Letter & FERC Accession Number</u>	<u>General Comments</u>	<u>Alabama Power Response</u>
<u>Randolph County Commission Sheriff David</u>	<u>June 09, 2021</u> <u>20210609-5051</u>	<p>As Sheriff of Randolph County, Alabama, for the past eleven years, I have been involved in over 30 search and rescue missions below the RL Harris Dam. Many of those missions ended in tragedy, but quite a few have ended well. I believe that we would be more effective in our rescue efforts if we could gain access to the river quickly.</p> <p>Public locations of entry along the downstream stretch of the Tallapoosa River would give us passage to the river along various points. As emergency events happen now, we have to search for places to enter the river. Most of the land bordering the river is privately owned by landowners who use their property as second homes. Because emergencies are unplanned and critical, by their very nature, my officers, local fire departments, and the Randolph County Rescue Squad have difficulty finding spots to launch rescue equipment into the water since most landowners have locked gates that are not readily visible from the roadway.</p> <p>Public access to the Tallapoosa River downstream is a vital public safety issue. Such spots would allow the Sheriff's Office and the Randolph County Rescue Squad to have a more timely ability to respond to calls below the dam. We could safely locate—and even rescue—those we serve more effectively.</p> <p>In fact, our mission on February 28, 2021, occurred right below the dam. A fisherman was caught in the current when the turbines were released, and we had great difficulty finding a spot to launch our boats. Even after his body was recovered, personnel had to move 1 ½ to 2 miles down the river to find a landowner whose property they could use to remove the victim from the water.</p> <p>Because of the treacherous water conditions at the dam at the time, there was no way to get in the water there. That is usually the case when we have a mission close to the dam. However, when a mission stretches to more than one day, we encounter a problem with our personnel becoming fatigued. Points along the river where we could have rescue personnel stationed, ready and rested, would be a great asset to our efforts. As things stand now, we cannot systematically check sections of the river because of the remote nature of the terrain and the lack of access to a road once we get off the water. This in itself is a public safety hazard. Heaven forbid that we have a medical emergency among our personnel.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>Alabama Power is proposing to design, install, and maintain barrier-free recreation (canoe/kayak) access at the existing Harris Tailrace Fishing facility.</p>

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<u>Corinne Cox</u>	<u>June 09, 2021</u> <u>20210611-5000</u>	<p>There is a huge need for better access for more people to use our lakes and rivers of Alabama. The citizens of Randolph, Clay and surrounding counties request Alabama Power Corporation to improve recreation on Lake Wedowee, Wedowee Creek and the Tallapoosa River below the R.L.Harris Dam. Alabama Power Corporation must expand their support of our river communities by building and maintaining more swimming areas with bath houses, picnic pavilions, fishing and paddling put in sites along with much needed rescue access.</p> <p>The part of Wedowee Creek, east of U.S. Highway 431, is a major wildlife habitat area to many species above and below the water. The east end of Wedowee Creek is narrow and shallow and should be speed controlled by making it a no wake zone to protect wildlife habitats and for paddled boats and swimming safety. We recommend building a kayak/canoe put in place on the east end of Wedowee Creek and preserve this special area.</p> <p>Alabama Power should proudly share its current and future plans to make the shores of Lake Wedowee, the Tallapoosa and Little Tallapoosa Rivers user friendly for property owners and non property owner visitors.</p> <p>All corporate use must support and preserve our precious natural resources. The rivers belong to the wildlife and people.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>Alabama Power is proposing to design, install, and maintain recreation (canoe/kayak) access in the tailrace below Harris Dam within the Project Boundary. Alabama Power is also proposing to provide an additional recreation site on Lake Harris to include a day use park (with amenities for swimming, picnicking, and a boat ramp).</p> <p>The Alabama Marine Patrol is responsible for patrolling and enforcing regulations for Alabama's waterways. No wake zones, speed limits, and vessel regulation are regulated and enforced by Alabama Marine Patrol.</p>
