

**PROGRESS ENERGY  
YADKIN-PEE DEE RIVER PROJECT  
TERRESTRIAL RESOURCES WORKING GROUP  
ISSUES EVALUATION TEMPLATE  
January 2004**

**Issue No. 5: Management and Control of Vegetation**

**1. Description of Issue**

Assurance that Progress Energy's maintenance policy on power line rights-of-way and management practices of project lands include provisions for controlling terrestrial invasive species, protecting RTE species, and providing for habitat improvements.

**2. Project Effects**

Licensees are responsible for operating and maintaining projects in accordance with license requirements and project purposes. Progress Energy currently manages lands within the Project boundary in accordance with the standard land use license article. In addition, Progress Energy has prepared two guidance documents to manage shoreline development along Tillery and Blewett Falls Lakes. These documents guide shoreline is management and shoreline development on each lake. Progress Energy has also prepared a Shoreline Management Plan for the Tillery Development (currently under review by FERC) and a SMP will be developed for the Blewett Development.

**3. Applicable Existing Information**

Progress Energy has had a maintenance plan to protect areas populated with RTE plant species on power line rights of way for over a decade. The company document Management of Rare Plant Sites on CP&L Power Line Rights of Way identifies the location and specific management strategy to protect the plants according to the Natural Heritage Program's recommendations including the restrictions of mowing times, cutting techniques, and herbicide applications. Through a Memorandum of Understanding between CP&L and the NC Natural Heritage Program since 1993, the actual locations of the RTE plant populations are not shared with the public. No RTE plant species have been identified on the power line rights-of-way on project lands.

Progress Energy has conducted surveys of the resources within the project area. The lists of all plants and animals identified, including RTE and invasive species, during these various surveys are provided within the following documents:

- Initial Consultation Document (Progress Energy 2003), Section 4.5, Botanical Resources, Section 4.6, Wildlife Resources, Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species--these sections provide information on plant and wildlife species, RTE, and significant communities found or documented to be located within/directly adjacent to the project boundary.

- Botanical and Terrestrial Wildlife Resources Study for Blewett Hydroelectric Plant (EA Engineering, Science, and Technology 2000), Section 2.5, Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plant Species, and Section 3.4, Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Animal Species--these sections provide information on RTE botanical and animal species, respectively. Each of these sections provides information pertaining to listed (i.e., state/federal) plant and animal species found in the project area, or that were identified during surveys.
- Montgomery County Natural Heritage Inventory (Bates 2001)--this document describes the county's natural areas, rare plant and animal species, and natural communities.
- Richmond County Natural Heritage Inventory (Sorrie 2001)--this document describes the county's natural areas, rare plant and animal species, and natural communities.
- Terrestrial Resources Report Associated with the Survey of Smith Lake Oxbow Swamp and the Adjacent Bottomland Wetlands (Framatome ANP DE&S 2002)--this report provides information regarding bottomland wetlands associated with the Smith Lake Oxbow Swamp (Black Gum Swamp) community and detailed information regarding the Black Gum Swamp area.
- Survey of Wading Bird Use and Great Blue Heron Nesting Activity in the Tailwater Area of the Tillery Hydroelectric Plant (CP&L 2002)--this report provides information regarding wading bird use at the tailwaters of the Tillery Hydroelectric Plant. In addition, information pertaining to bald eagle use of this area is presented.
- Information from the SC Heritage Trust and Nature Conservancy databases
- Shoreline Management Plan for the Tillery Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2206) (CP&L—A Progress Energy Company 2001).
- Interim Guidelines for the Use of Leased Properties at Lake Tillery (CP&L—A Progress Energy Company 2001)
- Guidelines for the Use of Leased Properties at Blewett Falls Lake (CP&L – A Progress Energy Company 2001)

Except for kudzu, invasive species, although encountered, have not been identified as a problem nor have they created negative impacts on power plant operations or transmission. Progress Energy has a Kudzu Eradication Program in place to control the encroachment of this plant species on managed forests. No other invasive species-specific control management program is in place. Progress Energy foresters use only regionally native vegetation for reseeding or replanting.

Progress Energy follows a corporate-wide management program on company-owned, Project lands. Progress Energy has developed integrated land management plan maps for all Project land holdings. Before land disturbing activities are initiated, tabletop research is conducted to verify that no known RTE species is on site. If a RTE species has been identified in the area, field surveys are conducted and alternative measures taken to protect the plant or animal. If the area warrants, a field survey for bald eagle nests is conducted and protection zones are honored.

Property is monitored by foresters on an on-going basis to consider changes in silviculture activities or use. Progress Energy foresters work closely with the NCWRC and USF&WS. Forestry practices on these lands follow, and in most cases exceed, state-approved Best Management Practices.

Progress Energy foresters have voluntarily incorporated wildlife food plots, partnered with local organizations and agencies for the enhancement of habitat, and managed for species-specific wildlife in various land holdings. For example, foresters have partnered with the National Wild Turkey Federation in their Energy for Wildlife Program to include wildlife recommendations within the forest management plans for all managed forest lands. Progress Energy received an award for “Significant Improvement for Wildlife Habitat in Anson and Surrounding Counties on CP&L Land” by the Brown Creek Soil & Water Conservation District in 1999 for incorporating wildlife considerations in forestry practices in the area.

Over 5,000 acres of land associated with the Blewett and Tillery projects are currently in the Gameland Program. This voluntary program is an agreement between Progress Energy and NCWRC where Progress Energy allows public use of the project lands and the NCWRC has control over wildlife management and enforcement of applicable hunting, fishing, and public use laws on these lands.

#### **4. Study Needs**

Based on Progress Energy’s current maintenance policy and management practices that protect RTE species and provide for habitat improvements, no additional studies are expected.

#### **Resource Working Group Overlap (check if applicable)**

- Water Resources Issue # \_\_\_\_
- Land Use and Recreation Issue # 7
- Terrestrial Resources Issue # \_\_\_\_