

**Action name:** SMP Protection of Riparian Habitat for Wildlife **Prerequisite Actions:** none

**Action Description:**

Determine if any shoreline management policy changes are needed to adequately protect riparian wildlife corridors, focusing on the shoreline and riparian areas within the project boundary.

**Applicable Hydro Projects/Developments:**

Nantahala (2692), Thorpe (Glenville-2686), Cedar Cliff (2698), Bear Creek (2698), Wolf Creek (2698), Tennessee Creek (2698), Bryson (2601), Dillsboro (2602), Franklin (2603), Mission (2619)

### **I. Objective**

Determine if the existing shoreline management policies, regarding protection of the project boundary and the Duke Power-Nantahala Area-owned peripheral strip (above the full pond elevation of the majority of the shoreline of the Nantahala, Thorpe, Cedar Cliff, Bear Creek, Wolf Creek, Tennessee Creek, Tuckasegee, Dicks Creek\Diamond Valley, White Oak Creek, Bryson, Dillsboro, Franklin, and Mission developments), are adequate to provide a primarily natural vegetated buffer with very limited clearing for lake access by adjoining property owners where access is authorized.

### **II. Basis**

Protection of areas (riparian and terrestrial) for wildlife movement is considered important by state and federal wildlife resource agencies concerned with the potential for development adjoining these environmentally important areas. Review of the current policies regulating activities that are allowed in these project areas, on Duke Power-Nantahala Area property, is necessary to ensure compliance with the standard land use articles for these projects (i.e. Article 33 for Project 2692, Article 34 for Project 2686, Article 27 for Projects 2601, 2602, 2603 and Article 32 for Project 2619). The standard land use articles allow the Licensee to exercise its authority to issue permits and conveyances of project lands only if the proposed use and occupancy is consistent with the purposes of protecting and enhancing the scenic, recreational, and other environmental values of the project.

### **III. Geographic and Temporal Scope**

The areas (riparian and terrestrial) over which current and any revised policies apply are limited to the project boundaries owned by Duke Power-Nantahala Area. These areas include, in most cases on the larger developments (e.g. Nantahala, Thorpe, Cedar Creek, Bear Creek and Wolf Creek), a peripheral strip along the shoreline that extends ten (10) vertical feet above the development's full pond contour elevation. The peripheral shoreline property along the remaining developments (e.g. Tuckasegee, Tennessee Creek, Bryson, Dillsboro, Franklin and Mission) varies from the full pond contour elevation up to seventeen (17) vertical feet above full pond.

<b>LAKE (Development)</b>	<b>PROJECT BOUNDARY (USGS sea level datum)</b>	<b>FULL POND CONTOUR (USGS sea level datum)</b>
Nantahala	3022.16 <sup>(1)</sup>	3012.16
White Oak Creek	3032.16 <sup>(1)</sup>	3032.16
Dicks Creek/Diamond Valley	3030.16 <sup>(1)</sup>	3030.16
Thorpe	3501.75 <sup>(2)</sup>	3491.75
Cedar Cliff	2340 <sup>(2)</sup>	2330
Bear Creek	2570 <sup>(2)</sup>	2560
Wolf Creek	3090 <sup>(3)</sup>	3080
Tennessee Creek	3090 <sup>(4)</sup>	3080
Bryson	1833.41-1843.41 <sup>(5)</sup>	1828.41
Dillsboro	1972	1972
Franklin	2000.22	2000.22
Mission	1685	1658.47
Tuckasegee	2289	2278.75

## Note:

- (1) The project boundary extends from just below the tailrace of the Nantahala powerhouse up the Nantahala River and around the pipelines and reservoirs of White Oak and Dicks Creeks. The boundary continues of the Nantahala River and extends around Nantahala Lake at elevation 3022.16 except for areas of the lake that are bordered by USDA FS land where full pool (elevation 3012.16) is the project boundary and several small private in-holdings around the lake where the boundary is defined by those property lines.
- (2) Project boundaries extend 10 vertical feet above the maximum normal elevation.
- (3) Project boundary extends 10 vertical feet above the maximum elevation and riparian rights to the bypassed section of Wolf Creek that encompasses approximately 2.1 miles.
- (4) Project boundary extends 10 vertical feet above the maximum normal elevation and riparian rights to the bypassed section of the East Fork of the Tuckasegee River that encompasses approximately 1.5 miles.
- (5) Project boundary ranges from 5 to 15 vertical feet in elevation above full pool.

