

Action name: Wildlife Survey

Prerequisite Actions:

Action Description:

Conduct terrestrial surveys for PETS* species within the project boundary and areas potentially affected by project operations.

* *PETS is used in this document as a catch- all term for proposed/ threatened/ endangered species, regional sensitive species, Forest Service concern species, and species of concern regardless of the specific administrative listings used by the US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and NC Natural Heritage.*

Applicable Hydro Projects/Developments:

Nantahala (2692), Thorpe (Glennville-2686), Tuckasegee (Little Glennville-2686), Cedar Cliff (2698), Bear Creek (2698), Tennessee Creek (2698), and Wolf Creek (2698), Bryson (2601), Dillsboro (2602), Franklin (2603), and Mission (2619).

I. Objective

Characterize riparian habitat and project properties for use by PETS species and evaluate the extent of any potential project-related impacts on these faunas.

II. Basis

The bases for this study are contained in 18CFR4.51 and 18CFR4.61 under basic information requirements for the identification of project-related wildlife resources and the Endangered Species Act, Section 7, relative to the identification of any federally listed rare, threatened, or endangered species.

III. Geographic and Temporal Scope

See Section IV.

IV. Approach and Analysis

The surveys for PETS species will be conducted as follows:

- (a) Project lands will first be evaluated using a combination of aerial photographs, land use classifications, geology/soil maps, or other large scale representations of riparian habitats.
- (b) When this initial habitat delineation has been completed PETS records, unpublished reports of sightings, and known occurrences of unique habitats will be overlaid on the habitat-type maps providing a guide to areas where PETS species have been documented. This will serve as a process and a focus for all field inventories. Specific investigations are as follows:

Bats

All project structural facilities (buildings, sheds, dams, penstocks, etc.) at all the projects will be inventoried in the summer 2001 for roosting bats. Even though PETS species like the Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the Gray Bat (*Myotis grisescens*) have not been reported from the Tennessee

system, they (in the case of the Gray Bat it was their vocalizations-ANABAT) have been reported from counties adjacent to the NPL projects. These two PETS mammals in addition to such species as the Eastern small-footed bat (*Myotis leibii*), the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and the Rafinesque's Big-eared Bat (*Corynorhinus rafinesquii*) are the primary animals of focus in this inventory, but all bat species observed will be documented. In the course of the structural facilities inventory, if there are likely-use habitats identified that have a direct relationship to project operations or habitat within project boundaries (e.g., below a dam or bypass reach) limited mist netting may be deployed in an attempt to determine occurrences; however the structural facility inventory is the primary focus.

Salamanders

Salamander surveys, using commonly accepted amphibian survey techniques and tailored to the specific habitat, will be conducted in the spring /summer period of 2001. The upper Nantahala River area (e.g., Rainbow Springs, White Oaks Bottom), as well as the wetland habitats identified in the botanical survey (see *Botanical Survey*), will be the focus of these surveys with specific sampling areas based on the location of documented PETS occurrences and in accordance with the habitat type preferred by each. [e.g., Longtail salamander (*Eurycea l. longicauda*) habitat is seeps and springs in moist woods, Junaluska salamander (*Eurycea junaluska*) lives along streams, mole salamander (*Ambystoma talpoideum*) live around ephemeral woodland ponds and forage in adjacent woods, and four-toed salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*) usually associated with sphagnum areas adjacent to woods]. Hellbenders (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*) are found primarily in riverine environments and thus the run-of-river projects will be the focus of these investigations, probably coinciding with fish and/or invertebrate sampling programs.

Birds

Bird inventories will largely be conducted in conjunction with the 2001 botanical surveys (see *Botanical Survey*) of selected wetlands, especially those that are possible sites for warblers (Family: Parulidae) and flycatchers (Family: Tyrannidae), and will be inventoried in the spring at the same time the botanical work is conducted. Additionally, blue-winged warbler (*Vermivora pinus*) inventories will be conducted in selected low-elevation brushy fields and thickets with emphasis on sites within project boundaries in Cherokee, Graham, and Macon counties.

III. Schedules and Required Conditions

The field work will be completed by 30 September, 2001. A draft report will be available by the end of February 2002. The final report will be generated by the end of April, 2002.

IV. Results

The results of this survey will provide basic, required information on the occurrence of PETS species within the vicinity of the project.

V. Participants

	Organization	Name	Phone #	E-Mail
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Other Participants	N/A			

V. Expected Benefits

The expected benefit of these studies is to provide basic descriptive information on the wildlife communities associated with these projects. See Section IV for site specific study benefits.

VI. List of Attachments

None

VII. List of References

None