<u>Michelle French</u>	<u>June 11, 2021</u> <u>20210611-5001</u>	<p>I am writing to request that your agency require Alabama Power and the Army Corps of Engineers make substantial changes to the Harris Dam/Lake Wedowee to better serve the citizens of Randolph, Clay, and Cleburne Counties. Harris Dam was conceived and designed, under the pretense of flood control and energy generation.</p> <p>Sadly, property owners below the dam are regularly flooded while the Tallapoosa River is suffering loss of fisheries and irregular water flows. Landowners have no confidence in the trustworthiness of the dam operations. Alabama Power gouges the local area on electric rates with less than stellar service. Please enforce upgrading and implementation of an update to the Army Water Control and redesigning and replacing the turbines at the dam. Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>As described in Exhibit B of the Final License Application, Alabama Power operates the Harris Project under the approved Water Control Manual that includes criteria and associated rules of operating during a high flow event.</p>
<u>Carol Knight</u>	<u>June 11, 2021</u>	May 5, 2021, was a day of extreme flooding in Wadley. As a result of a full pool on the lake and heavy rains in the days following a "full pool" party on	Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and

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	<u>20210611-5037 & 20210611-5038</u>	<p>Lake Wedowee on May 1, the downstream landowners once again felt the brunt of decisions beyond their control. Recreation opportunities became clean up chores for these landowners.</p> <p>NO ONE believes that flooding can be entirely avoided or eliminated, but the events leading up to May 5 made the flooding and erosion issues more devastating than they should have been. Rivers ebb and flow, but downstream landowners feel that they have been unfairly treated/punished for the sake of the lake property owners.</p> <p>Linda Frosilono, a downstream landowner and real estate agent in the county, stated on May 7: "Yes, we had damage and are losing a lot of our trees and banks from all the flooding from the dam. I noticed the lake water above the dam appeared to be full a week ago. Something needs to be done to prevent this from happening."</p>	<p>considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>As described in Exhibit B of the Final License Application, Alabama Power operates the Harris Project under the approved Water Control Manual that includes criteria and associated rules of operating during a high flow event.</p>
<u>Jimmy Traylor</u>	<u>June 11, 2021 20210611-5096</u>	<p>Since the closure of the Harris Dam, sportsman and landowners have known there was a problem with the Harris Dam in regard to the Tallapoosa River Ecosystem, erosion caused by the river flow, flooding, safety and river temperature.</p> <p>Being raised on the river, I had the privilege of not only fishing (trotlines, bank poles, baskets, and fishing rod). Additionally, I have been hunting and trapping the lands surrounding the river and creeks feeding the Tallapoosa both before and after the Harris Dam.</p> <p>The ecosystem, in my opinion, below the dam can be broken down as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The fish in the river 2. The bug life and crustaceans in the river 3. The animals in the river, both cold-blooded and warm-blooded creatures 4. The feeder creek ecosystems 5. The plant life in the river <p>Our family, with others, have been very active with meetings with Alabama Power Company concerning the damage below the Harris Dam. From the first few months the lake was impounded, I knew there was a problem. Since 1983 we were able to witness immediate changes to the fish populations in the river. For example, I have caught one flathead catfish in the Malone area since 1983! Therefore, I have the following concerns:</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>Alabama Power performed numerous operational and environmental studies prior to and during relicensing that may address these concerns. The data and results and conclusions are presented in the Final Study Reports, which can be found on FERC's e-library and on Alabama Power's Harris relicensing website at www.harrisrelicensing.com.</p> <p>Alabama Power notes, in response to comment #8, while Harris was allowed to fill just slightly ahead of schedule, the early May rain events occurred after Harris had reached full pool consistent with its normal rule curve; the early fill had no impact on flood control operations for those rain events. As described in Exhibit B of the</p>

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		<p>1. Fish – The topic of natural fish to the river is avoided. My question is this – What has happened to the Flathead Catfish, bow fish, shellcrackers, and the red horse suckers? Is the demise of the aforementioned fish related to the flow regime or the temperature?</p> <p>2. Of concern and curiosity, after the dam, why did spawning fish stop the annual spring spawning in the Plan implementation, however, the major damage occurred prior to the Green Plan. Since Alabama Power has commissioned Auburn University and the study has been completed, APC is now generating almost every evening and the erosion again is happening at an alarming rate. The riverbank in most parts around Malone is being held together by Privet Hedge (an invasive species) instead of natural trees. The trees washed away many years ago. My concern is simple, where is the data showing pre-Green plan erosion verses post Green Plan erosion. creeks? Is this due to the disappearance of the fish, or is this caused by 3 feet of silt in the creeks?