

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426

OFFICE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

June 23, 2023

Subject: Alabama Power Company's Proposed Chandler Mountain Pumped Storage Project

Dear Community Leader:

Please find enclosed a copy of a notice issued by the environmental staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) that, among other things, informs the public that the Alabama Power Company (Alabama Power) intends to file a license application for its proposed Chandler Mountain Pumped Storage Project (Project). As described in the notice, Alabama Power proposes to construct and operate a new pumped storage hydroelectric project in Etowah and St. Clair Counties, Alabama (see enclosed map). Pumped storage projects move water between two reservoirs located at different elevations to store energy and generate electricity. The Project would require the construction of a new 1,090-acre lower reservoir on Little Canoe Creek East and a 526-acre upper reservoir on Chandler Mountain, northwest of the existing Chandler Mountain Lake. Additional information about Alabama Power's proposal can be found in the Commission's publicly available administrative record, commonly referred to as eLibrary, which can be accessed through the FERC website at www.ferc.gov (FERC Docket No. P-15229-001). For assistance with eLibrary, please email elibraryhelpdesk@ferc.gov. Information about the project can also be obtained from Alabama Power's project website at www.chandlermountainpumpedstorage.com.

The enclosed notice also informs the public that FERC environmental staff have begun scoping for this project as part of its requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). "Scoping" refers to the process used by FERC environmental staff to seek comments from the public and others to identify issues of concern that should be addressed in the environmental review of the project as well as gaps in information that may require additional study. Under NEPA, the Commission must consider the potential impacts on the environment before making any decision. As described in the enclosed notice and Scoping Document 1 which is available in eLibrary or on Alabama Power's Chandler Mountain Pumped Storage Project website, scoping comments and initial study requests are due by August 12, 2023. Additionally, Commission environmental staff will hold two in-person, public scoping meetings to receive comments on the proposed Project. These meetings will be held on July 10, 2023, in Rainbow City, Alabama. Details about the scoping meetings can be found in the notice and Scoping Document 1.

The Commission's Office of Public Participation (OPP) seeks to empower, promote, and support public voices in Commission proceedings. OPP has identified you and/or your organization as having the potential to reach larger audiences and it is our hope that you will help us to increase awareness of this project in your community. Furthermore, OPP staff are available to help you and others better understand the Project, the Commission's review processes, and how the public can participate in this proceeding.

To assist you and other community leaders with spreading the word about this project and the Commission's ongoing review, we will periodically post information and updates about the Project on Twitter (twitter.com/FERC_OPP) and Facebook (facebook.com/OPP.FERC). We encourage you to share our social media content and information about this project with your networks, in your community's newsletters, email communications, and other places where your neighbors get their news.

OPP encourages the public to get involved early in the Commission's environmental review process. FERC staff have found that early involvement is one of the best ways to make one's voice heard. To help the public participate in the Commission's review process, OPP staff will undertake efforts to expand notification of Commission issuances and increase public awareness of project activities. OPP staff will also work to educate the public on the Project and the review process through the preparation and distribution of informational handouts and explainers. OPP staff also plan to attend public meetings, meet with interested parties and organizations, issue Project-related content via social media and conduct other activities aimed to help the public better understand and participate in this process.

Should you or anyone you know have questions about the Project or the Commission's environmental review process, OPP stands ready to assist you. If you would like any additional information, please contact OPP via email at opp@ferc.gov or by phone at (202) 502-6595. Additionally, if you would like to speak with someone located in your region, please contact Ms. Lauren Young, OPP Outreach Specialist at lauren.young@ferc.gov or by phone at (405) 435-6401. You can also visit www.ferc.gov/opp and www.ferc.gov for additional information about our office and the Commission.

Sincerely,

**NICOLE
SITARAMAN**

Nicole Sitaraman
Acting Director
Office of Public Participation

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Date: 2023.06.23 08:51:03 -04'00'

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Alabama Power Company

Project No. 15229-001

NOTICE OF INTENT TO FILE LICENSE APPLICATION, FILING OF
PRE-APPLICATION DOCUMENT (PAD), COMMENCEMENT OF ILP PRE-FILING
PROCESS, AND SCOPING; REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON THE PAD AND
SCOPING DOCUMENT, AND IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES AND ASSOCIATED
STUDY REQUESTS

(June 13, 2023)