Regulating activities authorized under the standard land use articles will continue for the term of the license. It is anticipated that policy decisions and any specific shoreline management guidelines/permitting regulations will be reviewed at least annually and updated when necessary to:

- (a) address specific permitting issues and improve the permitting process,
- (b) comply with local, state, tribal and federal regulations,
- (c) support the dynamic business needs of Duke Power-Nantahala Area, and
- (d) support license-related filings with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

## V. Approach and Analysis

Provide the opportunity for the interested state and federal wildlife resource agencies and a non-governmental lake stakeholder representative(s) to review and comment upon the adequacy of the existing shoreline management policy to protect riparian wildlife corridors on shoreline property owned by Duke Power-Nantahala Area and provide input regarding necessary policy revisions with consideration given to impacts to private landowner's adjoining the project boundary. This opportunity will be provided through a series of meetings and any necessary field investigations with the wildlife resource agency and lake stakeholder representatives. The meetings will be primarily devoted to:

- (a) developing consensus on how the input/review process should proceed,
- (b) review of the existing Nantahala Area policy and wildlife protection needs as developed in the associated habitat surveys (e.g. LLM1, Wildlife Survey and Botanical Survey),
- (c) receiving policy revision input and
- (d) coordination of the relevant habitat survey data and use restrictions developed from the associated studies and implementation through the shoreline management policy.

This study will rely, in part, on information currently being developed from several other studies and field data collection that will be conducted for the Nantahala Area. In particular the wildlife and botanical surveys for rare and endangered species and riparian habitats (e.g. LLM1, Botanic Survey and Wildlife Survey).

## V. Schedules and Required Conditions

The meetings will be conducted as appropriate throughout 2001-2002 to incorporate data from the related study plans (e.g. LLM1, botanical and wildlife surveys). The first meetings (conducted February 16 and March 15, 2001) were devoted to ensuring that the participants were provided the ability to comment on how the policy review should be conducted. The remaining meetings will focus on review of the current policy, protection needs and input into any revisions.

It is intended that any policy revisions regarding protection of riparian and terrestrial wildlife corridors will be finalized and approved by Duke Power-Nantahala Area for implementation no later than 2002. This schedule is tentatively based on the results of the field data collection being available and incorporated into the Nantahala GIS.

## VI. Results

## VII. Participants

	Organization	Name	Phone #	E-Mail
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	NCWRC	Chris Goudreau	(828) 652-4360	goudrecj@wnclink.com
	NCWRC	Owen Anderson	(828) 452-2546	andersof@brinet.com
<b>Other Participants</b>	Duke Power, Lake Management	Richard Conley	(828) 369-4513	rconley@duke-energy.com
	Friends of Lake Glenville private property owner	Phillip Fowler Ken Dinger (alternate)	(941) 642-1373 (828) 884-7597	Housie <a href="mailto:Housie_J@aol.com">J@aol.com</a> ken@bearcreek-lake.com

### VIII. Expected Benefits

The study plan is expected to provide protection or enhancement of the hydro project's environmental, public recreational and electric generation resource values. The study will also provide information to identify areas of possible mitigation.

### IX. List of Attachments

COE General Permit 198200030  
Nantahala Power and Light Company Lake and Shoreline Management Policy (1/1/98)  
NCDENR DWQ 401 application and information

### X. List of References