

**STUDY PROGRESS REPORT
RECREATION AND LAND USE
MORGAN FALLS PROJECT (FERC NO. 2237)**

NOVEMBER 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

Georgia Power is conducting a study to characterize existing recreational use and land use in the Morgan Falls project area and to develop information for analyzing the potential effects of continued project operation on recreation, land use, and visual aesthetic qualities. 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 Recreation and Land Use Study Report, which Georgia Power will distribute to participants 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 Recreation and Land Use Study are to:

- Review existing information to describe recreation, land use, and visual aesthetic qualities in the Morgan Falls Project area.
- Characterize current types and levels of recreational use on the Morgan Falls impoundment and in the tailrace.
- Evaluate the need for additional recreational access or facilities at the Morgan Falls Project.

2. STUDY PROGRESS

2.1 Activities Completed

Review of Existing Information

The following activities were conducted for describing existing recreation and land use in the project area:

- Obtained Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (CRNRA) Visitor Study conducted in spring 1998 from National Park Service (NPS) and reviewed study results.
- Gathered other existing information concerning recreation in the CRNRA, including visits reported from 1992 through 2004, historical and current information on recreation concessionaires, and information on the BacteriAlert water quality monitoring program sponsored by the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper.

- Gathered and reviewed comprehensive plans developed or being updated by county and local governments for relevant information on current and future land use and recreation needs in the project area, including: draft Focus Fulton 2025 Comprehensive Plan; Roswell Comprehensive Plan 2020 (currently being updated); and Cobb County Comprehensive Plan 1995-2015.
- Prepared a map identifying parks, lakes, and other major recreation destinations within a 60-mile radius of the project boundary as part of regional recreation overview and assessment.
- Characterized canoe take-out and portage around the project dam by measuring overland distances and photographing signage and terrain.

Recreation Field Surveys

The following recreation survey activities were completed to characterize existing use of public recreation areas providing access to project waters:

- Completed 12 of 14 recreation field surveys scheduled at three public recreation areas, including Azalea Park (formerly Chattahoochee River Park), Don White Memorial Park, and the Morgan Falls tailrace area. Questionnaires were completed by 746 users during the first 12 surveys:

Date	Azalea Park	Don White	Tailrace	Other ^a	Total
4/14/05	35	23	12	1	71
4/30/05	9	32	2	2	45
5/11/05	32	26	10	1	69
5/28/05	8	30	27	4	69
6/22/05	11	28	11	5	55
7/2/05	38	24	13	8	83
7/31/05	25	11	6	5	47
8/23/05	22	9	8	3	42
9/5/05	52	28	12	6	98
9/15/05	22	23	5	1	51
10/15/05	45	15	6	6	72
11/8/05	14	18	5	7	44
Total	313	267	117	49	746

^a Other surveys included roving recreation surveys at Riverside Park and Willeo Park.

- Compiled recreation survey results into a database and began summarizing response trends and developing recreation use estimates.

Interviews of Organizations and User Groups

The following activities were completed to obtain information on water-based recreational opportunities, use, and user perspectives in the project area:

- Interviewed Roswell Recreation and Parks Department, Chattahoochee Nature Center, and Huntcliff Homeowners Association to gather information on recreation facilities and use of the project impoundment.
- Interviewed or completed surveys with recreational organizations that use project waters on a regular basis, including: Upper Chattahoochee Chapter of Trout Unlimited; Atlanta Fly Fishing Club; Spring Creek Anglers; White Water Learning Center of Georgia; Georgia Tech Kayak Club; St. Andrew Rowing Club; and Georgia Canoeing Association.
- Contacted the following organizations to schedule interviews or surveys: Atlanta Rowing Club; Atlanta Junior Rowing Club; Chattahoochee Coldwater Fishery Foundation; Sandy Springs Conservancy; and Chattahoochee Outfitters.

2.2 Preliminary Findings

Recreation Field Surveys

- Initial assessment of responses from the first 10 events indicates that the most frequent reason cited for visiting the project area by users surveyed was running/walking. The top reasons cited by access point were: canoeing/kayaking/rowing at Azalea Park; running/walking at Don White Memorial Park; and shoreline fishing at Morgan Falls tailrace area and other access points surveyed. Reasons for visits are summarized below:

Reason for Visit	Azalea Park	Don White	Tailrace	Other	Total
Running/walking	52	89	11	2	154
Shoreline fishing	24	48	37	17	126
Canoeing/kayaking/rowing	64	19	22	8	113
Dog walking	18	32	28	3	81
Sight-seeing	30	26	11	2	69
Wildlife viewing	25	21	17	5	68
Shoreline relaxation	33	18	7	3	61
Biking/rollerblading	16	38		3	57
Boat fishing	27	10	17		54
Picnicking	24	14	6		44
Playground	19	4	1		24
Swimming/wading	3	5	16		24
Pleasure boating	6	6	8	1	21
Other	6	4	2		12

3. VARIANCE FROM STUDY PLAN AND SCHEDULE

- There has been no substantive variance to date from the study plan or schedule. Minor adjustments were made to the survey forms as described below.
- The recreation survey and user count forms were modified slightly to add other commonly cited reasons for visits, including running, dog walking, playground use, and biking and rollerblading, and to add notations for how user counts were recorded. The recreation survey form also was translated to Spanish for Spanish speaking users.

4. REMAINING ACTIVITIES

- Conduct two more recreation surveys in December 2005 and January 2006.
- Complete compilation and analysis of recreation survey results with respect to user response trends, current and future visitation, and current use of project waters compared to facility or resource capacity.
- Complete interviews with user groups and organizations and compile results.
- Complete analysis of information and data relative to existing recreation facilities and opportunities in project area; the NPS revised draft General Management Plan for the CRNRA as available; regionally or nationally important recreation areas in the project vicinity; current and future recreation needs identified in applicable plans; effects of project operations on recreational use; surrounding land use in project area; existing shoreline buffer zones in project area; and visual characteristics of lands and waters affected by the project.
- Prepare the Recreation and Land Use Study Report.