- a. Type of Filing: Notice of Intent to File License Application for an Original License and Commencing Pre-filing Process
- b. Project No.: 15229-001
- c. Dated Filed: April 14, 2023
- d. Submitted By: Alabama Power Company (Alabama Power)
- e. Name of Project: Chandler Mountain Pumped Storage Project
- f. Location: The proposed project would be located on Little Canoe Creek East and Chandler Mountain in Etowah and St. Clair Counties, near the town of Steele, Alabama. The project would entail the construction of a new 1,090-acre lower reservoir on Little Canoe Creek East and a 526-acre upper reservoir on Chandler Mountain, northwest of the existing Chandler Mountain Lake.
- g. Filed Pursuant to: 18 C.F.R. Part 5 of the Commission's Regulations.
- h. Applicant Contact: Angie Anderegg, Chandler Licensing Project Manager, Alabama Power Company, 600 North 18th Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35203; (205) 257-2251; arsegars@southernco.com.
- i. FERC Contact: Sarah Salazar at (202) 502-6863, or e-mail at sarah.salazar@ferc.gov.
- j. Cooperating agencies: Federal, state, tribal, and local agencies with jurisdiction and/or special expertise with respect to environmental issues that wish to cooperate in the preparation of the environmental document should follow the instructions for filing such requests described in item o below. Cooperating

agencies should note the Commission's policy that agencies that cooperate in the preparation of the environmental document cannot also intervene. *See* 94 FERC ¶ 61,076 (2001).

- k. With this notice, we are initiating informal consultation with: (a) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and the joint agency regulations, thereunder, at 50 C.F.R., Part 402; and (b) the State Historic Preservation Officer, as required by section 106, National Historic Preservation Act, and the implementing regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation at 36 C.F.R. § 800.2.
- l. With this notice, we are designating Alabama Power as the Commission's non-federal representative for carrying out informal consultation, pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
- m. Alabama Power filed with the Commission a Pre-Application Document (PAD, including a proposed process plan and schedule), pursuant to 18 C.F.R. § 5.6 of the Commission's regulations.
- n. A copy of the PAD may be viewed on the Commission's website (<http://www.ferc.gov>), using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the docket number field, to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, or call (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659 (TTY). A copy of the PAD is also available for public inspection during normal business hours at the office of Alabama Power Company, 600 18th Street North, Birmingham, AL, 35203. In addition, a copy of the PAD was distributed to the following public libraries near the project: Rainbow City Public Library in Etowah County and Steele Public Library in St. Clair County.

You may register online at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/FERCOOnline.aspx> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support.

The Commission's Office of Public Participation (OPP) supports meaningful public engagement and participation in Commission proceedings. OPP can help members of the public, including landowners, environmental justice communities, Tribal members and others, access publicly available information and navigate Commission processes. For public inquiries and assistance with making filings such as interventions, comments, or requests for rehearing, the public is encouraged to contact OPP at (202) 502-6595, or at OPP@ferc.gov.

- o. With this notice, we are soliciting comments on the PAD and Commission staff's Scoping Document 1 (SD1), as well as study requests. All comments on the PAD and SD1, as well as study requests should be sent to the address above in paragraph h. In addition, all comments on the PAD and SD1, study requests, requests for cooperating agency status, and all communications to and from Commission staff related to the merits of the potential application must be filed with the Commission.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file all documents using the Commission's eFiling system at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/FERCOOnline.aspx>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/QuickComment.aspx>. You must include your name and contact information at the end of your comments. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support. In lieu of electronic filing, you may submit a paper copy. Submissions sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852. All filings must clearly identify the project name and docket number on the first page: **Chandler Mountain Pumped Storage Project (P-15229-001)**.

All filings with the Commission must bear the appropriate heading: "Comments on Pre-Application Document," "Study Requests," "Comments on Scoping Document 1," "Request for Cooperating Agency Status," or "Communications to and from Commission Staff." Any individual or entity interested in submitting study requests, commenting on the PAD or SD1, and any agency requesting cooperating status must do so by **August 12, 2023**.

- p. Scoping Process

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Commission staff will prepare either an environmental assessment (EA) or an environmental impact statement (EIS) (collectively referred to as the "NEPA document"). The NEPA document will consider both site-specific and cumulative environmental effects, and reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. The Commission's scoping process will help determine the required level of analysis and satisfy the NEPA scoping requirements, irrespective of whether the Commission prepares an EA or EIS.

