



July 14, 2025

***Electronically Filed***

Honorable Debbie-Anne A. Reese, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20426

Subject:       **Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (P-2740-053)  
Filing of Final License Application**

Dear Secretary Reese:

Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC (Duke Energy or Licensee) is the Licensee, owner, and operator of the 1,400-megawatt (MW) Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (Project) (FERC Project No. 2740) located in Oconee County, South Carolina, approximately eight miles north of Salem. The Project utilizes the Bad Creek Reservoir as the upper reservoir and Lake Jocassee, which is licensed as part of the Keowee-Toxaway Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 2503), as the lower reservoir.

The existing (original) license for the Project was issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) for a 50-year term, with an effective date of August 1, 1977, and expires July 31, 2027. Accordingly, Duke Energy is pursuing a new license for the Project pursuant to the Commission's Integrated Licensing Process (ILP), as described at 18 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 5. Duke Energy is proposing additional energy storage and generation capacity at the Project, which would be developed by constructing a new 1,400-MW Bad Creek II Power Complex (Bad Creek II) adjacent to the existing powerhouse.

Pursuant to 18 CFR § 5.17(a), Duke Energy is hereby filing the Final License Application (FLA) for the Project. As described in the FLA, in the new license term, Duke Energy is proposing to continue operating the Project on a "daily cycle" mode, commonly alternating between generating and pumping on a daily basis, with the reservoir typically maintained in the upper 50 to 60 feet (ft) at elevations of 2,310 and 2,250 ft above mean sea level (compared to a maximum drawdown of 160 ft). Following Bad Creek II construction, the Licensee would continue operating the upper reservoir within the current licensed maximum operating band; however, because of the increased hydraulic capacity with the addition of Bad Creek II, generation run times (at best efficiency) would decrease from approximately 23 hours to approximately 12 hours, and the energy density would increase by a factor of approximately two. This means that twice as many MW-hours could be brought to the grid during times of increased demand.

As required by 18 CFR 5.16, on February 28, 2025, the Licensee filed a Draft License Application (DLA) with the Commission and notified parties on the attached distribution list that the DLA was available for review and comment. The following organizations provided comments on the DLA: FERC staff, Foothills Trails Conservancy, Oconee County, Upstate Forever, Naturaland Trust, Advocates for Quality Development, Friends of Lake Keowee Society, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and South Carolina Department of Environmental Services. Comments have been addressed in the FLA as applicable. Refer to Exhibit E, Appendix A for a copy of comments received on the DLA, as well as a summary table of comment responses from the Licensee.

The FLA includes the studies conducted in support of relicensing and reflects the substantive amount of consultation that has occurred throughout the ILP process, including the Bad Creek Relicensing Agreement signed in January 2025 by Duke Energy, resource agencies, and non-governmental organizations. The Bad Creek Relicensing Agreement is a comprehensive settlement agreement reflecting a shared vision for the operation of the Project, including Bad Creek II, during the next license term. Accordingly, the FLA includes proposals for protection, mitigation, and enhancement (PM&E) measures related to operations and resources associated with the Project and construction of Bad Creek II. The proposed PM&E measures described in the FLA reflect careful consideration of available information, results of studies conducted, issues specific to the Project, and the Bad Creek Relicensing Agreement.

The FLA includes five volumes, as described below.

### **Volume I of V (Public)**

Volume I contains the following sections and exhibits as listed below.

- Executive Summary
- Initial Statement
- Additional Information Required by 18 CFR §4.32(a)
- Verification
- Exhibit A – Project Description
- Exhibit B – Project Operation and Resource Utilization
- Exhibit C – Construction History and Proposed Construction Schedule
- Exhibit D – Costs and Financing

### **Volume II of V (Public)**

Volume II contains Exhibit E and appendices as listed below.

- Exhibit E – Environmental Report
  - Appendix A – Consultation Documentation
  - Appendix B – Bad Creek Relicensing Agreement and Explanatory Statement
  - Appendix C – Summary of Climate Data and Future Operations on Water Resources
  - Appendix D – Relicensing Study Reports
  - Appendix E – Management Plans
  - Appendix F – Biological Assessment
  - Appendix G – Draft Cultural Resources Interpretive Exhibit Plan

### **Volume III of V (Public)**

Volume III contains the following exhibits as listed below.