</p> <p>3. The bugs to me tell a story of the river’s health. A main forage for fish in the Tallapoosa was crayfish, mayflies, hellgrammites, and various other small bugs for consumption. The issue of the bugs has never been addressed nor has the issue of crawfish. Specifically, the bug and crustacean population in the shoals. Data showing the difference in populations in shoals vs. deep water needs to be revealed and analyzed.</p> <p>4. With the departure of fish, bugs, crustaceans and other food (grasses, ect.), there has been disappearances of other creatures.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Water moccasins Bull Frogs Mink River Otter Muskrats <p>These creatures are part of the completion of the river’s ecosystem. We have been asking the question for decades - why are these creatures nonexistent in the river now? Is this due to flow or temperature?</p> <p>5. Major streams that feed the river below the Harris Dam have been compromised as well. Again, this topic is avoided. No Business creek for example has 1-3 feet of silt in the mouth of the creek and is reduced as you move up the creek. Is the silt a reason why no fishes spawn up the creek? How do bugs lay eggs in mud vs. on rocks? How do you move forward to</p>	<p>Final License Application, Alabama Power operates the Harris Project under the approved Water Control Manual that includes criteria and associated rules of operating during a high flow event.</p> <p>Alabama Power notes, in response to comment #10, both data sets are relevant to characterizing the aquatic resources in the Tallapoosa River below Harris Dam. There is no attempt to discredit any information provided by Dr. Irwin and the USGS. Alabama Power included previous studies conducted by Irwin as part of its Pre-Application Document (PAD). The study plan—and approved study—for aquatic resources was intended to provide information for a data gap as identified by stakeholders, and it included methodology for sampling both shallow and deep water habitats. Irwin’s previous studies focused solely on shallow water habitats. All available information – Dr. Irwin’s study results in conjunction with additional relicensing studies by Auburn University’s findings - were used to develop the license application and inform Alabama Power on its operating proposal and protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures.</p>

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		<p>restore the natural rock bottom instead of mud and debris flowing up the creek every time the turbines are opened?</p> <p>6. Before the Harris Dam, the river was full of grass both in deep areas as well as shoals. All species of fish and bugs used these grasses for protection and for feeding. Is the grass being killed by the temperatures or the flows?</p> <p>7. Erosion is another issue of concern. After 15 years of the Green Plan, erosion is not as bad as prior to Green Plan implementation, however, the major damage occurred prior to the Green Plan. Since Alabama Power has commissioned Auburn University and the study has been completed, APC is now generating almost every evening and the erosion again is happening at an alarming rate. The riverbank in most parts around Malone is being held together by Privet Hedge (an invasive species) instead of natural trees. The trees washed away many years ago. My concern is simple, where is the data showing pre-Green plan erosion verses post Green Plan erosion.</p> <p>8. Recent flooding is an issue because APC was allowed to raise, prematurely, the lake level. The lake was at full pool when the flood gates were opened – with no warning. The flood gates were opened for about 6-8 hours and I suffered about a \$38,000.00 loss. This could have been avoided if there were notifications sent to people below the dam. Harris Dam was sold to the public for flood control – this operation is not flood control. If APC is allowed to raise the lake level, what modifications in flood control operations will be implemented?</p> <p>9. Safety falls hand in hand with flood control. The Harris Dam creates floods every time it generates power. The volatile waters in the shoals when generation occurs can be extremely dangerous. What is the plan to mitigate the safety threat?</p> <p>10. While I believe the most recent study by Auburn University is good, the only areas that were studied were the deeper waters. The river is a shallow water – shoal driven fishery. The study done over 20 years by Elise Irwin was focused on the shoal areas. It appears that APC has contracted with Auburn in an attempt to discredit or contradict Elise’s report in an attempt to relicense the dam as is. There should be a transparent and open debate to discuss both studies as both studies are relevant moving forward with the dam’s operation and the rivers true health.</p> <p>11. APC moved the skimmer to its uppermost position sometime after the Green Plan was implemented. Biologists were not notified of the change and therefore temperature data was not evaluated as to the effects of the fish population due to temperature prior to or after the movement of the skimmer. Does this data exist, and can this data be released to all shareholders?</p>	

