

MEETING NOTES

**SOUTH CAROLINA ELECTRIC & GAS COMPANY
SALUDA HYDRO PROJECT RELICENSING
DOWNSTREAM FLOWS TECHNICAL WORKING COMMITTEE**

**SCDNR HEADQUARTERS
March 01, 2006**

final dka 03-22-06

ATTENDEES:

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Tom Eppink	SCANA	Charlene Coleman	AW
Bill Marshall	SCDNR and LSSRAC	Malcolm Leaphart	TU
Patrick Moore	AR/SCCCL	Dave Anderson	Kleinschmidt Associates
Guy Jones	River Runner	Jennifer Summerlin	Kleinschmidt Associates
Karen Kustafik	Columbia Parks and Recreation		

HOMEWORK ITEMS:

- Charlene Coleman – send list of river users to group
- All – Review list of river users and begin to fill in “who, what, when, where, why”
- All – compile a working bibliography of existing studies related to the LSR
- Dave – scan and email creel surveys done on the LSR

PARKING LOT ITEMS:

- None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: **TBA**

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These notes serve to be a summary of the major points presented during the meeting and are not intended to be a transcript or analysis of the meeting.

Dave A. began the meeting by going over the tasks associated with the committee. Dave outlined the function of the group to include proposing recreational flows for the lower Saluda River and the effects of project operations on recreational use of the LSR. Tom E. questioned the group about what recreational issues exist on the LSR. Someone identified the coldwater trout fishery and the striper fishery. Dave asked if there were any conflicts between users on the LSR, noting that, in general, there are conflicts between boat and wading anglers. Malcolm replied that there are some problems with boats going to fast through “runs” the wading anglers are fishing, but it is not a major issue on the LSR.

Malcolm L. questioned the group as to what “recreational flows” means. Dave replied that he thinks it means flows conducive to certain activities, or optimal flows. Malcolm replied that their main concerns with the LSR are that project releases are not announced in advance and that recreating is often unsafe because of the extreme flow level changes; and, that TU advocates for the best flows to be set based on scientific studies for the fish, not for the fishermen or other recreationists. Tom E. believed the flow issues will be dealt with in the Safety RCG and in the Fish & Wildlife RCG.

Dave reviewed the plan for the TWC for the coming months. Dave thought the group should begin by reviewing existing information on the number of users on the river. Dave reminded the group that the number of users needs to be established so we can project use for the new license term. Dave wondered if we would be able to use information from the SCORP to estimate use.

Dave questioned the group as to whether it is necessary to separate users in any sort of recreational analysis. The group agreed that if another group were to conduct a use estimate for the Project, then it would be necessary to differentiate different types of uses on the LSR.

Tom questioned the group as to what would be each groups “preferred” flow for the LSR, not taking other Project uses into account (i.e., what would each group like to see if their respective uses were the only consideration). Malcolm replied that he would like to see more of a ‘run of the river’ flow regime with flows out of the lake based on flows into the lake with scheduled releases that averaged those flows over a 24 hour period for less fluctuation. Tom replied there will ultimately be a flow regime. Dave also noted the FERC will be using the current license as a baseline and they will not go back to pre-Project conditions in an environmental analysis.

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Tom continued the exercise of identifying who uses the LSR, pointing out that he envisioned identifying who, what, where, and whens of recreational use on the LSR. Tom noted that once all of this information is identified, we can begin to diagram use and provide some flow recommendations to the operations group.

Charlene discussed her classification of river users. She identified several different types of river users, as well as different sub-categories of users. The group agreed that Charlene's classifications are a good place to start and asked Charlene to type out her list and send it to the group (attached). Tom asked Charlene if there was any information about the number of users to go along with her list. Charlene replied we would have to do an informal account because different types of users are present at different times of the year. Malcolm added we need to add bikers to the list. Charlene noted that some bikers use the spillway at the dam because it's "extreme" to go over the rocks.

Bill M. noted that the largest number of river users is at the Zoo, either lounging on the rocks or enjoying the water. Tom noted that this is the next step in the process—to identify users and their locations. Charlene noted we could include drug dealers and people who are "trolling" for dates. Patrick noted that even though we joke about "rock people", there are optimal flows for those users as well.

Malcolm asked about scheduled flows. Dave pointed out the comments from the SCDNR concerning an instream flow study. The comments that SCDNR submitted in response to the ICD indicate that in lieu of an instream flow study, SCE&G can implement an instantaneous flow of at least 470 cfs to support one-way downstream navigation, and flows of 590 cfs (July – November), 1170 cfs (Jan-April), and 880 cfs (May, June and December) to provide seasonal aquatic habitat. Dave talked about the possibility that another group might conduct an IFIM based on existing data, and the Operation RCG is doing an operations model that we will have to consider when making recreational flow recommendations.

Malcolm questioned the flows the DNR is requesting and where the numbers are from. Bill M. replied that he thinks these numbers came from a study conducted by the DNR. Charlene wondered where these flows would be measured, in the tailrace or at the Zoo, etc. Tom wants to confirm the DNR standards for navigational flows. Bill M. believes the 470 cfs is the minimum flow based on an earlier study; the study does not address navigation through Millrace because jon boats do not navigate through these rapids.

Tom questioned if everyone in the group has an idea for their optimal flows. Tom clarified that, looking at the big picture, the committee will identify different flows for different users. We need to identify the impact of these various flows on different uses, and then base our optimum flow on the fewest negative impacts for the greatest number of users. Guy J. questioned the group as to how

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SCE&G will regulate flows to suit the public. Tom E. replied the new license will allow SCE&G to operate under a certain regime. The group will look at all alternatives and decide on the best outcomes. Tom thinks the final plan will fall somewhere in the middle.

Dave reminded the group that their task is to identify recreational flows and make a recommendation to other groups based on these flows. Dave reminded everyone to review the standard process form before the next RCG meeting. Dave also reminded the group that recreation is only one part of downstream flows; there are ecological considerations that will have to be made before any flow regime is approved.

The meeting adjourned with everyone agreeing to attempt to fill out the river user outline via e-mail before meeting again. The next meeting time will be determined after this process occurs.

IDENTIFIED USERS OF THE LOWER SALUDA RIVER

- swimmers
 - children & teenagers on the river banks
 - people at access areas
 - rock people
 - educational groups and clubs
- tubers
- fishermen
 - bank
 - trout
 - food—people that actually fish to feed their families
 - bass and other
 - father and son type outings to learn to fish
 - scouts and other clubs, groups
 - boat
 - trout
 - trophy bass
 - recreational
 - food
 - business (oriental group that fishes near bridges)
 - wade
 - trout
 - children w/ parents
- charity groups
 - canoe, raft, sit on tops, etc
- social groups
- clubs
- educational groups
 - schools and university
 - scouts
 - club field trips
 - outdoor clubs
- hikers
- mountain bikers
- kayakers and canoeists—(skilled)
- recreational boaters (rental and less skilled)
- 4x4 clubs
- zoo visitors
- rescue training
- kayak and canoe classes
- us team boaters practicing (olympic and world team level)
- bird watchers
- nature lovers

WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY OF STUDIES ON THE LOWER SALUDA RIVER

de Kozlowski, Steven J. 1988. Instream Flow Study, Phase II: Determination of Minimum Flow Standards to Protect Instream Uses in Priority Stream Segments; A Report to the SC General Assembly. SC Water Resources Commission.