- Exhibit F – General Design Drawings (list only)
- Exhibit G – Project Boundary Maps
- Exhibit H – Plans and Ability of the Applicant to Operate the Project

### **Volume IV of V (CONTROLLED UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION // CRITICAL ENERGY/ELECTRIC INFRASTRUCTURE INFORMATION [CUI//CEII])**

Volume IV contains CUI/CEII materials not intended for public release, and includes the following:

- Exhibit F – General Design Drawings
- Exhibit F – Supporting Design Report
- Exhibit H – Single Line Diagrams of the Transmission Systems

### **Volume V of V (PRIVILEGED [CUI//PRIV])**

Volume V contains CUI/PRIV materials not intended for public release, and includes the following:

- Cultural Resources Study Report
- Historic Properties Management Plan

Duke Energy is filing the FLA with the Commission electronically and is distributing this letter electronically or by USPS to the parties listed on the attached distribution list. Parties interested in the relicensing process may obtain a copy of the FLA electronically through FERC's eLibrary system at <https://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/search/fercgensearch.asp> under docket number P-2740, or on Duke Energy's website at <https://www.badcreekpumpedstorage.com/>. The GIS data associated with the Project is also being submitted as a separate filing, under the above docket number.

A copy of the public exhibits of the FLA can also be reviewed during normal business hours at the Oconee County Public Library (Walhalla Branch), located at 501 West South Broad Street, Walhalla, SC 29691. In addition, paper copies of the application can be reproduced at a cost of \$0.10/page, plus postage (both prepaid)<sup>1</sup>, by contacting the below signatory.

In accordance with 18 CFR § 5.17(d)(2), Duke Energy will publish public notice of the filing of the FLA once in both *The Journal – Upstate Today* and the *Greenville Journal*. The public notices will be published within 14 days of the filing of this FLA (i.e. on or before July 28, 2025).

Duke Energy looks forward to continuing to work with Commission staff and relicensing participants through the remainder of this ILP, and in the expected new license term. If there are any questions regarding filing, please contact Alan Stuart, Senior Project Manager, Water Strategy & Hydro Licensing at [Alan.Stuart@duke-energy.com](mailto:Alan.Stuart@duke-energy.com) or via phone at 980-373-2079.

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<sup>1</sup> Except as provided in 18 CFR § 5.2(b)(4).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan Stuart".

Alan Stuart  
Senior Project Manager  
Water Strategy, Hydro Licensing & Lake Services  
Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC

Enclosures

cc (w/o enclosures): Jeff Lineberger, Duke Energy  
Garry Rice, Duke Energy

## Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2740) Distribution List

### Federal Agency

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
401 F St N.W.  
Ste 308  
Washington, D.C. 20001-2637

Bonneville Power Administration, Pacific NW  
Hydrosite Database & Analysis Section  
905 N.E. 11th Ave  
Ste 7  
Portland, OR 97232-4169

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First St, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20426

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Atlanta  
Regional Office, Gwinnett Commerce Center  
3700 Crestwood Pkwy, N.W.  
Ste 950  
Duluth, GA 30096-7155

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Office  
of Energy Projects  
888 First St, N.E.  
Room 61-02  
Washington, D.C. 20426

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Office  
of General Council - Energy  
888 First St, N.E.  
Room 101-56  
Washington, D.C. 20426

Jeffrey Duncan  
Fishery Ecologist and Water Quality Specialist  
National Park Service  
535 Chestnut St  
Ste 207  
Chattanooga, TN 37402-4930  
jeff\_duncan@nps.gov

National Park Service  
100 Alabama St S.W.  
Ste 1924  
Atlanta, GA 30303

Kevin Mack  
Marine Habitat Resource Specialist  
NOAA – National Marine Fisheries Service  
Habitat Conservation District  
331 Ft Johnson Rd  
Charleston, SC 29412  
Kevin.Mack@noaa.gov

Heather Blough  
NOAA – National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Region  
heather.blough@noaa.gov

Southeastern Power Administration  
1166 Athens Tech Rd  
Elberton, GA 30635-6711

Harold Peterson  
National Hydropower Program Coordinator  
U.S Bureau of Indian Affairs  
609 Demoines Dr  
Hermitage, TN 37076  
harold.peterson@bia.gov

