



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT
100 W. OGLETHORPE AVENUE
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401-3604

March 5, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE
Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

SUBJECT: Notice of Availability of the Hartwell Lake Draft Integrated Water Supply Storage Reallocation Report and Environmental Assessment, Georgia, and South Carolina. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, notice is hereby given that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District (Corps) has prepared the Hartwell Lake Draft Integrated Water Supply Storage Reallocation Report and Environmental Assessment (IWSSRR/EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), South Carolina and Georgia. The Corps evaluated two final alternatives, including the No Action Alternative (NAA) and Action Alternative to reallocate Hartwell Lake conservation storage to water supply storage with the inclusion of return flow credit (RFC).

Public Comment Period: The Corps is pleased to provide the Draft IWSSRR/EA and FONSI for public comment. The public comment period closes at midnight April 4, 2024. Those interested or affected by this action are invited to share their concerns or comments.

Public comments may be submitted via email at
CESAS-planning@usace.army.mil or mailed to the address below. Please include
"Hartwell Lake Water Supply Draft EA" in the subject line.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District
Attn: Planning Branch/Suzanne Hill
100 West Oglethorpe Ave
Savannah, GA 31401

All comments received will become part of the administrative record and are subject to public release under the Freedom of Information Act, including any personally identifiable information such as name, phone numbers, and addresses.

The Draft IWSSRR/EA and Draft FONSI are available for public review and comment. The documents can be downloaded from the Corps website at:
<https://www.sas.usace.army.mil/About/Divisions-and-Offices/Planning-Division/Plans-and-Reports/> (the last bullet under **Hartwell Lake Project**). Copies may also be obtained through email request to the following address:
CESAS-planning@usace.army.mil.

The Public Comment Period Closes April 4, 2024.

LOCATION OF PROPOSED ACTION: The Hartwell Dam and Lake Project, Georgia and South Carolina (Hart, Franklin, and Stephens Counties in Georgia, and Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties in South Carolina).

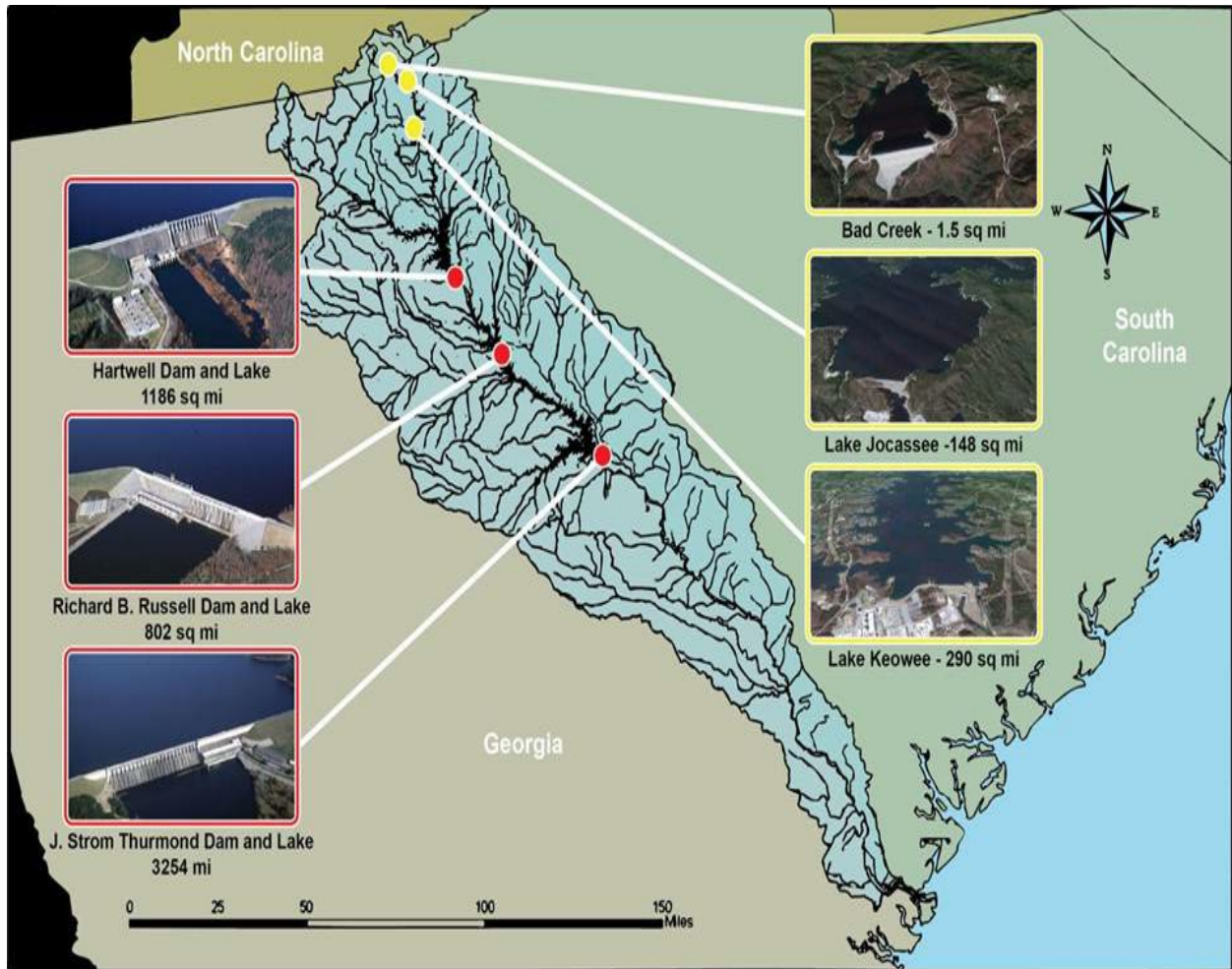


Figure 1: Savannah River Basin Map

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The recommended plan is the reallocation of 10,414 acre-feet of storage from Hartwell Lake to water supply storage with return flow credit (RFC). Four separate entities requested the reallocation of storage for water supply from Hartwell Lake: Anderson Regional Joint Water System (ARJWS); Pioneer Rural Water District (PRWD); the City of Lavonia; and the Currahee Club. ARJWS requested 4,571 acre-feet or 16 Million Gallons per Day (MGD). PRWD requested 3,123 acre-feet or 5 MGD. The City of Lavonia requested 2,308 acre-feet or 3 MGD. The Currahee Club requested 412 acre-feet or 0.5 MGD. Total requests equal 10,414 acre-feet or 24.55 MGD.

