

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1.1 Description of the Project Areas and Proposed Action

Oglethorpe Power Corporation (Oglethorpe Power, or Oglethorpe), a rural electric cooperative, headquartered in Tucker, Georgia initially applied to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) for financing assistance to construct two 100-megawatt (MW) net biomass-fired generating plants and related facilities at two different sites in Georgia. One of the sites is in Warren County, approximately 40 miles west of Augusta, Georgia (Figure 1-1). The other site is approximately 40 miles west of Hinesville, Georgia (Figure 1-2). Currently Oglethorpe has specific plans to proceed with construction of only one of the plants. Oglethorpe proposes to construct the plant at the Warren County site (the Proposal), while the plant at the Appling site has been deferred for the foreseeable future. In this EIS the Appling site is evaluated as an alternative to the Proposal (Alternate site or Alternate).

1.1.1.1 Proposal and Alternate Settings

The 343-acre Proposal site is approximately three-fourths mile east of the city limit of Warrenton (2000 population 2,013). The area surrounding the site is mostly wooded, and there is some industrial development between the City of Warrenton and the Warren site (Figure 1-3).

The 345-acre Alternate site is just east of the city limits of Baxley, Georgia (2000 population 4,150). The area surrounding the site is a mix of forest, agriculture, and residential and industrial land (Figure 1-4).

1.1.1.2 Proposal Site

The Proposal site is roughly triangular in shape and is bordered on the north by East Warrenton Road and on the southwest by the existing Norfolk Southern Railroad. The City of Warrenton is developing an industrial park adjacent to the northwest part of the site (Warren County Chamber of Commerce n.d.). There are residential developments along East Warrenton Road. Two transmission corridors cross the site, one (north-south) with a 115-kilovolt (kV) line and the other (east-west) with one 115- and one 230-kV line (Figure 1-5).

Most of the site (62 percent) is currently used for pasture or hay production. Eight scattered wooded areas ranging from approximately 3 to 16 acres cover 14 percent of the site. Recently cleared areas, including the site south of the southern transmission line and another area on the east, cover 22 percent of the site. Three ponds, the largest of which is approximately 2.5 acres in size, cover a little over one percent of the site.

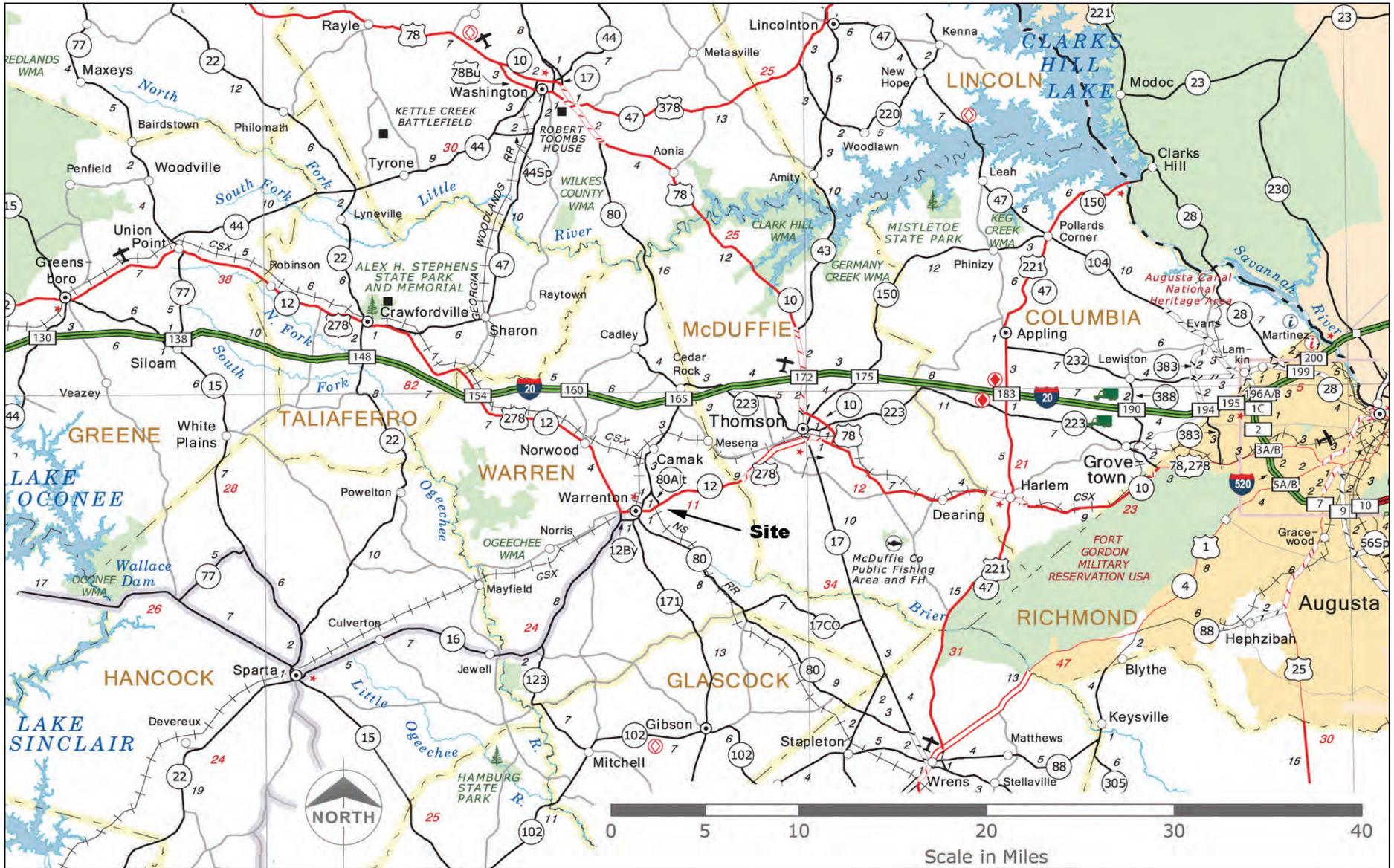


Figure 1-1. Proposal Site Regional Setting.