Leonard Rawlings  
U.S Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Regional  
Office  
545 Marriott Dr  
Ste 700  
Nashville, TN 37214  
Leonard.Rawlings@bia.gov

U.S Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of the  
Solicitor  
1849 C St N.W.  
MS6557  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Laura Boos  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
69A Hagood Ave  
Charleston, SC 29403-0919  
Laura.M.Boos@usace.army.mil

Brice McKoy  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Peter.B.McKoy@usace.army.mil

Howard Mindel  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
60 Forsyth St, S.W.  
Room IOM-15  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8801  
howard.p.mindel@usace.army.mil

Angelle Greer  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Greenville Field  
Office  
750 Executive Center Drive, Suite 103  
Greenville, SC 29615  
angelle.v.greer@usace.army.mil

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Water  
Management  
60 Darlington Ave  
Wilmington, NC 28403-1343

## Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2740) Distribution List

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Chief  
Economist-OEPNUE  
1400 Independence Ave N.W.  
MS 3815  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0001

U.S. Department of Interior  
75 Spring St S.W.  
Ste 304  
Atlanta, GA 30303

U.S. Department of Interior, Office of  
Environmental Policy & Compliance  
1849 C St N.W.  
MS 2430  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Maria Clark  
Project Officer  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region  
IV  
61 Forsyth St S.W.  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8931  
Clark.Maria@epa.gov

Ntale Kajumba  
Chief of the NEPA Program Office  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region  
IV  
kajumba.ntale@epa.gov

Christy Johnson-Hughes  
Project Leader  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
christy\_johnsonhughes@fws.gov

Melanie Olds  
SC Ecological Services Field Office, FERC  
Coordinator  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
176 Croghan Spur Rd  
Ste 200  
Charleston, SC 29407-7558  
melanie\_old@fws.gov

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
187S Century Blvd N.E.  
Ste 400  
Atlanta, GA 30345

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1849 C St N.W.  
Room 3238  
Washington, D.C. 20240

U.S. Forest Service – Sumter National Forest  
112 Andrew Pickens Cir  
Mountain Rest, SC 29664

Derrick Miller  
Acting Administrative Officer  
U.S. Forest Service – Sumter National Forest  
112 Andrew Pickens Cir  
Mountain Rest, SC 29664  
Derrick.Miller@usda.gov

U.S. Forest Service, Nantahala National Forest  
160A Zillico St  
Asheville, NC 28802

U.S. Forest Service, Southern Region  
5645 Riggins Mill Rd  
Dry Branch, GA 31020

Office of Joe Wilson  
U.S. House of Representatives (CD2)  
2229 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Office of Jeff Duncan  
U.S. House of Representatives (CD3)  
116 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Office of William Timmons  
U.S. House of Representatives (CD4)  
1237 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Office of Ralph Norman  
U.S. House of Representatives (CD5)  
1004 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Office of James E. Clyburn  
U.S. House of Representatives (CD6)  
2135 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Office of Russell Fry  
U.S. House of Representatives (CD7)  
1626 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Office of Lindsey Graham  
U.S. Senate  
211 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

## Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2740) Distribution List

Office of Senator Budd  
U.S. Senate  
217 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Office of Senator Scott  
U.S. Senate  
520 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Office of Senator Tillis  
U.S. Senate  
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Van Cato  
U.S. Senate, Upstate Regional Office  
130 South Main St  
Ste 700  
Greenville, SC 29601  
Van\_Cato@lgraham.senate.gov

### **State Agency**

North Carolina Department of Agriculture and  
Consumer Services  
Division of Soil and Water Conservation  
1614 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1614

Andrew Moore  
Regional Supervisor  
North Carolina Department of Environmental  
Quality, Division of Water Resources  
2090 U.S. 70 Highway  
Swannanoa, NC 28778-8211  
Andrew.W.Moore@deq.nc.gov

North Carolina Department of Environmental  
Quality, Division of Land Resources  
1611 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1611

North Carolina Department of Environmental  
Quality, Environmental Management  
Commission  
1617 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1617

North Carolina Department of Environmental  
Quality, Office of the Secretary  
1601 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1601

Elizabeth Weese  
North Carolina Department of Justice  
114 West Edenton St  
Raleigh, NC 27602  
jweese@ncdoj.gov

Amin Davis  
North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation  
1615 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1615  
amin.davis@ncdenr.gov