A number of alternative plans were developed and evaluated in the Draft IWSSRR/EA. Consideration in the planning process was given to how well the plan would meet the projected demand as well as to cost-effectiveness, technical viability, environmental acceptability, and impacts on other project purposes. The range of alternatives that were fully evaluated in the Draft IWSSRR/EA are as follows:

a. **Alternative 1 - No Action Alternative:** Under the No Action Alternative (NAA), or future without project condition (FWOP), storage would not be reallocated from Hartwell Lake to meet the water supply requestors' needs. The requestors would be required to identify or develop alternatives sources for water supply.

b. **Alternative 5 – Recommended Plan – Hartwell Lake Reallocation of Conservation Storage to Water Supply with Return Flow Credit:** The proposed reallocation of 10,414 acre-feet of storage from the Hartwell Lake conservation pool would yield the requested 24.55 MGD to the four requestors in the most effective and efficient means. This proposed alternative:

- a. Provides the requested water supply storage necessary to meet the present and future water demands of the four requestors;
- b. Would result in a decrease in Hartwell Lake average water surface elevation of 0.02 feet or 0.24 inches over the period of record analyzed (1939-2013);
- c. Would result in an average annual decrease of 12 cubic feet per second (cfs) from an average annual flow of 8,956 cfs to 8,944 cfs in the Savannah River at Augusta, GA (0.1% difference). In context of the larger river system, this change would be imperceptible;
- d. Would result in a 0.05 percent reduction in hydropower benefits; and a 0.06 percent reduction in hydropower revenues;
- e. Does not affect flood control storage and does not significantly affect other authorized purposes;
- f. Does not change any of the rules of operations associated with the three-project system. Operations associated with the Drought Management Plan, Flood Risk Management, and standard operations including hydropower generation and minimum flow requirements from the projects remain unchanged; and
- g. Does not require any structural changes or improvements.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY EVALUATION:

Environmental Assessment: The Corps has prepared a Draft IWSSRR/EA and has preliminarily determined that an Environmental Impact Statement would not be required for this action. The Draft IWSSRR/EA is being coordinated concurrently with this Notice to Federal and State natural resource agencies for review and comment.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS:

For all alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated, as appropriate. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the recommended plan are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Potential Effects of the Recommended Plan

	Insignificant Effects	Insignificant Effects as a Result of Mitigation*	Resource Unaffected by Action
Hydrology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water Supply	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hydropower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flood Risk Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Water Quality in the Lakes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Water Quality in the Savannah River	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Aquatic Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Threatened/Endangered species/critical habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Essential Fish Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Socioeconomics*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Justice*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protection of Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous, Toxic & Radioactive Waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wetlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cultural Resources/Historic Properties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Climate Change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
* For these resources the Corps determine minor benefits in comparison with the NAA.			

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the recommended plan. No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the recommended plan.

Threatened, Endangered, and Other Protected Species: Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended, the Corps has determined that the recommended plan will have no effect on federally listed species or their designated critical habitat.

Cultural Resources: Based on a review of 36 CFR §800, this project poses no adverse effect to historic properties. The Corps coordinated this determination under Section 106 of the

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended, with the South Carolina and Georgia State Historic Preservation Offices for concurrence.

Clean Water Act Section 404(b)1 Guidelines: No discharge of dredged or fill material in waters of the U.S., including wetlands are anticipated for the recommended plan. Therefore, a Section 404(b)(1) evaluation is not required. Currahee Club will be responsible for obtaining any required permits for their intake pipe.

Clean Water Act Section 401: Section 401 Water Quality Certifications from the States of Georgia and South Carolina are not needed as no discharge of effluent or materials into waters of the U.S. is anticipated for the recommended plan. Currahee Club will be responsible for obtaining any required permits for their intake pipe.

Clean Water Act Section 402: All return flows included in the recommended plan are from facilities with existing permits in compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Any required modifications to these permits will be the responsibility of the requestors.

Coastal Zone Consistency: Pursuant to Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), as amended, the project is outside of the Coastal Zone and has no indirect impacts to the Coastal Zone, compliance with CZMA is not applicable.

Consideration of Public Comments: The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Native American Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the recommended plan. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps in its deliberations on this action.

Comment Period: Anyone wishing to comment on the Draft IWSSRR/EA and FONSI should submit comments to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District by midnight April 4, 2024. Written comments may be sent via email to: CESAS-Planning@usace.army.mil, or to the mailing address below. In your response, please reference "Hartwell Lake Water Supply Draft EA" in the subject line. Mailed comments on this notice must be postmarked by the expiration date. Questions may be directed to Ms. Suzanne Hill, Environmental Team Lead, at 912-423-2324.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Savannah District
Attn: Planning Branch/Suzanne Hill
100 West Oglethorpe Ave
Savannah, GA 31401**

Kimberly L. Garvey

Kimberly L. Garvey
Chief, Planning Branch
Savannah District