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation 2009a

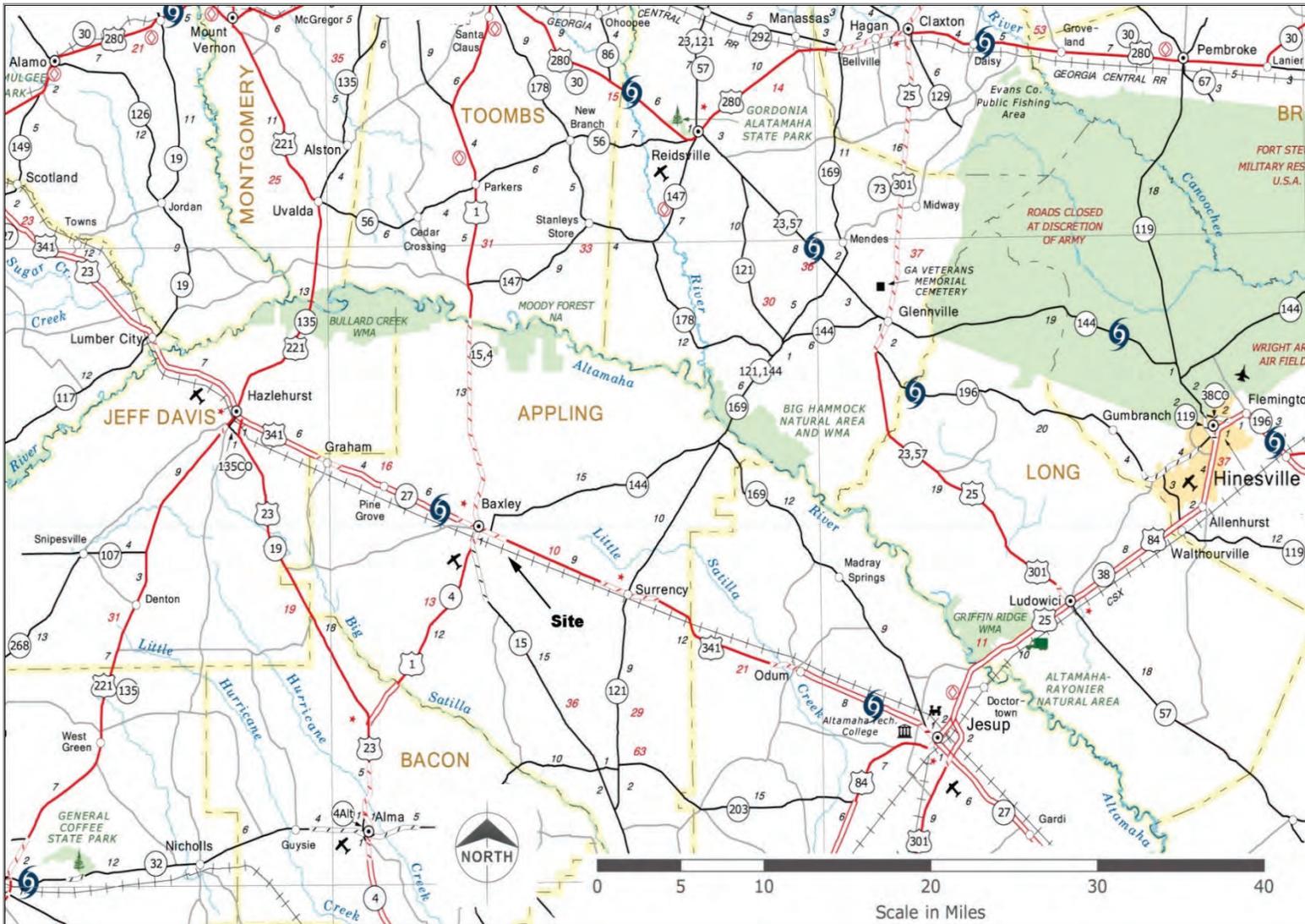


Figure 1-2: Alternate Site Regional Setting

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation 2009a

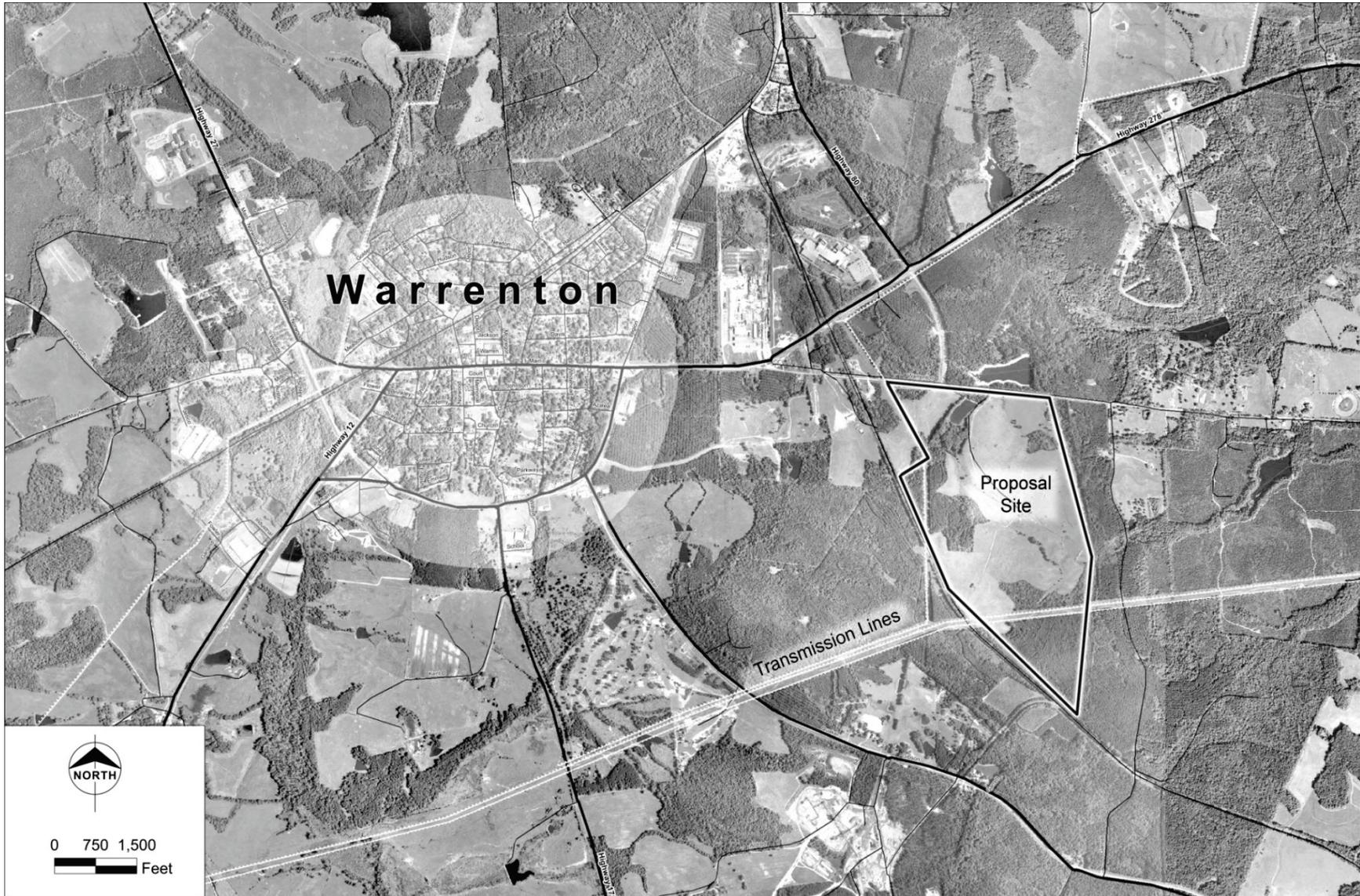


Figure 1-3: Proposal Site Location

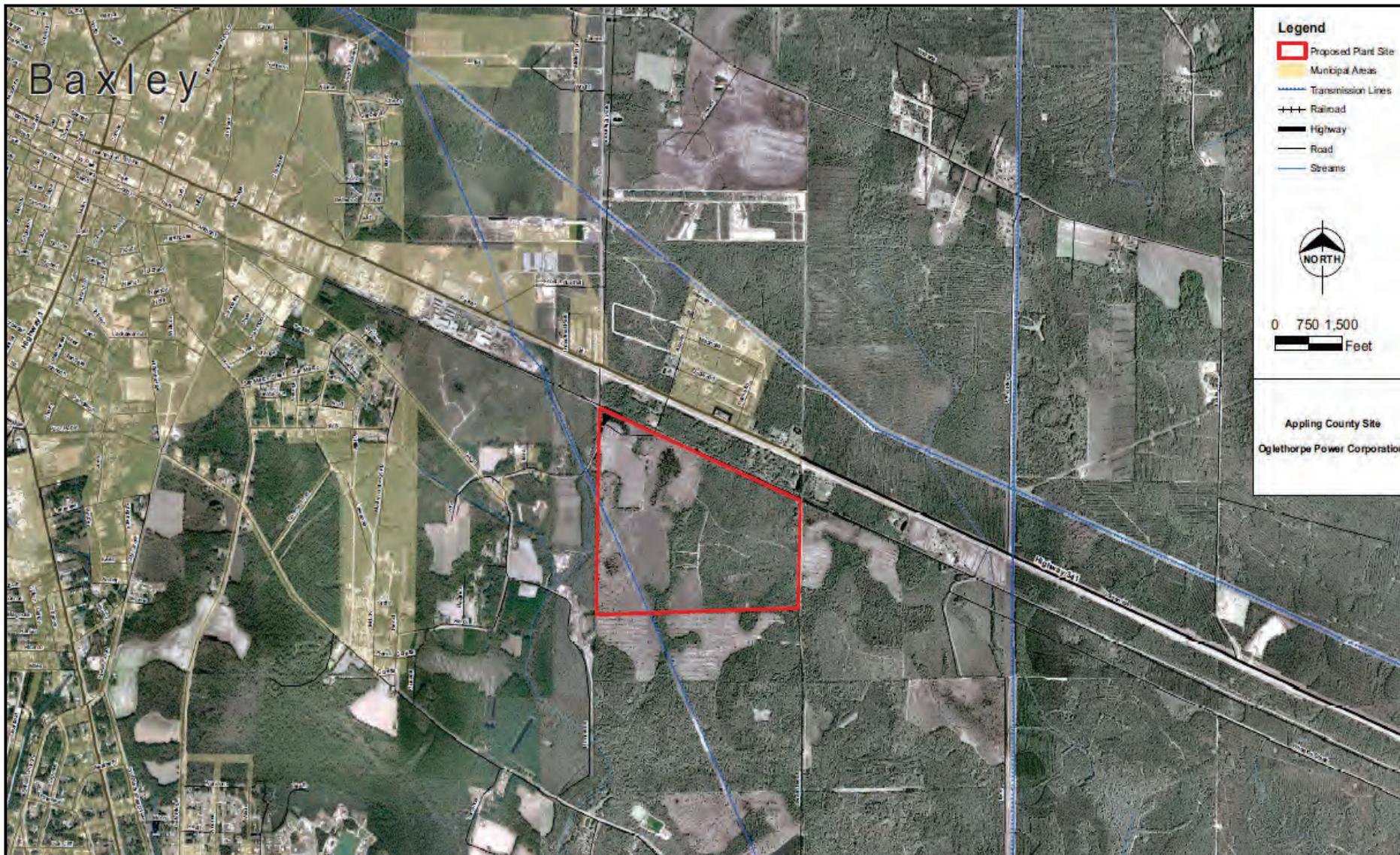


Figure 1-4: Alternate Site Location



Figure 1-5: Proposal Site

Source: National Agricultural Imagery Program 2009

1.1.1.3 Alternate Site

The Alternate site is trapezoidal in shape and is bordered on the north by the Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way. Hundreds Road, a creek, and several residential parcels are just west of the site. Swain Break Road borders the site on the east. A 230kV electrical transmission line right-of-way crosses the southwestern proportion of the subject property (Figure 1-6).