Mike Clampitt  
North Carolina House of Representatives,  
District 119  
300 N. Salisbury Street  
Room 633  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
Mike.Clampitt@ncleg.gov

North Carolina Office of the Governor  
20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

North Carolina State Environmental Review  
Clearinghouse  
NC Department of Administration  
116 West Jones St  
Ste 5106  
Raleigh, NC 27603

Christine Farrell  
Environmental Review Coordinator  
North Carolina State Parks  
christine.farrell@ncparks.gov

Brian Strong  
North Carolina State Parks  
brian.strong@ncparks.gov

North Carolina Utilities Commission  
430 North Salisbury Street  
Dobbs Building, 5th Floor  
Raleigh, NC 27603-5918

Vann Stancil  
Research Coordinator  
North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission,  
Habitat Conservation Division  
645 Fish Hatchery Rd  
Marion, NC 28752  
vann.stancil@ncwildlife.org

The Honorable Alan Wilson  
Office of the Attorney General of South Carolina  
P.O. Box 11549  
Columbia, SC 29211

## Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2740) Distribution List

The Honorable Henry McMaster  
Office of the Governor of South Carolina  
1100 Gervais Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
Office  
101 Executive Center Drive  
Suite 100  
Columbia, SC 29210

Jeffrey Gordon  
Energy Planning and Emerging Technology  
Department  
S. C. Office of Regulatory Staff  
jgordon@ors.sc.gov

Findlay Salter  
Energy Planning and Emerging Technology  
Department  
S. C. Office of Regulatory Staff  
fsalter@ors.sc.gov

Morgan Amedee  
South Carolina Department of Environmental  
Services  
2600 Bull St  
Columbia, SC 29201-1708  
Morgan.Amedee@des.sc.gov

Charles Hightower  
Water Quality Standards & Wetlands Section,  
Manager  
South Carolina Department of Environmental  
Services  
2600 Bull St  
Columbia, SC 29201-1708  
hightoCW@des.sc.gov

Jennifer Hughes  
Deputy Director, Environmental Affairs  
South Carolina Department of Environmental  
Services  
2600 Bull St  
Columbia, SC 29201-1708  
hughesjr@des.sc.gov

Erica Beason  
State Malacologist  
South Carolina Department of Natural  
Resources  
BeasonE@dnr.sc.gov

Shannon Bobertz  
South Carolina Department of Natural  
Resources  
326 Little Brooke Lane  
West Columbia, SC 29172  
bobertz@dnr.sc.gov

Elizabeth Miller  
FERC Coordinator  
South Carolina Department of Natural  
Resources  
P.O. Box 167  
Columbia, SC 29202-0167  
millere@dnr.sc.gov

Lorriane Riggan  
South Carolina Department of Natural  
Resources  
P.O. Box 167  
Columbia, SC 29202-0167  
rigginl@dnr.sc.gov

Aiden Fell  
South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation  
& Tourism  
1205 Pendleton St  
Columbia, SC 29211  
afell@scprt.com

Rowdy Harris  
South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation  
& Tourism  
charris@scprt.com

Kelly Howell  
South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation  
& Tourism  
Khowell@scprt.com

Paul McCormack  
Director  
South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation  
& Tourism  
1205 Pendleton St  
Columbia, SC 29201  
pmccormack@scprt.com

Bill Whitmire  
South Carolina House of Representatives (CD1)  
P.O. Box 11867  
Room 436C  
Columbia, SC 29211  
billwhitmire@schouse.gov

Adam Duncan  
South Carolina House of Representatives (CD2)  
208 E. South 3rd Street  
Seneca, SC 29678



## Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2740) Distribution List

Phillip Bowers  
South Carolina House of Representatives (CD3)  
P.O. Box 9  
Six Mile, SC 29682

David Hiott  
South Carolina House of Representatives (CD4)  
P.O. Box 11867  
Room 4188  
Columbia, SC 29211  
davidhiott@schouse.gov

Neal Collins  
South Carolina House of Representatives (CD5)  
P.O. Box 11867  
Room 429  
Columbia, SC 29211  
nealcollins@schouse.gov

Blake Sanders  
South Carolina House of Representatives (CD9)  
1 Hindman St.  
Pelzer, SC 29669

Thomas Alexander  
South Carolina State Senate (District 1)  
P.O. Box 142  
Room 313  
Columbia, SC 29202-0142  
thomasalexander@scsenate.gov