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		<p>12. Cold water pollution in a warm water fishery is not addressed nor acknowledged by APC. If this is indeed true, all of the above issues should be addressed before relicensing is granted.</p> <p>13. Alabama Power Company has discussed, as well as others, the “water wars” between Alabama, Georgia and Florida. The concern I have is the inefficient design of the turbines. We all know that water is a limited commodity that should be conserved. If you could generate more energy with less water, why would APC not want to do this – besides cost?</p> <p>Alabama Power Company’s environmental record should be analyzed as well as Alabama Power Companies direct conflicts of interests with study groups and Government agencies. For example, APC should not be threatening researchers because the data doesn’t fit APC’s narrative moving forward.</p> <p>If Alabama Power is granted a relicense without modifications to Harris Dam, this would only expedite the destruction of the Tallapoosa River.</p>	
<u>Donna Matthews</u>	<u>June 14, 2021</u> <u>20210614-5000</u>	<p>In December 1973, the Federal Power Commission granted the Alabama Power Company a license to build a dam on the upper Tallapoosa River to house two 16 megawatt units.¹ Ultimately, two 67.5 megawatt units went online in 1983, a four fold increase in generating capacity. Following the trail of how and why the changes were allowed requires a lengthy FOIA inquiry.</p> <p>The licensed purposes for the dam construction were flood control of Tallapoosa River and generation of electric power. FAMIS documents are found on the FERC website beginning in the 1960’s, but substantive public documents among them are scarce. However, an early Army Corps of Engineers (see below Document accession #: 20010204-2538; Army Corps Flood Control 1968 20010204-2538) gives an indication of their thoughts regarding flood management.</p> <p>These assessments of the reservoir expansion capacity necessary to remediate flooding (include allowing pool height of 799) in the Tallapoosa basin proved prescient.</p> <p>After approval and licensure, the unruly nature of the river prevented easy construction. A flood in 1977 a flood washed away part of the coffer dam, construction halted for a couple of years (APC financial constraints). Construction began again, was halted by flooding in 1981.²</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>The 1965 preliminary permit application and the subsequent original license granted by the Federal Power Commission in 1973 authorized 135 megawatts.</p> <p>The relicensing process does not require the licensee or FERC to analyze pre-project conditions as the project already exists and is considered baseline when evaluating events.</p> <p>Any member of the public may conduct a FOIA request to FERC.</p>

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		<p>Comment: I request APC make public the filings of all parties engaged in the decision to allow changes in the generating capacity of the Crooked Creek Project. This includes documents relating to expected effects on flood control and dam operations from the changes. It is my understanding that during this comment period is the opportunity to identify root causes of the problems plaguing this project (above and below the dam) since generation began in 1983.</p> <p>1. Atkins, Leah Rawls in Lake Wedowee Magazine Vol 1: issue 1; pp 10-14. The Randolph Leader publisher</p> <p>2. Atkins, Leah Rawls, Developed for the Service of Alabama , the Centennial History of the Alabama Power Company, pp 439-440.</p>	
<u>Donna Matthews</u>	<u>June 14, 2021</u> <u>20210614-5000</u>	<p>Recreation: At the 10,000 acre impoundment above Harris Dam there is one APC developed and maintained public swimming area. In spite of its out of the way location and dangerous swimming terrain (submerged, invisible drop offs, cliffs and annual casualties), 10s of thousands of visitors/yr go to Flat Rock Park. Of the APC managed facilities it ranks 2nd only to the highway 48 boat ramp. It is a nice facility, but not adequate for the needs of the county and its increasing number of visitors. With only one public swimming area, APC is effectively limiting recreational access on the lake to those with private homes or boats.</p> <p>Downstream recreational activities are severely limited by lack of public access below the dam. Efforts by search & rescue crews are also severely hampered by lack of public access to the downstream river.</p> <p>It is noteworthy to observe the response rate from a mail survey sent to 225 downstream landowners in January 2020. The query was an attempt to fill in data gaps regarding downstream recreation. Nearly 50% of surveys were completed. What is significant is the just short of phenomenal 50% response rate representing the depth and interest downstream landowners have in the management and reclamation of the river.