Approximately half the Alternate site is used for timber production and the remainder is used for agricultural purposes. There is an approximately 0.83-acre pond in the far northwest corner.

1.1.2 Purpose and Need for the Action

1.1.2.1 Oglethorpe Responsibilities and Resources

Oglethorpe power supply obligations. Since 1973, by Georgia law, all the land area in the state has been assigned to specific power suppliers, among which are the state's 42 electric membership cooperatives (EMCs) (Figure 1-7). Each power supplier is responsible for providing electricity to the consumers in its assigned area. In 1974, 39 of the state's EMCs (the Members) founded Oglethorpe as their own power supply. Before forming Oglethorpe, the Members had been dependent upon Georgia Power to provide the electricity they needed for their consumer-members (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2008b). In 1974 Oglethorpe began acquiring generation resources and by 2007 owned interests in 24 individual generating units representing 4,744 MW of generating capacity (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2008c). Oglethorpe acquires additional resources only to meet its Members' needs, and only upon approval of 75 percent of its board of directors, 75 percent of its Members, and members representing 75 percent of its patronage capital (equity component of a cooperative's capitalization) (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2009d, p. 2).

Oglethorpe supplies power to its Members through wholesale power contracts. Under these contracts, each Member is unconditionally obligated for a fixed percentage of the capacity costs of each of Oglethorpe's generation resources and purchased power resources with a term greater than one year. Each Member must then establish rates and manage its business so that it can meet its financial obligations to Oglethorpe (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2009d, p. 2). Thus, because of the obligations imposed on the Members, they have an incentive to authorize Oglethorpe's acquisition of additional resources only when they are certain they will need the resources and are unlikely to acquire them at lower costs elsewhere.

