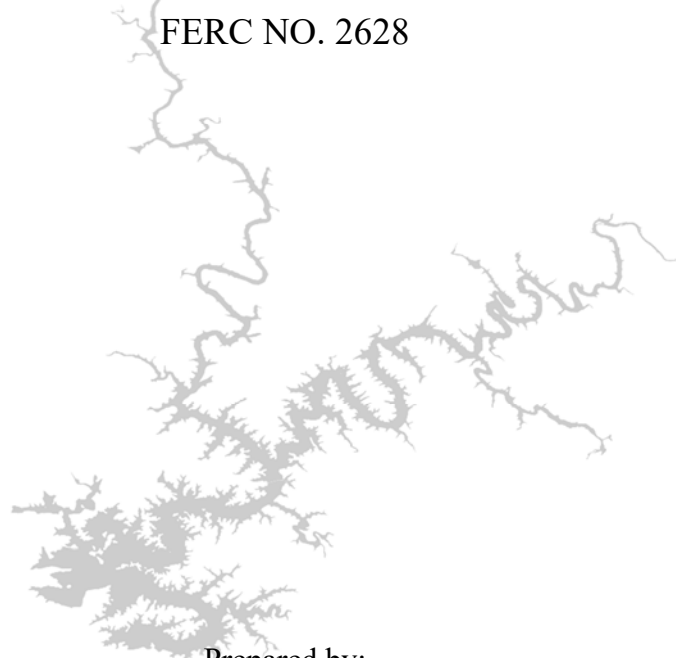




**CULTURAL RESOURCES  
PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT  
and  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
MANAGEMENT PLAN  
STUDY PLAN**

**R. L. HARRIS HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT**  
FERC NO. 2628



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# CULTURAL RESOURCES PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT AND HISTORIC PROPERTIES MANAGEMENT PLAN STUDY PLAN

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Alabama Power Company (Alabama Power) is initiating the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) relicensing of the 135-megawatt (MW) R.L. Harris Hydroelectric Project (Harris Project), FERC Project No. 2628. The Harris Project consists of a dam, spillway, powerhouse, and those lands and waters necessary for the operation of the hydroelectric project and enhancement and protection of environmental resources. These structures, lands, and water are enclosed within the FERC Project Boundary. Under the existing Harris Project license, the FERC Project Boundary encloses two distinct geographic areas, described below.

Harris Reservoir is the 9,870-acre reservoir (Harris Reservoir) created by the R.L. Harris Dam (Harris Dam). Harris Reservoir is located on the Tallapoosa River, near Lineville, Alabama. The lands adjoining the reservoir total approximately 7,392 acres and are included in the FERC Project Boundary. This includes land to 795 feet mean sea level (msl)<sup>1</sup>, as well as natural undeveloped areas, hunting lands, prohibited access areas, recreational areas, and all islands.



The Harris Project also contains 15,063 acres of land within the James D. Martin-Skyline Wildlife Management Area (Skyline WMA) located in Jackson County, Alabama. These lands are located approximately 110 miles north of Harris Reservoir and were acquired and incorporated into the FERC Project Boundary as part of the FERC-approved Harris Project Wildlife Mitigative Plan and Wildlife Management Plan. These lands are leased to, and managed by, the State of Alabama for wildlife management and public hunting and are part of the Skyline WMA (ADCNR 2016b).

For the purposes of this study plan, “Lake Harris” refers to the 9,870-acre reservoir, adjacent 7,392 acres of project land, and the dam, spillway, and powerhouse. “Skyline” refers to the 15,063 acres of project land within the Skyline WMA in Jackson County. “Harris Project” refers to all the lands, waters, and structures enclosed within the FERC Project Boundary, which includes both Lake Harris and Skyline. Harris Reservoir refers to the 9,870-acre reservoir only; Harris Dam refers to the dam, spillway, and powerhouse. The Project Area refers to the land and water in the Project Boundary and immediate geographic area adjacent to the Project Boundary (Alabama Power Company 2018).

Lake Harris and Skyline are located within two river basins: the Tallapoosa and Tennessee River Basins, respectively. The only waterbody managed by Alabama Power as part of their FERC license for the Harris Project is the Harris Reservoir.

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<sup>1</sup> Also includes a scenic easement (to 800 feet msl or 50 horizontal feet from 793 feet msl, whichever is less, but never less than 795 feet msl)

## **Background and Existing Information**

Before and after Harris Project construction, several cultural resources studies were conducted at the Harris Project. In total, eighteen surveys were conducted in the Harris Project Area. In 1974, the University of Alabama Department of Anthropology<sup>2</sup> performed an archaeological survey of the dam construction area, proposed Lake Harris area, and a proposed thermal plant site to be situated adjacent to the Harris Reservoir<sup>3</sup>. Following this initial survey, the Department of Anthropology performed two additional studies: one in 1974 and another in 1975. The University of Alabama Museum's Office of Archaeological Research (OAR) conducted additional studies in the proposed Harris Project Area in 1976 and 1977. The purpose of the 1977 survey was to synthesize the results of previous investigations. In 1985, after Harris Reservoir was inundated, OAR performed surveys primarily focused on shoreline areas within the scenic easement (OAR 2016a). These additional surveys were conducted to assess lands to be used for various project construction permitting, including building and maintaining transmission lines, creating food plots for hunting lands around Lake Harris, and building bridges (OAR 2016a).