</p> <p>Another small comment regarding the survey taken of a tour group. A river guide who does not impress and shoe clients a good time will not be in business very long. Responses from these 'first timers' are not useful for recreation evaluation purposes.</p> <p>Comment: In the Recreation report, APC provides no specific details about future recreation projects. Clear precise effort at laying out their vision is requested.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>Alabama Power is proposing to design, install, and maintain recreation (canoe/kayak) access in the tailrace below Harris Dam within the Project Boundary. Alabama Power is also proposing to provide an additional recreation site on Lake Harris to include a day use park (with amenities for swimming, picnicking, and a boat ramp).</p> <p>Alabama Power also proposes to develop and implement a Recreation Plan, which serves to guide recreation decision making over the course of the license.</p>

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		<p>Provide plans for an additional 2-3 sites for public access for swimming, picnicking, non motorized boating at more easily accessible locations, including one on the east side of the reservoir.</p> <p>Provide plans for (by purchasing or leasing land), additional public put-in locations below the dam. Locations are best placed at Malone, Wadley and other sites close enough to allow day paddles.</p> <p>It is desirable to have these plans required as part of the relicensing process providing details to the public including locations timetables for completion of improvements.</p>																																																									
<u>Donna Matthews</u>	<u>June 14, 2021</u> <u>20210614-5000</u>	<p>Flooding: The table below is assembled from screen shots taken by Albert Eiland to illustrate the relative stability of reservoir levels during heavy rain and potential flood events. His request is for APC to work with USACE to drop reservoir levels in anticipation of allowing the reservoir to receive the upstream rainfall flows using that absorptive property to remediate downstream flooding.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="709 831 1201 1307"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Time</th> <th>Wadley* ft</th> <th>Reservoir ft</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5.5.21</td> <td>6:00 AM</td> <td>20.16</td> <td>792.97</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.5.21</td> <td>3:00 AM</td> <td>18.06</td> <td>793.24</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>11:00 AM</td> <td>19.11</td> <td>792.79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.12.21</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.20.20</td> <td>3:00 PM</td> <td>13.6</td> <td>790.47</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.7.20</td> <td>12:30 PM</td> <td>14.28</td> <td>788.11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.12.20</td> <td>7:15 PM</td> <td>14.56</td> <td>790.84</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.13.20</td> <td>2:45 PM</td> <td>14.2</td> <td>791.76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.13.20</td> <td>5:00 PM</td> <td>14.72</td> <td>791.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.18.20</td> <td>4:15 PM</td> <td>13.89</td> <td>784.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.1.2</td> <td>8:45 PM</td> <td>8.3</td> <td>786</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.19.19</td> <td>11:45 AM</td> <td>13.2</td> <td>789.84</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.20.19</td> <td>12:15 AM</td> <td>13.55</td> <td>789.84</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*13 ft is flood level</p>	Date	Time	Wadley* ft	Reservoir ft	5.5.21	6:00 AM	20.16	792.97	5.5.21	3:00 AM	18.06	793.24		11:00 AM	19.11	792.79	5.12.21				4.20.20	3:00 PM	13.6	790.47	2.7.20	12:30 PM	14.28	788.11	2.12.20	7:15 PM	14.56	790.84	2.13.20	2:45 PM	14.2	791.76	2.13.20	5:00 PM	14.72	791.9	2.18.20	4:15 PM	13.89	784.5	2.1.2	8:45 PM	8.3	786	4.19.19	11:45 AM	13.2	789.84	4.20.19	12:15 AM	13.55	789.84	<p>As described in Exhibit B of the Final License Application, Alabama Power operates the Harris Project under the approved Water Control Manual that includes criteria and associated rules of operating during a high flow event.</p> <p>Alabama Power notes that this comment exceeded the character limit on FERC's eLibrary and ends abruptly.</p>