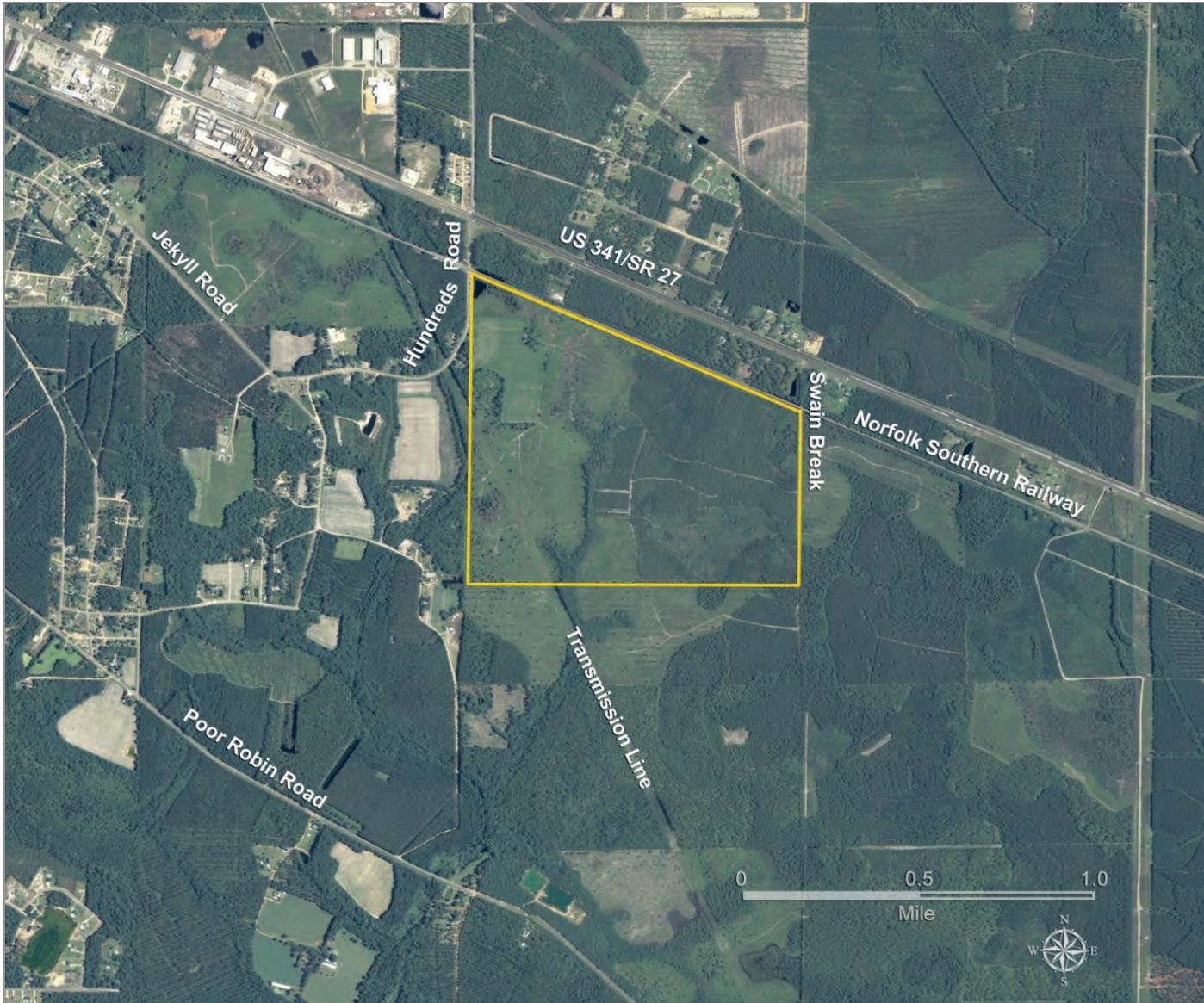


Figure 1-6. Alternate Site

Source: National Agricultural Imagery Program 2009

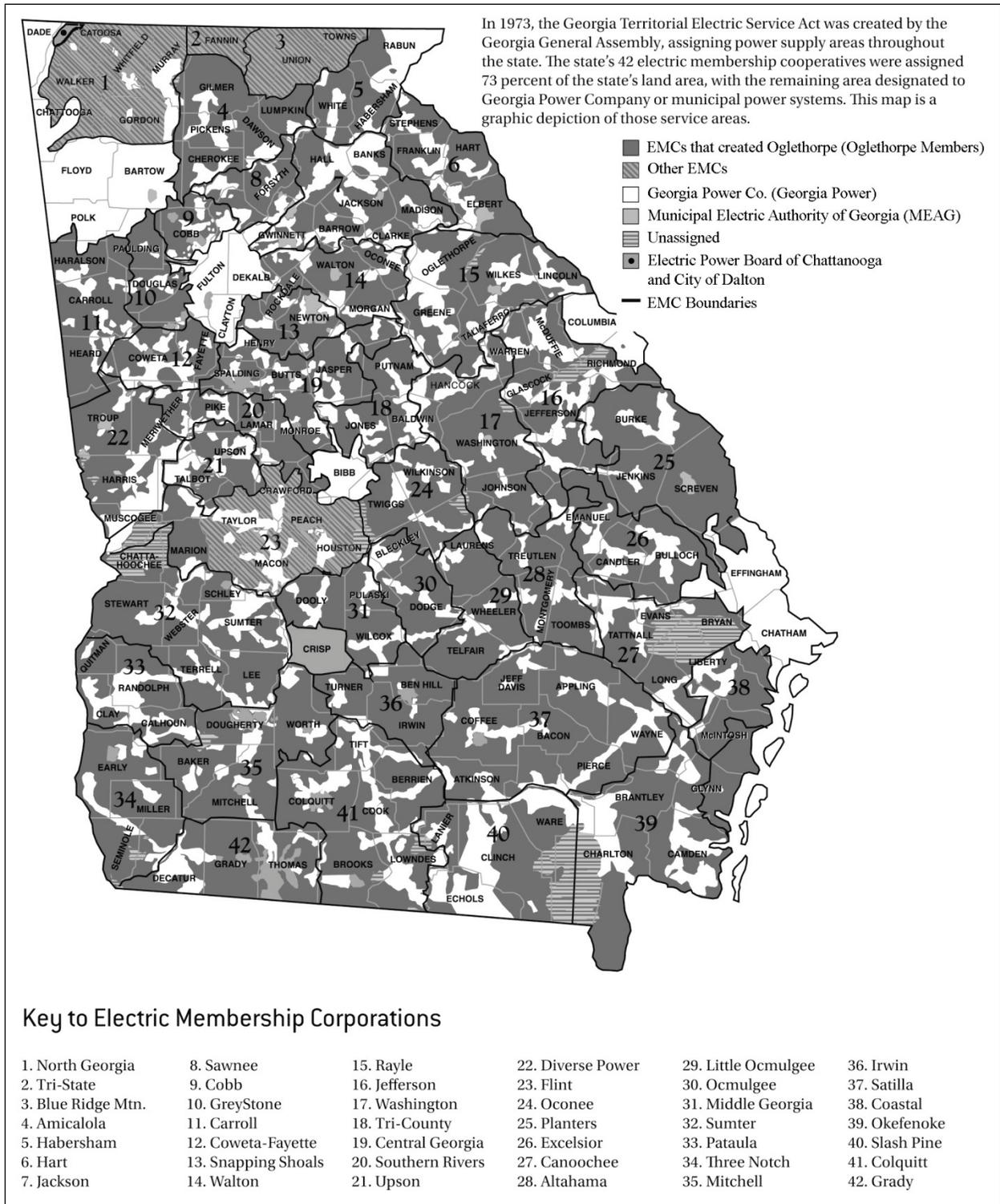


Figure 1-7. Georgia's Electric Suppliers Assigned Service Areas

Source: Georgia EMC 2008

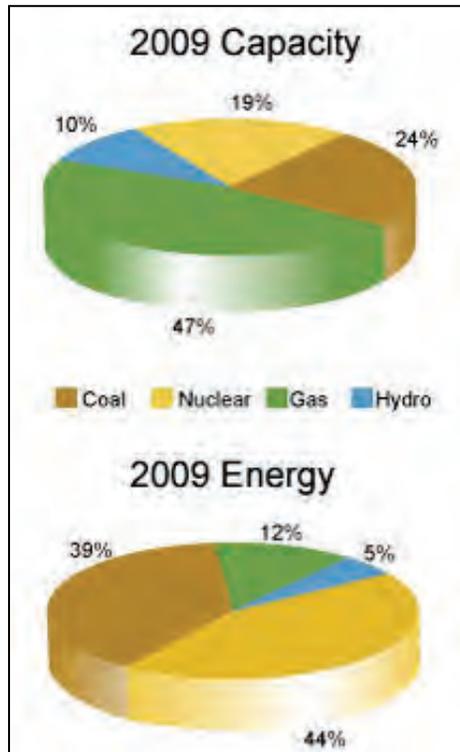


Figure 1-8. Oglethorpe Resources.
 Source: Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2008a

Different types of generation resources. Electric utilities have two basic types of generation resources to meet daily and seasonal variations in demand: baseload plants that operate continuously except for down time for repair or maintenance; and peaking plants that operate only when demand is high, such as on hot summer afternoons. Intermediate load plants may fill the gap between baseload and peaking. Baseload needs are best met with plants that have relatively low fuel costs, because they must operate continuously. Peaking needs that occur during the summer heat and winter cold are best met with generation sources that can respond very quickly to demand, and then shut down again. Higher fuel costs are more acceptable with peaking facilities, and utilities need a combination of baseload and peaking resources. Baseload plants are generally more expensive to build and require more time to start up, but can produce electricity at much lower cost on a per energy unit basis than peaking plants.