Scoping Meetings

Commission staff will hold two public scoping meetings to receive input on the scope of the environmental issues that should be analyzed in the NEPA document. The daytime scoping meeting will focus on resource agency, Native American Tribes, and non-governmental organization (NGO) concerns, while the evening scoping meeting will focus on receiving input from the public. We invite all interested agencies, Native American Tribes, NGOs, and individuals to attend one of these meetings to assist us in identifying the scope of environmental issues that should be analyzed in the NEPA document. Additionally, as noted below, Alabama Power will present a video tour of the proposed project area, using drone footage, at the scoping meetings. The dates, times and locations of these meetings are as follows:

<p>Daytime Scoping Meeting</p> <p>DATE: Monday, July 10, 2023 TIME: 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. CDT PLACE: Rainbow City Community Center ADDRESS: 3702 Rainbow Drive, Rainbow City, Alabama 35906</p>
<p>Evening Scoping Meeting</p> <p>DATE: Monday, July 10, 2023 TIME: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. CDT PLACE: Rainbow City Community Center ADDRESS: 3702 Rainbow Drive, Rainbow City, Alabama 35906</p>
<p>Virtual Video Tour of the Chandler Mountain Project Area</p> <p>A video tour using drone footage will be shown during both the Daytime and Evening Scoping Meetings</p>

Copies of SD1, outlining the subject areas to be addressed in the NEPA document, were distributed to the individuals and entities on the Commission's mailing list, as well as Alabama Power's distribution list, including 462 potentially interested landowners. Copies of SD1 will be available at the scoping meetings, or may be viewed on the web at <http://www.ferc.gov>, using the "eLibrary" link. Follow the directions for accessing information in paragraph n. Based on all oral and written comments, a Scoping Document 2 (SD2) may be issued. SD2 may

include a revised process plan and schedule, as well as a list of issues, based on the scoping process.

Environmental Site Review

The applicant and Commission staff will conduct an environmental site review of the proposed project. All interested agencies, Native American Tribes, NGOs, and individuals are invited to attend. All participants are responsible for their own transportation and must wear closed-toe shoes/boots for walking in uneven/sloped terrain around the proposed project area. If you plan to attend the environmental site review, please contact Dave Anderson with Alabama Power at (205) 257-1398, or via email at chandlerpshlicensing@southernco.com, on or before June 28, 2023. If calling to RSVP, stakeholders should provide their name, phone number, and an email address. The time and location of the environmental site review is as follows:

Chandler Mountain Project On-Site Environmental Site Review

DATE: Tuesday, July 11, 2023

TIME: 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. (CDT); meeting time will be 8:45 a.m.

PLACE: The location to meet for the Environmental Site Review will be provided to those that RSVP. Space is limited.

Meeting Objectives

At the scoping meetings, Commission staff will: (1) initiate scoping of the issues; (2) review and discuss existing conditions; (3) review and discuss existing information and identify preliminary information and study needs; (4) review and discuss the process plan and schedule for pre-filing activity that incorporates the time frames provided for in Part 5 of the Commission's regulations and, to the extent possible, maximizes coordination of federal, state, and tribal permitting and certification processes; and (5) discuss the potential of any federal or state agency or Native American Tribe to act as a cooperating agency for development of an environmental document. Meeting participants should come prepared to discuss their issues and/or concerns. Please review the PAD in preparation for the scoping meetings. Directions on how to obtain a copy of the PAD and SD1 are included in item n of this document.

Meeting Procedures

The meetings will be recorded by a court reporter and become part of the Commission's formal record on the project.

Agencies, Native American Tribes, NGOs, and individuals with environmental expertise and concerns are encouraged to attend the meetings and to assist Commission staff in defining and clarifying the issues to be addressed in the NEPA document.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