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<p><u>Carol Knight on behalf of Randolph County Commission</u></p>	<p><u>June 14, 2021</u> <u>20210614-5002</u></p>	<p>PLEASE NOTE: These comments were written on May 28, 2021, and the county administrator could not submit them. I am submitting them on behalf of the Randolph County (AL) County Commissioners.</p> <p>This information is being sent to FERC in support of downstream recreation on the Tallapoosa River below the R. L. Harris Dam. This is written on behalf of the Randolph County Commission.</p> <p>The Commission would like to request that public access be added along the Tallapoosa River below the dam to increase access for all to enjoy the river.</p> <p>For generations, people have enjoyed the river and its unique offerings, but now the need for more accessible areas to enjoy the river below the R. L. Harris Dam are anticipated. More people enjoy kayaking and fishing, and many enjoy canoeing down the river, putting in at Malone or Wadley and taking out at a site in Chambers County. However, this problem exists: those who recreate on the river often trespass on private property to gain access.</p> <p>The Commission wants Alabama Power to invest in sites as recreational areas for the public to enjoy the waterways. This would not only create more recreation for the public but would enhance the tourism to the Town of Wadley, Alabama. This would enhance recreation, economic growth, and interest in this small community that is home to the second oldest community college in the state, Southern Union State Community College.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>Alabama Power is proposing to design, install, and maintain recreation (canoe/kayak) access in the tailrace below Harris Dam within the Project Boundary. Alabama Power is also proposing to provide an additional recreation site on Lake Harris to include a day use park (with amenities for swimming, picnicking, and a boat ramp).</p> <p>Alabama Power notes that the property identified by the County Commission as a potential recreation area has not been selected as a future project recreation site due to its steep terrain, its location on a narrow body</p>

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		<p>In addition, the County is in need of a more centrally located recreational area. The only park is at Flat Rock and is not easily accessible nor is the terrain favorable for swimming. The County stands in need of large public campsite with picnic tables, grills and bath houses, adjacent swimming areas for the general public, hiking trails, a playground. Possibly a waterslide or splash park would be a welcome asset to our County.</p> <p>The property we believe to be most favorable for this type recreational area is a parcel of property that Alabama Power currently owns northwest of Wedowee, AL more particularly described as SW1/4 of NE1/4 lying E of Little Tallapoosa River, Wedowee Creek Seg. Sec. 33, T19S, R11E. There is 12 acres conveniently situated just out of town on the lake. This property would be within 10 minutes of down town Wedowee.</p> <p>This Wedowee area would be much easier for law enforcement to patrol, as well as for entry for emergency vehicles and rescue units, should they be needed. Every year we have people hurt or drowned at the Flat Rock location and it takes, what seems like, forever to reach the "Rock" from both Randolph County and Clay County</p>	<p>of water, and that it has no public road access.</p>
<u>Taylor Melzer (Mayor of Waverly)</u>	<u>June 14, 2021</u> <u>20210614-5018</u>	<p>I write this letter as both the Mayor of the Town of Waverly, and as an avid Alabamian outdoorsman to implore that FERC make strict guideline requirements in the following three critical areas when formulating the new license</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More stringent regulations requiring greater consistency of flow in order to reduce sedimentation, drastic temperature fluctuation and public danger while at the same time promoting health of the river's wildlife, and thus promoting tourism resulting a win for all parties. 2. More reliable and accurate generation/flow reporting is needed to provide safer boating and fishing (Life Safety) 3. More public access, for tourism, patrolling, and rescue efforts. (Life Safety/Tourism) <p>The following is my attempt to convey a comprehensive "big picture" look at issues and considerations that make strong justifications for strengthening the current shortcomings cited above.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Alabama Power reviewed and considered these comments in developing the Final License Application for the Harris Project.</p> <p>Alabama Power is proposing to implement a continuous minimum flow to provide greater consistency of flow in the Tallapoosa River below Harris Dam.</p> <p>Alabama Power is also proposing to design, install, and maintain recreation (canoe/kayak) access in the tailrace below Harris Dam within the Project Boundary.</p>

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		<p>While not located directly on the Tallapoosa, Waverly is conveniently close and thus directly affected by the health of the river economy. Our tiny town's sales tax revenue is very dependent on tourism dollars spent at both our world famous music venue Standard Deluxe and our fine dining restaurant The Waverly Local. Many visitors to both often tie some portion of their visit in with one to the Tallapoosa or vice versa. There are many boaters, paddlers, hunters and fisherman who frequent our town, as they do many of the other towns along the water.</p> <p>While these folks are "water lovers", that label doesn't just mean the water; it means they love all of the things that go with it- the fish and turtles and flowers and trees and insects that rely on it every bit as much, if not more so than we do to live. Nature is really what people love about water. And nature in Alabama is in last place when it comes to having a seat at the table. In Alabama industry prevails when it comes to environmental regulation.