Capacity factor. Utilities use the term capacity factor to quantify how much a plant produces compared to how much it could produce at maximum output. For a given power source over a given period of time, the capacity factor is the ratio of actual energy produced to the energy that would have been produced if the source had operated continuously at maximum capacity. For example, if during 2009 a plant operated 75 percent of the time at maximum capacity and was completely shut down the rest of the year, the capacity factor was 75 percent for that year.

Oglethorpe resources. Oglethorpe’s baseload plants are mostly nuclear and coal-fired. The Department of Energy (DOE) Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports that nationwide, coal-fired plants, which are one of the two main sources of baseload capacity in the U.S. (the other is nuclear, which has had a higher capacity factor), had an average capacity factor of 72.6 percent in 2006 (EIA 2007a). Baseload plants operate continuously, except for outages, which may be planned (for scheduled maintenance) or unplanned (as a result of equipment failure, for example). Peaking plants are usually less expensive to build and can start up and change load quickly to respond to variable demand. Nationwide in 2006, combustion turbine plants, which are Oglethorpe’s main type of peaking plant, had an average capacity factor of approximately 11 percent (EIA 2007a). Intermediate load plants have characteristics and capacity factors between baseload and peak load plants.

Figure 1-8 shows the difference between baseload and peaking plants. In 2009, Oglethorpe’s coal and nuclear plants made up 43 percent of its generation capacity, in

MW (Figure 1-8; top pie chart); however, these baseload resources produced 83 percent of Oglethorpe's energy (measured in MW-hours, or MWh) (Figure 1-8; bottom pie chart). The natural gas combustion turbine peaking plants make up 47 percent of Oglethorpe's capacity; however, they were used only when demands were high, and they produced only 12 percent of the energy. Oglethorpe's hydro resources are pumped storage and generate during peak times and pump during off-peak times. The Proposal would be expected to have a capacity factor of approximately 80 percent.

Oglethorpe other future resources. Oglethorpe currently has 30 percent ownership in the 2,302-MW Vogtle Nuclear Plant near Waynesboro, Georgia, and is participating in 30 percent of the cost of two additional 1,100-MW nuclear units at the site. Oglethorpe's 30 percent ownership will equal approximately 1,351 MW at Vogtle when the additions are completed (691 existing plus 660 planned). In April 2011, Oglethorpe purchased an existing 1220 MW Gas-fired combined cycle power plant called the Murray Energy Facility. This caused Oglethorpe to cancel a 605 MW gas fired combined cycle plant that it had planned to construct at Smarr, Georgia.

1.1.2.2 Purpose of the Proposal

The purpose of the Proposal is to provide a reliable, long-term supply of renewable and sustainable energy at a reasonable cost to meet part of Oglethorpe's contractual obligations to provide electric energy to its Members.

In 2007, Oglethorpe Power's Board of Directors adopted an official position statement on the issue of global climate change as a means of providing guidance for corporate activities in this area. The position paper states the board's support of increased renewable energy as "'insurance' against the risk that global warming could result in significant environmental and economic impacts" (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2007).

1.1.2.3 Need

While Oglethorpe was formed for the purpose of providing wholesale electric power to its Members, Oglethorpe has never had the resources to meet all its Member needs. In 2008, Oglethorpe supplied approximately 65 percent of its Members' energy needs; and in 2009, it supplied 55 percent (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2009d, p. 2), (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2010c, p. 2). Members are responsible for making their own arrangements for the remainder. As discussed in Section 1.1.2, Oglethorpe may acquire additional resources only to meet its Member needs, and only upon authorization by 75 percent of its Members (representing at least 75 percent of its patronage capital) and 75 percent of its board of directors. When Members authorize Oglethorpe's acquisition of additional resources, they are then contractually obligated to pay for those resources through the rates they charge to their customers.

Based on the compilation of each Member's projections of its energy requirements, Oglethorpe has estimated an average annual increase in energy requirements of all its Members of approximately 3 percent per year from 2010 to 2030 (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2010d).

In July 2008, Oglethorpe's board of directors, which consists of 12 members who are EMC directors or managers plus one outside director, approved Oglethorpe's application of the loan to finance the Proposal (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2008d), (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2008e). Oglethorpe's Members have also subscribed to the Proposal (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2010c, p. 9).

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR AGENCY ACTION

1.2.1 Rural Utilities Service

Under the Rural Electrification Act, as amended (RE Act), the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized and empowered to make loans for rural electrification to nonprofit cooperatives and others "for the purpose of financing the construction and operation of generating plants, electric transmission and distribution lines or systems for the furnishing and improving of electric service to persons in rural areas."¹ A primary function or mission of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is to carry out this electric loan program.²

Providing feasible and environmentally acceptable renewable energy is consistent with the policy of the federal government, including the Department of Energy (DOE), which implements federal energy policy, and the USDA, of which RUS is an agency. The federal government has supported renewable energy, through various laws and programs, since the energy crisis of the 1970s, and most recently with funding for renewable energy in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The support originally began as a result of concern about U.S. dependence on imports of oil, and increased concerns of global warming. Regarding biomass in particular, according to a recent joint study, the USDA and DOE "are both strongly committed to expanding the role of biomass as an energy source. In particular, they support biomass fuels and products as a way to reduce the need for oil and gas imports; to support the growth of agriculture, forestry and rural economies; and to foster major new domestic industries" (DOE 2005).

RUS is currently pursuing options for eligible organizations to develop renewable energy, and has financed biomass, photovoltaic, and wind powered renewable energy projects developed by current borrowers (RUS 2010).

¹ United States Code, Title 7 (7 USC) §904

² 7 USC §6942

1.3 AUTHORIZING ACTIONS

1.3.1 Applicable Statutory Requirements

State and federal laws and regulations applicable to the Proposal and Alternate site are summarized in Appendix A of this final EIS. In addition to NEPA, some of the major applicable laws include:

- Federal Clean Water Act (and Georgia Water Quality and Erosion and Sedimentation Acts).
- Federal Clean Air Act (and Georgia Air Quality Act).
- National Historic Preservation Act (and Georgia Antiquities Act).
- Federal Threatened and Endangered Species Act (and Georgia State Wildlife Policy).

