

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

To the Agency or Individual Addressed:

Reference: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Attached is the draft environmental impact statement (draft EIS) for the Santee Cooper Project (FERC No. 199), located on the Santee and Cooper rivers, in Berkeley, Calhoun, Clarendon, Orangeburg, and Sumter counties, South Carolina.

This draft EIS documents the views of governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, affected Indian tribes, the public, the license applicant, and Commission staff. It contains staff evaluations on the applicant's proposal and alternatives for relicensing the Santee Cooper Project.

You are invited to file comments on the draft EIS. Any comments, conclusions, or recommendations that draw upon studies, reports, or other working papers should be supported by appropriate documentation. Your comments will be considered in the staff's preparation of the final EIS.

Comments should be filed with Magalie R. Salas, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20426. All comments should be filed within 60 days of the notice date in the Federal Register and should reference Project No. 199-205. Comments may be filed electronically via the Internet in lieu of paper. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filings. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and instructions at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the eLibrary link.

Before the Commission makes a licensing decision, it will take into account all concerns relevant to the public interest. The draft EIS will be part of the record from which the Commission will make its decision. The draft EIS was sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and made available to the public in March, 2007.

Copies of the draft EIS are available for review in the Commission's Public Reference Branch, Room 2A, located at 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426. An electronic copy of the draft EIS may be viewed on FERC's website at <http://www.ferc.gov> using the "eLibrary" link. Please call (202) 502-8222 or TTY (202) 208-1659 for assistance.

Attachment: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

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COVER SHEET

- a. Title: Relicensing the Santee Cooper Project in South Carolina, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) Project No. 199-205
- b. Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- c. Lead Agency: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

d. Abstract: The South Carolina Public Service Authority (SCPSA) filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a new license under Part I of the Federal Power Act (FPA), for the existing 130-megawatt (MW) Santee Cooper Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 199), located on the Santee and Cooper rivers in Berkeley, Calhoun, Clarendon, Orangeburg, and Sumter counties, South Carolina. There are no federal lands located within the project boundary.

The project operates in accordance with its existing license and pursuant to an agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Corp's St. Stephen Hydroelectric Station, which is located on Lake Moultrie, a Santee Cooper Project reservoir. No change in project operation is proposed by SCPSA.

Key issues associated with relicensing this project are instream flows, upstream and downstream fish passage, reservoir operations, and threatened and endangered species. SCPSA's proposal includes measures intended to address these issues, including measures that are part of a draft settlement agreement (DSA) among SCPSA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

The staff's recommendation is to relicense the project in accordance with the DSA, along with some modifications by staff.

e. Contact:	<p>Environmental Staff</p> <p>Monte J. TerHaar</p> <p>Federal Energy Regulatory Commission</p> <p>Office of Energy Projects</p> <p>888 First Street, N.E.</p> <p>Washington, DC 20426</p> <p>(202) 502-6035</p>	<p>Staff Counsel</p> <p>Merrill F. Hathaway</p> <p>Federal Energy Regulatory Commission</p> <p>Office of the General Counsel</p> <p>888 First Street, N.E.</p> <p>Washington, DC 20426</p> <p>(202) 502-8825</p>
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f. Transmittal: This draft environmental impact statement, prepared by the Commission’s staff on the hydroelectric license application filed by South Carolina Public Service Authority for the existing Santee Cooper Project (No. 199), is being made available to the public in March 2007, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.¹

¹National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, amended (Pub. L. 91-190. 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended by Pub. L. 94-52, July 3, 1975, Pub. L. 94-83, August 9, 1975, and Pub. L. 97-258, §4(b), September 13, 1982).

FOREWORD

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission), pursuant to the Federal Power Act (FPA)² and the U.S. Department of Energy Organization Act³ is authorized to issue licenses for up to 50 years for the construction and operation of non-federal hydroelectric developments subject to its jurisdiction, on the necessary conditions:

That the project adopted...shall be such as in the judgment of the Commission will be best adapted to a comprehensive plan for improving or developing a waterway or waterways for the use or benefit of interstate or foreign commerce, for the improvement and utilization of water-power development, for the adequate protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife (including related spawning grounds and habitat), and for other beneficial public uses, including irrigation, flood control, water supply, and recreational and other purposes referred to in Section 4(e)...⁴

The Commission may require such other conditions not inconsistent with the FPA as may be found necessary to provide for the various public interests to be served by the project.⁵

²16 U.S.C. §791(a)-825r, as amended by the Electric Consumers Protection Act of 1986, Public Law 99-495 (1986) and the Energy Policy Act of 1992, Public Law 102-486 (1992).

³Public Law 95-91, 91 Stat. 556 (1977).

⁴16 U.S.C. §803(a).

⁵16 U.S.C. §803(g).

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