

**STUDY PROGRESS REPORT  
WETLANDS, RIPARIAN, AND LITTORAL HABITAT  
MORGAN FALLS PROJECT (FERC NO. 2237)**

**NOVEMBER 2005**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Georgia Power is conducting a study to characterize existing wetlands, riparian, and littoral habitat at the Morgan Falls Project for use in analyzing the potential effects of continued project operation. The study is being conducted according to the study plan for the Morgan Falls Project approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) on November 26, 2004. The results of the study will be presented in a Wetlands, Riparian, and Littoral Habitat Study Report, which Georgia Power will distribute to participants by December 31, 2005, and file with the Commission by April 1, 2006. Georgia Power will use the information generated by the study to evaluate the environmental effects of its proposed project in the Preliminary Licensing Proposal, to be filed with the Commission by October 2, 2006.

The specific objectives of the Wetlands, Riparian, and Littoral Habitat Study are to: describe floodplain, wetlands, riparian habitats, and littoral habitats occurring in the project area, including lists of representative plant and animal species; identify invasive species; and prepare a map of wetland, riparian, and littoral habitat.

**2. STUDY PROGRESS**

**2.1 Activities Completed**

**Review of Existing Information**

- Obtained *Plants of Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, Checklist of Reptiles and Amphibians, and An Inventory of Aquatic Plants in the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, Atlanta, Georgia, USA*, for Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (CRNRA) from National Park Service.
- Updated lists of breeding bird species documented by the North American Breeding Bird Survey in annual surveys along routes in or near Fulton and Cobb Counties.
- Obtained checklists of bird species observed by local birders in the project area, including Morgan Falls impoundment, Chattahoochee Nature Center, Morgan Falls dam, and Johnson Ferry Unit of CRNRA.
- Compiled lists of plant, mammal, amphibian, reptile, and bird species potentially occurring in the project area.

## **Field Reconnaissance Survey**

- Completed field reconnaissance survey of wetland and aquatic vegetative communities in the project area extending up to 2,000 feet beyond the project boundary between May 12 and 27, 2005.
- Prepared lists of wetland and aquatic plant and animal species observed in project area and prepared list of invasive plant species observed.
- Prepared descriptions of dominant wetland vegetative community types observed in the project area.
- Prepared map of wetland, riparian, and littoral community types occurring within 2,000 feet of the project boundary.
- Compiled 1972 aerial photography obtained for the project area from the University of Georgia Map Library; began evaluating wetland signatures for comparison to current distribution of wetland community types.

## **Reporting**

- Began preparing Wetlands, Riparian, and Littoral Habitat Study Report.

### **2.2 Preliminary Findings**

- Forested, scrub-shrub, and emergent wetlands occur primarily in the lower half of the project impoundment, where islands and shallow flats are most common.
- Forested wetlands occur sparsely in the riparian zone immediately adjacent to the impoundment or associated with islands and shallow flats.
- Scrub-shrub wetlands typically occur along margins between forested areas and emergent wetlands within the project area.
- Emergent wetlands occur primarily near shorelines, islands, and in flats.

### **3. VARIANCE FROM STUDY PLAN AND SCHEDULE**

- There has been no substantive variance to date from the study plan or schedule.

### **4. REMAINING ACTIVITIES**

- Complete compilation of flora and fauna lists and comparison of 1972 wetland and riparian vegetative cover with current wetland and riparian vegetative cover in the project area.
- Complete the Wetlands, Riparian, and Littoral Habitat Study Report.