These laws and others, and the associated regulations, are addressed throughout this EIS.

1.3.2 Federal EIS Requirements

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires an EIS for major federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Oglethorpe, a rural electric cooperative, has applied to RUS under the provisions of the RE Act, for financing assistance for the construction of the Proposal. Prior to making a decision about whether to provide financing assistance for the proposal, RUS is required to conduct an environmental review under the NEPA in accordance with its policies and procedures.³ The size and type of the Proposal puts it in a category that, under RUS' regulations, normally requires RUS to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) under the NEPA.⁴ An EIS is intended to "provide full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts and shall inform decision makers and the public of the reasonable alternatives which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment."⁵

The process for preparing an EIS is determined by the federal regulations implementing NEPA.⁶ The major steps in the EIS process are described below.

³ 7 CFR Part 1794

⁴ Code of Federal Regulations, Title 7 (7 CFR) §1794.25(a)(1).

⁵ 40 CFR §1502.1

⁶ 40 CFR Parts 1500 - 1508

Notice of Intent (NOI) – The EIS process for the Warren Site began when RUS published a NOI in the Federal Register and in newspapers local to the Proposal (Warren Site) on June 26, 2009. At that time Oglethorpe planned to proceed with both projects and RUS published a NOI on June 22, 2009 for the Alternate (Appling Site). The NOIs announced RUS’ intention to prepare EISs and hold public scoping meetings concerning the projects.

Scoping Period – The purpose of scoping is to identify public and agency issues to be addressed in the EIS, and possible alternatives to the Proposal that should be considered. Scoping was conducted for both the Warren and Appling sites.

Draft EIS – The draft EIS, made available in April 2011, described the Proposal and alternatives to the Proposal, considered public and agency comments received during the public scoping processes, assessed the potential impacts of the Proposal and the Alternate, and identified potential measures to mitigate those impacts. A notice of availability (NOA) for the draft EIS was published in the Federal Register and in newspapers local to the Proposal.

Comment Period and Public Hearings – The public and agencies reviewed and commented on the draft EIS during a 45-day comment period that began with publication of the NOA for the draft EIS. During the public comment period, RUS held a public hearing in the Proposal area. While Oglethorpe has applied for financing assistance for the Alternate, Oglethorpe currently has no definite plan for proceeding with the Alternate. If and when Oglethorpe decides to move forward with the Alternate, RUS will prepare a supplement to this EIS and will hold a public hearing near the Alternate site.

Final EIS – In this final EIS, RUS responds to comments on the draft EIS and makes appropriate changes in response to those comments. Any changes to the Proposal (Warren Site) and Alternate (Appling Site) resulting from comments on the draft EIS will be identified in this final EIS. RUS published an NOA in the Federal Register when this final EIS became available. RUS encourages public review and comment on the final EIS for 30 days after it is published.

Record of Decision (ROD) –RUS will publish a ROD describing the selected action and any mitigation measures, and the factors considered in making its decision. The ROD concludes the agency’s environmental review process in accordance with NEPA and its implementing regulations. The ROD will not include RUS’ decision for the Appling site.

1.3.3 Decisions to Be Made Based on this Analysis

Oglethorpe has applied to RUS for financing assistance for the Warren and the Appling sites, and RUS must decide whether or not to provide the financing assistance. This EIS addresses RUS' decision only for the Warren site.

1.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1.4.1 Scoping Process

The scoping process involved the following actions:

- Notifying the public and agencies about the scoping meetings.
- Developing project information for review by the public and agencies.
- Conducting the scoping meeting.
- Collecting and reviewing comments.
- Identifying issues raised that need to be addressed in the EIS process.

RUS held a public scoping meeting for the Proposal on July 9, 2009 at the Warren County Community Service Building in Warrenton.⁷ Thirty-seven people signed the attendance sheet. The newspaper notice for the meeting appeared in the *Warrenton Clipper* on the same day as the NOI. On June 19 Oglethorpe sent postcards to landowners within a 2.5-mile radius of the Proposal site, inviting them to attend the scoping meeting.

RUS held a public scoping meeting for the Alternate on July 8, 2009 at the Courthouse Annex in Baxley. Eighty-two people signed the attendance sheet. The newspaper notice for the meeting appeared in the *Baxley News Banner* on June 24, 2009. On June 19 Oglethorpe sent postcards to landowners within a 1-mile radius of the Alternate site, inviting them to attend the scoping meeting.

Details of the scoping process, including the materials presented at the scoping meetings and the meeting transcript, are provided in the scoping reports (one for each site), which are included in Appendix B.

⁷ At the time of the scoping meetings, Oglethorpe was planning two biomass plants and the two sites were therefore not presented as Proposal and Alternate. However, for consistency in the EIS, the two are referenced as Proposal and Alternate throughout.

RUS held an agency scoping meeting for both the Proposal and Alternate on July 7, 2009 at the Oglethorpe Power Corporation Headquarters in Tucker, Georgia. The same project information made available at the public scoping meeting was presented at the agency scoping meeting. In each letter sent to agencies dated June 19, 2009 and June 22, 2009, RUS provided the RUS website address and a copy of the Alternatives Report (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2009a) that evaluated alternatives to meet part of Oglethorpe's power generation needs. Oglethorpe Power's Alternatives Report meets the RUS requirement for an Alternative Evaluation Study and a Siting Study.⁸ RUS also invited each agency to both the agency and the public scoping meetings, and invited comments. The list of agencies and government officials invited to the scoping meeting is included at the front of Appendix B.

Scoping efforts related to cultural resources are discussed in Section 3.11.

1.4.2 Federal Requirements

The federal requirements for scoping are summarized in Section 1.3.2.

1.4.3 Public Review and Comment

RUS received one oral comment at the Warren (Proposal) public scoping meeting and 14 written comments from the public during the comment period that ended on July 27, 2009. RUS also received 11 agency comment letters regarding the Warren proposal. Agency correspondence is included in Appendix B.