The National Park Service (NPS) has expressed concern that flows from Harris Dam are damaging the Miller Covered Bridge piers and other cultural resources located at the Horseshoe Bend National Military Park. The Miller Covered Bridge was built in 1908 and, at 600 feet, was once the longest covered bridge in the United States. In the late 1950s, a new concrete bridge was constructed parallel to the Miller Covered Bridge.

The University of Alabama, in conjunction with Alabama Power, conducted two surveys at Skyline. From November 1990 to March 1991, the University of Alabama performed a survey of approximately 3,000 acres within the Skyline Project Boundary. In October 2006, OAR performed a cultural resources survey on two areas within the Skyline WMA in Jackson County near Stevenson, Alabama (OAR 2016b).

Additional background information on the basin setting, general prehistory of Alabama, prehistory within the Tallapoosa and Tennessee River basins, and historic overview are contained in the Pre-Application Document (PAD) for the Harris Project.

### 1.1 Resource Management Goals

The FERC has responsibility to consult with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Advisory Council) and the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC or State Historic Preservation Office [SHPO]) pursuant to the Advisory Council's regulations (36 CFR part 800) implementing the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108; hereinafter, "Section 106"). FERC could require Alabama Power to implement the provisions of a Programmatic Agreement (PA) as a condition of issuing a new license for the Harris Project, if there will be adverse effects to historic properties, to satisfy FERC's Section 106 responsibilities during the term of the new license. Finally, Alabama Power will work with potentially-affected tribes and follow the Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties developed by the National Park

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<sup>2</sup> The Department of Anthropology at the University of Alabama conducted surveys and archaeological investigations prior to the creation of the Office of Archaeological Research.

<sup>3</sup> The proposed thermal plant was never built.

Service (Parker and King 1990) to consult on and develop a Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP) Identification Plan.

## 1.2 Current Operations and Operational Alternatives

The cultural resources study will involve collecting and summarizing existing cultural resources baseline information. Any effects on cultural resources from potential changes in operations will be analyzed in the R.L. Harris Project Operating Curve Change Feasibility Study and the Downstream Release Alternatives Study. Information from the baseline and effects analyses will be included the Harris Project Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) that will be developed as part of this study.

## 2.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the study is to develop a plan to assess cultural resources identified in the Harris Project Area of Potential Effects (APE).

The first objective of the study is to develop a HPMP for the Harris Project. The HPMP will describe the Harris Project, APE, anticipated effects, and Alabama Power's proposed measures to protect Historic Properties.

The second objective of the study is to determine the need for, and if required, develop a draft PA (among FERC, the SHPO, Alabama Power, and applicable federally recognized tribes<sup>4</sup>) for managing Historic Properties that may be affected by a new license issued to Alabama Power for the continued operation of the Harris Project. FERC will issue the draft PA with any draft National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents (Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement) and then issue the final PA with the final NEPA analysis.

## 3.0 PROJECT NEXUS AND GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The cultural resources study will determine if cultural resources are present or are likely to be present within the APE and whether the authorized Harris Project uses may cause changes in the character or use of Historic Properties, if Historic Properties exist.

The geographic scope of the study will be the APE (as defined by Harris Action Team (HAT) 6) and will include Lake Harris, Skyline, and the area below the Harris Dam through Horseshoe Bend.

## 4.0 METHODS

The overall purpose of this study is to gather additional information for preparing the draft HPMP. The procedures to attain additional information may include, but are not limited to:

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<sup>4</sup> As of March 2019, the applicable tribes consist of the following: Cherokee Nation, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, Kialegee Tribal Town, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, and Thlopthlocco Tribal Town.

1. Determine the APE for the Harris Project;
2. Determine the presence and location of known Historic Properties in the APE (including a pier evaluation for the Miller Covered Bridge at Horseshoe Bend National Military Park Boat Ramp);
3. Obtain detailed topographical information for the Harris Project Area;
4. Obtain data (high resolution aerial imagery, current soils maps, past surveys, etc.) to determine appropriate areas of high probability for containing Historic Properties, as needed;
5. Consult with SHPO and applicable federally recognized tribes that have an active interest in the Harris Project; and
6. Evaluate methods for determining the Harris Dam and associated facilities' eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

To accomplish this, the study may involve the following components:

1. Consult with SHPO and applicable federally recognized tribes that have an interest in the Harris Project to develop the APE for the Harris Project.
2. Complete an analysis of the Miller Covered Bridge piers at Horseshoe Bend National Military Park Boat Ramp to determine eligibility for the NRHP.
3. Update the literature search of the Alabama State Site File (ASSF) and the National Archaeological Database Bibliography (NADB) to identify any additional known historic sites and consult with applicable federally recognized tribes and the Alabama SHPO to identify any known additional cultural resources which are not recorded in the ASSF or NADB.
4. Collect Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) data and process into contour maps of the Harris Project lands.
5. Collect high resolution, ground controlled aerial imagery of Harris Project lands. This data will be processed to determine Harris Project lands that have not been developed and to provide a visual assessment of existing Harris Project lands which may contain cultural resources.
6. Review data from Items 4 and 5 and determine any additional areas for survey. Review existing surveys and current methods and determine if any updated surveys are needed<sup>5</sup>.
7. Develop a HPMP for the Harris Project, which will include provisions to conduct an analysis in 2033 of the Harris Dam and Powerhouse to determine eligibility for the NRHP.

## **5.0 REPORTS**

As the various components of this study are completed and available for review and comment, Alabama Power will share results with HAT 6 through written documentation and stakeholder meetings, as discussed in Section 2.0 of the PAD. Stakeholders will have between 7-30 days to review and comment on documents, depending on the document length and complexity. Additional meetings (in-person and via conference call) will be held as necessary to discuss study

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<sup>5</sup> Any archaeological surveys and reports must meet the guidelines in the Policy for Archaeological Survey and Testing in Alabama (Alabama Historical Commission Administrative Code Chapter 460-X-9 Archaeological Investigations). As such, the Principal Investigator will meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for archaeological fieldwork. Alabama Power will follow procedures per License Article 62 for Inadvertent Discovery.

results and solicit stakeholder input. Draft and final reports, if applicable to the study, will be filed with FERC as well as provided to the HAT members and posted to the Harris relicensing website for access by the general public. Due to the sensitive and protected nature of archaeological information, the distribution of some “privileged” information will be limited to SHPO, FERC, and applicable federally recognized Native American tribes with an interest in the Harris Project.

As part of the Integrated Licensing Process (ILP), FERC requires licensees to file two status reports: the Initial Study Report and Updated Study Report. These reports provide a status update on all the FERC-approved relicensing studies. Alabama Power will prepare these FERC reports per the requirements of 18 CFR 5.15(c) and (f).

While not required in FERC’s ILP process, Alabama Power will also file two Progress Updates during the relicensing process to provide additional updates to FERC, stakeholders, and the general public on the status of the relicensing studies, any interim work products, and any draft and final reports issued. The Progress Update will also include HAT meeting summaries. The first Progress Update will be distributed (and filed with FERC) in October 2019, approximately six months prior to the Initial Study Report; the second update will be distributed (and filed with FERC) in October 2020, approximately six months prior to the Updated Study Report.

## 6.0 SCHEDULE

This schedule corresponds to the FERC-approved Harris Project Process Plan and Schedule. Consultation meeting dates will be finalized with HAT 6 members upon FERC approval of the study plan.

FERC Study Plan Determination	April 2019
Distribute information request to applicable tribes	May 2019
Progress Update	October 2019
Complete APE consultation and provide written description and map to HAT 6	April 2020
Complete background research and data collection	April 2020
Complete pre-field work consultation <sup>6</sup>	April 2020
Complete Inadvertent Discovery Plan	April 2020
Conduct TCP consultation	April 2019 – April 2020
Initial Study Report	April 2020
Initial Study Report Meeting	April 2020
Progress Update	October 2020
Complete survey work and TCP identification	February 2021
Complete eligibility assessments for known cultural resources	July 2021
Updated Study Report	April 2021
Updated Study Report Meeting	April 2021
Issue determination of effect on historic properties	July 2021
Draft HPMP	July 2021
File Preliminary Licensing Proposal	By July 3, 2021

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<sup>6</sup> HAT 6 meetings were held on January 25 and March 11, 2019. Another HAT 6 meeting is planned on May 22, 2019. Additional meetings are planned for August/September 2019, January/February 2020.

## **7.0 COST AND EFFORT**

Alabama Power estimates the cost to consult on and implement this study plan, including costs to review cultural data and develop a HPMP, is \$270K.

## **8.0 REFERENCES**

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR). 2016b Wildlife Management Areas. Available at: <http://www.outdooralabama.com/wildlife-management-areas>. Accessed November 2016.

Alabama Power Company. 2018. Pre-Application Document for the Harris Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2628). Alabama Power Company, Birmingham, AL.

Office of Archaeological Research. 2016a. Summary of Previous Surveys of R.L. Harris Reservoir: 1974:2010. Tuscaloosa, AL.

Office of Archaeological Research. 2016b. Summary of Two Previous Surveys within the Skyline Wildlife Management Area: 1992 and 2006. Tuscaloosa, AL.

Parker, P.L. and T.F. King. 1990. National Register Bulletin No. 38: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties. National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, Washington, D.C.