



R. L. Harris Hydroelectric Project

FERC No. 2628

Meeting Summary

HAT 6 Meeting

March 11, 2019

9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Alabama Historical Commission

Participants:

Stacye Hathorn – Alabama Historical Commission
Amanda McBride- Alabama Historical Commission
Billy Baily- Poarch Band of Creek Indians
Larry Haikey- Poarch Band of Creek Indians
Angie Anderegg- Alabama Power
Keith Chandler - Alabama Power
Bill Gardner - Alabama Power
Tina Mills - Alabama Power
Matt Gage - Office of Archaeological Research (OAR)
Amanda Fleming - Kleinschmidt Associates
Carey Oakley – Affinity Archaeological Consultants, LLC.

Via Skype and Phone:

Stephen Yerka- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Elizabeth Toombs- Cherokee Nation
RaeLynn Butler - Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Turner Hunt - Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Robin Soweka- Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Emman Spain - Muscogee (Creek) Nation
LeeAnne Wendt- Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Action Items:

- Alabama Power will invite Rachel McNamara, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), to participate in future meetings.
- Alabama Power will include updates on other Harris Relicensing components as part of the Harris Action Team (HAT) 6 meetings.
- Alabama Power will distribute the following information to the meeting participants: copy of PowerPoint presentation from March 11 meeting, archaeological survey reports for the Harris Project, Harris Pre-Application Document Appendix R, Harris Project Boundary GIS Shapefile, Harris Relicensing Study Plans filed in March 2019, and aerial photos of fish weirs.
- The next HAT 6 meeting will be on May 21 or 22.

Notes:

Angie Anderegg, Alabama Power Company (Alabama Power), gave an overview of the R.L. Harris Hydroelectric Project (Harris Project or Project). Then, Bill Gardner (Alabama Power) discussed the purpose of the meeting: to introduce and understand Harris Project cultural resources sites that may be further investigated. Bill noted that Alabama Power will distribute the archeological survey reports that the tribes requested. Next, Amanda Fleming (Kleinschmidt) reviewed the changes made to the Cultural Resources Programmatic Agreement and Historic

Properties Management Plan Study Plan. The group discussed the geographic scope and any methods of evaluating Harris Project effects on cultural resources downstream of Harris dam and potential effects to cultural resources outside of the Harris Project Boundary. Angie noted that the effects of Harris Project operations on downstream resources will be evaluated as part of the Downstream Release Alternatives Study Plan and Operating Curve Change Feasibility Analysis Study Plan. The group discussed the possibility of conducting surveys on sites along the Tallapoosa River downstream of Harris Dam through Horseshoe Bend. Bill Gardner explained that Alabama Power did not have any rights to the majority of land located in this stretch of the river. Bill added that the Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) includes an enforcement component to protect cultural resources. Therefore, because the area is private property, Alabama Power does not have any method of enforcement to prevent looting. The group discussed that Alabama Power could be granted access with permission of the property owner. Bill Gardner explained that, during the development of the Warrior Project HPMP, Alabama Power reached out to approximately one hundred property owners to gain access to conduct surveys. However, no owner granted Alabama Power this right. Amanda McBride (Alabama Historical Commission) explained that the only laws protecting cultural resources on private property are those associated with burials and human remains. In addition, Amanda Fleming proposed that Alabama Power begin each Harris Action Team (HAT) 6 meeting with an update on the other relicensing studies, as they pertain to cultural resources.

Next, Matt Gage (Office of Archaeological Research (OAR)) reviewed the criteria and selection process for sites that may be further investigated (National Register Historic Places (NRHP)), including eligibility recommendations and site inundation during water drawdown and normal Harris Project operations. He discussed the previous surveys for both the Lake Harris and Skyline areas, including fish weir investigations. Matt explained the overall summary of site components; which sites contain historic or precontact elements. Matt noted that Lake Harris and the Tallapoosa River are high energy and narrow. As part of the site component and fish weir discussion, Stacye Hathorn (Alabama Historical Commission) explained that Alabama Power and OAR may need to reevaluate historical sites on Skyline Wildlife Management Area, as some may now be NRHP eligible since the time of the previous evaluation. In conclusion, Matt noted most of the fish weirs in the Project Boundary are well under water but were surveyed prior to inundation.