

HFO-2996

Wood, Diana

To: carlisa.linton-peters@ferc.gov
Subject: Question Regarding FD 36095 Palmetto Railways Project in Berkeley County SC
Attachments: FERC Preliminary Consultation ltr 10-2017.pdf; Santee Hydro Project PA.pdf

Dear Ms. Linton-Peters,

I'm following up on a preliminary consultation letter the Surface Transportation Board's (Board) Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) sent to you in October 2017 regarding the proposed construction and operation of an approximately 23-mile rail line in Berkeley County, SC. The letter mentioned a range of alternatives the applicant, Palmetto Railways, had assessed prior to submitting its petition to the Board, including one (the Cross Route and applicant's Proposed Route) that would cross the Santee Cooper Diversion Canal via a new bridge and connect to a CSXT main line on the Santee Cooper property adjacent to its Cross Generating Station (see the attached letter and Figure A map). OEA has since conducted additional screening of the applicant's other alternatives and determined that the Proposed Cross Route, as well as the no build alternative, will be carried forward for analysis in the Environmental Assessment.

As background, on March 15, 2004, the South Carolina Public Service Authority (SCPSA), filed an application for a new license to continue operating its existing Santee Cooper Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 199), located on the Santee and Cooper Rivers in Berkeley, Calhoun, Clarendon, Orangeburg, and Sumter counties, SC. The parties executed a Programmatic Agreement on April 3, 2004 (attached) because it was anticipated that issuing a new license to continue operating and maintaining the existing project may pose adverse effects to historic properties (the Santee dam on the Santee River, the Pinopolis dam on the Cooper River, **the Diversion canal**, the Santee Spillway Hydroelectric Station, and the Jefferies Hydroelectric Station).

Among other things, the PA requires that within one year of issuing a license for the project, the Licensee (Santee Cooper) would file a **Historic Properties Management Plan** with FERC specifying how historic properties will be managed in the project area.

Because construction of the Proposed Cross Route would require a new rail bridge over the Diversion Canal, I'm wondering if FERC, in addition to Santee Cooper, would need to approve this rail line project. The applicant, Palmetto, is working with Santee Cooper and will be providing a point of contact next week, so I will be contacting them, as well.

Thank you so much for your time.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-245-0302 or by email. In the meantime, I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Diana Wood
Environmental Project Manager

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