Rex Rice  
South Carolina State Senate (District 2)  
P.O. Box 142  
Room 101  
Columbia, SC 29202-0142  
rexrice@scsenate.gov

Elizabeth Johnson  
Director, Historical Services, D-SHPO  
State Historic Preservation Office, SC  
Department of Archives & History  
8301 Parklane Rd  
Columbia, SC 29223  
EMJOHNSON@scdah.sc.gov

Andrew Bateman  
Acting Executive Director  
State of South Carolina, Office of Regulatory  
Staff  
1401 Main Street  
Suite 900  
Columbia, SC 29201

### Local Government

Phillip Shirley  
Parks, Recreation & Tourism Director  
Oconee County  
415 S. Pine St  
Wahalla, SC 29691  
PShirley@oconeesc.com

Scott Willett  
Anderson Regional Joint Water System  
swillett@arjwater.com

Maureen Copelof  
Mayor  
City of Brevard, NC  
95 W. Main St  
Brevard, NC 28712  
maureen.copelof@cityofbrevard.com

Robert Halfacre  
City of Clemson, SC  
1250 Tiger Blvd  
Ste 1  
Clemson, SC 29631  
Mayor@cityofclemson.org

Isaiah Scipio  
Mayor  
City of Pickens, SC  
219 Pendleton Street  
P.O. Box 217  
Pickens, SC 29671  
iscipio@pickenscity.com

Daniel Alexander  
Mayor  
City of Seneca, SC  
P.O. Box 4773  
Seneca, SC 29679  
dalexander@seneca.sc.us

Bob Faires  
City of Seneca, Seneca Light & Water  
P.O. Box 4773  
Seneca, SC 29676

Tim Hall  
City of Walhalla, SC  
P.O. Box 1099  
Walhalla, SC 29691  
thall@cityofwalhalla.com

## Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2740) Distribution List

Jeff Boss  
CEO  
Greenville Water  
P.O. Box 687  
Greenville, SC 29602  
jboss@greenvillewater.com

Justin Kirouac  
County Administrator  
Oconee County  
jkirouac@oconee.ga.us

Jennifer Adams  
Clerk to Council  
Oconee County  
415 S. Pine St  
Walhalla, SC 29691  
councilclerkinfo@oconeesc.com

Ken Roper  
County Administrator  
Pickens County  
222 McDaniel Ave  
B-10  
Pickens, SC 29671  
kenr@co.pickens.sc.us

David Gilstrap  
Pickens County Water Authority  
222 McDaniel Ave  
8-1  
Pickens, SC 29671  
gilstrap4@gmail.com

Steve Jewsbury  
Pickens County Water Authority  
222 McDaniel Ave  
8-1  
Pickens, SC 29671  
sjewsburyjr@bellsouth.net

Lynn Towe  
Mayor  
Town of Salem  
5A Park Ave  
Salem, SC 29676

Jamie Laughter  
County Manager  
Transylvania County, NC  
21 East Main St  
Brevard, NC 28712  
jaime.laughter@transylviacounty.org

### Tribes

Wenonah Haire Caitlyn Rogers  
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer  
Catawba Indian Nation  
1536 Tom Steven Rd  
Rock Hill, SC 29730  
wenonah.haire@catawba.com

William Harris  
Chief  
Catawba Indian Nation  
996 Avenue of the Nations  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

Elizabeth Toombs  
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer  
Cherokee Nation  
22361 Bald Hill Road  
Tahlequah, OK 74464  
elizabeth-toombs@cherokee.org

Chief Richard Sneed  
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians  
88 Council House Loop Rd  
Cherokee, NC 28719  
ashlstep@nc-cherokee.com

Russell Townsend  
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer  
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Qualla  
Boundary  
P.O. Box 455  
Cherokee, NC 28719  
syerka@nc-cherokee.com

Dr. Savannah Waters  
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer  
The Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
swaters@muscogeenation.com

LeeAnne Wendt  
Tribal Archaeologist  
The Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
leeannewendt@outlook.com

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
Section106@muscogeenation.com

Roger Cain  
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer  
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians  
P.O. Box 746  
Tahlequah, OK 74465  
rcain@ukb-nsn.gov

## Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2740) Distribution List

### Non-Governmental

Terry Keene  
Advocates for Quality Development (AQD)  
jtk7140@me.com

Sue Williams  
Advocates for Quality Development (AQD)  
suewilliams130@gmail.com

Gary Owens  
President  
Advocates for Quality Development, Inc.  
P.O. Box 802  
Seneca, SC 29679  
growens@gmail.com

Peter Raabe  
Southeast Regional Director  
American Rivers  
Praabe@americanrivers.org

Kevin Colburn  
National Stewardship Director  
American Whitewater  
2725 Highland Dr  
Missoula, Montana 59802  
kevin@americanwhitewater.org

Jeff Lineberger  
Duke Energy  
jeff.lineberger@duke-energy.com

Garry Rice  
Duke Energy  
4720 Piedmont Row Dr  
Mail Code PNG04C  
Charlotte, NC 28210  
garry.rice@duke-energy.com

Alan Stuart  
Duke Energy  
alan.stuart@duke-energy.com

Phil Mitchell  
Fishers Knob Homeowners Group  
lputnammitchell@gmail.com

Don Taylor  
Fishers Knob Homeowners Group  
Clemsonla@gmail.com

Heyward Douglas  
Executive Director  
Foothills Trail Conservancy  
heyward69@gmail.com

Andrew Gleason  
Foothills Trail Conservancy  
andrewandwilla@hotmail.com

Glenn Hilliard  
Foothills Trail Conservancy  
glenn@hilliardgrp.com

Bill Ranson  
Foothills Trail Conservancy  
bill.ranson@retiree.furman.edu

John Hains  
Friends of Lake Keowee Society  
jhains@g.clemson.edu

Dale Wilde  
President  
Friends of Lake Keowee Society  
1201 N Fant Street  
Anderson, SC 29672  
dwilde@keoweefolks.org

Sarah Kulpa  
Senior Regulatory Specialist  
HDR  
440 S. Church St  
Ste 1200  
Charlotte, NC 28202  
Sarah.Kulpa@hdrinc.com

Jocassee Outdoor Center  
516 Jocassee Lake Rd  
Salem, NC 29676  
fun@jocasseeoutdooreenter.com

Elizabeth Thomas Esq.  
K&L Gates LLP  
925 Fourth Ave  
Ste 2900  
Seattle, WA 98104  
liz.Thomas@klGates.com

Tyler Reeves  
Regional Director  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
treeves@nwtf.net

Wes Cooler  
Trustee  
Naturaland Trust  
wes.cooler@mac.com

## Bad Creek Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2740) Distribution List

Mac Stone  
Executive Director  
Naturaland Trust  
MacStone@naturalandtrust.org

Dale Threatt-Taylor  
Chief of Staff  
Nature Conservancy  
1417 Stuart Engals Blvd  
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464  
d.threatttaylor@tnc.org

Tim Gestwicki  
Executive Director  
North Carolina Wildlife Federation  
2155 McClintock Rd  
Charlotte, NC 28205  
tim@ncwf.org

Annie Caggiano  
President  
Oconee Economic Alliance  
528 Bypass 123  
Ste G  
Seneca, SC 29678  
acaggiano@oconeesc.com

Joanna Rothell  
Preservation South Carolina  
1109 Broad Street  
Suite 2H  
Camden, SC 29020  
joanna@preservesc.org

Andy Douglas  
S.C. Wildlife Federation  
adoug41@att.net

Sara Green  
Executive Director  
South Carolina Wildlife Federation  
sara@scwf.org

Bob King  
Chapter President  
Trout Unlimited, Chattooga River Chapter  
40 Quartermaster Dr  
Salem, SC 29676

Erika Hollis  
Upstate Forever  
507 Pettigru St  
Greenville, SC 29601  
ehollis@upstateforever.org

Chris Starker  
Upstate Forever  
507 Pettigru St  
Greenville, SC 29601  
cstarker@upstateforever.org

Mike Case  
mgcase@icloud.com

Michael Corney  
Mike\_corney@yahoo.com

Steve Corney  
Steve@corney.org

Mark Cotton  
mark@cottonrealestate.com

Simeon Ramsden  
CEO Kipling Ventures  
simeon@kiplingventures.com

Kathy Rhodes  
P.O. Box 325  
Seneca, SC 29679

Angela Shadwick  
P.O. Box 325  
Seneca, SC 29679