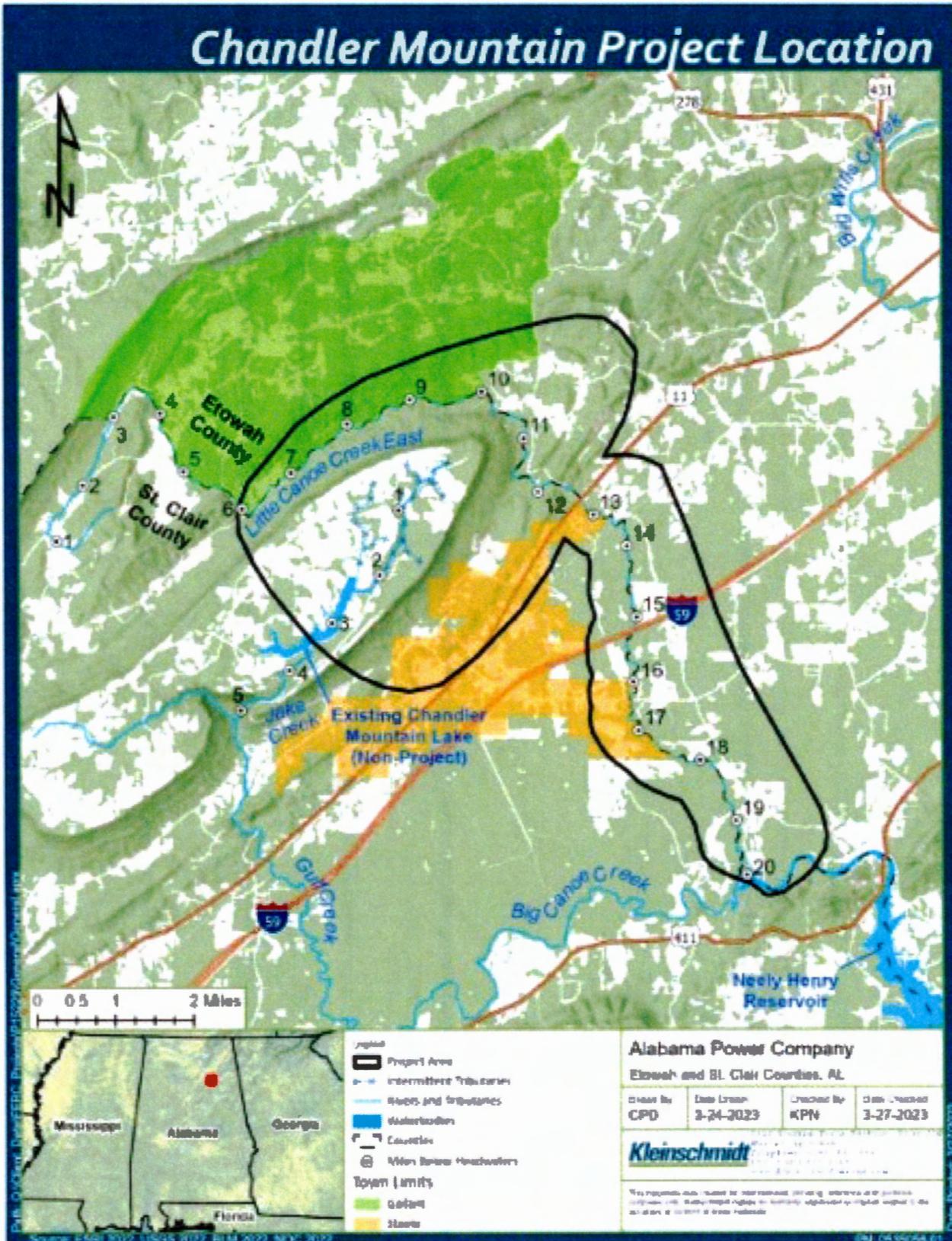


Figure 1. Location of the proposed Chandler Mountain Project. (Source: PAD, 2023).



OFFICE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Bringing People to FERC and Bringing FERC to People



The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of natural gas, oil, and electricity. The mission of the FERC's Office of Public Participation (OPP) is to empower, promote, and support public voices at the Commission.

Bringing People to FERC

If you are interested in participating in a FERC proceeding, have a question about a FERC proceeding, or want to learn more about FERC and its role as a federal regulatory agency in the energy sector, OPP is here to help.

OPP can support you in your efforts to:

- Understand the industries FERC regulates and the limits of FERC jurisdiction;
- Find the FERC matter that relates to your concern, by docket number;
- File a comment, intervene, and participate in a FERC matter;
- Determine filing deadlines and understand FERC processes; and
- Find documents filed at FERC and previous FERC decisions.

OPP is helping people use existing FERC filing systems and document libraries and exploring ways to make those systems easier to use.

Bringing FERC to People

In addition to responding to inquiries, OPP conducts outreach to communities and organizations that have traditionally been under-represented or are new to FERC processes, such as Tribal members and environmental justice communities, to facilitate greater understanding of Commission processes and solicit broader participation in matters before the Commission.

OPP is attending public meetings, visiting with community organizations, and delivering presentations around the country to encourage more participation in, and understanding of, FERC matters.



Website: www.FERC.gov/OPP

Email: opp@ferc.gov

Phone: (202) 502-6595

Follow us on:     



PUBLIC COMMENT MEETINGS



Make your voice heard!

CHANDLER MOUNTAIN PUMPED STORAGE PROJECT

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is seeking comments on the scope of the environmental issues that should be considered and addressed in the environmental review of the proposed Chandler Mountain Pumped Storage Project. Public comments are integral to the FERC's review and decision-making processes.

Daytime Meeting

DATE: Monday, July 10, 2023

TIME: 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. CDT

PLACE: Rainbow City Community Center

ADDRESS: 3702 Rainbow Drive, Rainbow City, Alabama 35906

Evening Meeting

DATE: Monday, July 10, 2023

TIME: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. CDT

PLACE: Rainbow City Community Center

ADDRESS: 3702 Rainbow Drive, Rainbow City, Alabama 35906

For additional information, please contact FERC's Office of Public Participation.
www.FERC.gov/OPP opp@ferc.gov (202) 502-6595