</p> <p>Counter to that sad fact, Alabama, known as "America's Amazon", is the most biodiverse state in the nation and one of the most biodiverse places in the world. A large contributing factor in that is because it has more navigable waterways than any other state as well, 132,000 miles, regulated by the lowest funded state environmental management agency in the country- ADEM.</p> <p>Within these 132,000 weakly protected miles. the Tallapoosa is considered to be one of the cleanest and most pristine waterways left in Alabama, with the stretch between Wedowee and Lake Martin being perhaps the most remote, beautiful and beloved in it's whole 265 mile length. Add to that the Horseshoe Bend National Military Park, the Alabama Scenic Waterway's "Harold Banks Canoe Trail" and the best fly-fishing on the river (some even say the state), gives this segment the strongest tourism dollar potential of "skinny water" on the river.</p> <p>As current drought conditions persist out West and fishing pressure in North Georgia and North Carolina increase, I predict that East Alabama and the Tallapoosa River has the potential to become one of the next premier fly-fishing destinations. The Tallapoosa even boasts endemic black bass species such as the redeye bass, which is becoming known as an excellent game fish to target with a fly rod. In addition, the Alabama bass, striped bass, are excellent game fish that inhabit the Tallapoosa River.</p>	

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		<p>This tourism money will only continue to grow as word gets out, but with that there are other hugely impactful factors that will grow as well in the near future. The redeye bass isn't just up against anglers. Atlanta and Birmingham rapidly continue to merge towards each other along I-20, Lake Martin property values and Atlanta growth are creating increased interest in Lake Wedowee. The Auburn/Opelika Area is predicted to double in size to 200,000 in the next 15 years.</p> <p>With this growth comes a greater need for power thus more generation. Yet, with the increases in population, agriculture and industrial growth being largely focused to north and east (which is also the source directions of both the Tallapoosa and Little Tallapoosa) coupled with Atlanta's need for water, this will also put a greater drain on the amount of water that makes its way down, and thus concentrating weakly regulated pollutants to higher levels.</p> <p>The poultry industry is the largest industry in Alabama, and has seen major growth in the eastern portion, and has recently been granted exemption from EPA standards and made "self regulating". We will see how this plays out but it doesn't sound good based on "industry's self regulating" past history. The livestock industry is large here as well. These CAFO's have driven E. Coli counts to as high as 9000 per 100ml (ADEM limit is 230 E. Coli per 100ml) in feeder creeks in 2020 on the portion of river between Lineville and Alexander City.</p> <p>While I do realize that the E. Coli pollution, coupled with sedimentation from bad logging, agricultural and development practices, are not in FERC's scope, I mention them because they are equal to or perhaps greater threats to the river than bad generation practices. I mention them to impart upon you how many other major threats the river faces, and how they will only continue to grow, and to ask that you strengthen your regulation requirements to force more strict Best Management Practices upon Alabama Power, because you are the only ones with the "power" to do so. This is one area where the Federal Government can hold sway in protecting our beautiful yet poorly protected state.</p> <p>As it stands, all the threats facing most water, and all nature for that matter, can be best described as BMPFP (Best Management Practices For Profit). Mega monopoly's BMPs should be defined threefold in order of practices that</p>	

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		<p>consider what is best- 1st for the Planet, 2nd for the Public, and 3rd for the Shareholders. Anything less is immoral and oftentimes criminal in hindsight.</p> <p>The issues faced in the science studying the past is critical, and it is even more critical to make comprehensive considerations for the inevitably worsening and complicating issues the Tallapoosa River will face in the future.</p> <p>In summary, I strongly believe the issues mentioned above are in need of strengthened implementation. It has been shown that the need for FERC to strengthen the issues cited is strongly supported not just by historical precedents and objective science, but that these views are strongly embraced by and expressed by many (not just local) stakeholders ranging from concerned citizens, property owners, scientists and environmental groups to local small businesses, law enforcement and government officials. Please make this historically impactful ruling one that future generations will look back on and be proud of.</p>	