RUS received six oral comments at the Appling (Alternate) public scoping meeting and 11 written comments from the public during the comment period that ended on July 22, 2009. RUS also received 8 agency comment letters regarding the Appling proposal. Public correspondence is included in Appendix B.

1.4.4 Comment Analysis

RUS summarized comments based on where they are addressed in the EIS. For the Warren site, agency comments are summarized in Table 1-1 and comments from the public are summarized in Table 1-2. For the Appling site, agency comments are summarized in Table 1-3 and comments from the public are summarized in Table 1-4.

1.5 ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.5.1 Key Issues

The following key issues were identified in scoping:

⁸ 7 CFR 1794.51(c)

- Potential long-term forest impacts.
- Avoidance, minimization and mitigation of impacts to Waters of the U.S.
- Impacts on groundwater resources.
- Air impacts.

1.5.2 Other Issues Considered

The U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Environmental Compliance and Policy, asked why the Warren County and Appling County proposals were not considered in the same NOI and EIS. These are independent and not connected actions (Section 1.6 below). In fact, the Appling County proposal has been indefinitely postponed. However, this EIS evaluates the impacts of both projects. Should Oglethorpe decide to move forward with the Appling project, and seek financing from RUS, a supplemental EIS would be required, RUS will prepare appropriate NEPA documentation.

1.6 CONNECTED ACTIONS

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations define the scope of an EIS as “the range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in an environmental impact statement.”⁹ One type of action that agencies must consider in determining the scope of an EIS is the “connected action.” Connected actions are those that “are closely related and therefore should be discussed in the same impact statement.”¹⁰

⁹ 40 CFR 1508.25

¹⁰ 40 CFR 1508.25(a)1

Table 1-1. Summary of Comments from Agency Scoping for the Proposal Site.

Agency	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
PURPOSE AND NEED/ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION			
U.S Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Savannah District	Basic purpose of the project needs to be determined so that it does not exclude other potential project sites from consideration. The basic project purpose is a critical element in the USACE’s evaluation for compliance with the 404(b)(1) Guidelines.	Well-defined purpose and need; evaluation of full range of reasonable alternatives.	See Section 1.1.2 for a discussion of the purpose and need for the proposal and Section 2.4 for a discussion of the site selection process. The determination of basic project purpose is a requirement specific to the Clean Water Act Section 404 regulatory program.
PROPOSED ACTION			
U.S. Dept of Interior, Office of Environmental Compliance and Policy	Question on why two NOIs and two EISs for the two projects– Warrenton and Appling.	Connected actions.	These are independent proposals; one can and may proceed without the other. Since the NOIs were published, the Appling site has been deferred. See Section 1.6 for a discussion of connected actions. Note that Appling is evaluated as an Alternate site in this final EIS.
AIR RESOURCES			
GDOT	Using wood is carbon-friendly.	Greenhouse gas	See Section 3.1 for a discussion of air resources and impacts, including greenhouse gases.
Georgia Forestry Commission	Using biomass is carbon neutral. Impacts from other air pollutants are less than most fossil fuels.	Greenhouse gas and other air impacts.	

Table 1-1. Summary of Comments from Agency Scoping for the Proposal Site.

Agency	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
SURFACE WATER AND AQUATIC HABITATS			
FWS, Georgia Ecological Services	Please provide information on water needs for plant operation and water quality of any proposed discharges to Waters of the U.S.	Surface water and aquatic impacts.	See Section 2.5.2.6 for a discussion of the Proposal water needs and Section 2.5.2.7 for a discussion of proposed discharges.
DNR Wildlife Resources Division	Keep machinery out of creeks during construction. Recommend that shrubs and ground vegetation be left in place. Recommend stringent erosion control practices during construction and re-establishment of vegetation as soon as possible. Use natural vegetation and grading techniques (e.g., vegetated swales, turn-offs, vegetated buffer strips) that will ensure that the project area does not serve as a conduit for storm water or pollutants into the water during or after construction. The Division has designated high priority waters and watersheds. The Washington No. 1 site is near a high priority stream. Website provided.	Surface water and aquatic impacts.	See Section 3.2 for a discussion of surface water resources, impacts, measures to reduce impacts, and for a discussion of fisheries and aquatic resources, impacts, and measures to reduce impacts as related to the Proposal.

Table 1-1. Summary of Comments from Agency Scoping for the Proposal Site.

Agency	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
FOREST RESOURCES AND OTHER VEGETATION			
FWS, Georgia Ecological Services	Identify source of biomass (e.g., waste material, newly harvested trees) and radius around the plant from which these materials will be acquired.	Forest impacts and sustainability.	See Sections 2.5.2.3 and 3.6.1 for a discussion of the fuel supply for the Proposal.
USFS, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest	No National Forests in Appling, or Warren Counties.		See Section 3.6 for a discussion of forestry resources.
Georgia Forestry Commission	The forestry industry in Georgia is sustainable (information provided). The Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia has been researching and improving forest biomass harvesting methods in support of biomass to energy projects. The Forestry Commission administers a best management practices (BMP) system for forestry that protects water quality and forest soils during forestry operations. The most recent BMP survey reflected a 90 percent overall statewide BMP implementation rate with 99.4 percent of those acres compliant with BMPs.		See Section 3.6 for a discussion of forest impacts and sustainability.
GDOT	Project will support sustainable use of state's forest resources.		

Table 1-1. Summary of Comments from Agency Scoping for the Proposal Site.

Agency	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
THREATENED AND ENDANGERED AND SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES			
DNR Wildlife Resources Division	Provided web information on highest priority species and natural communities. Nongame Conservation Section website.	Protected species.	Information from the referenced web site is included in Section 3.7.
DNR Wildlife Resources Division	Provided information on Natural Heritage Database occurrences.		This information has been included in Sections 3.7.
DNR Wildlife Resources Division	No records of high priority species or habitat at the Warren County or Appling County sites, but recommend completing surveys for species of concern at Appling and Warrenton sites before any project begins.		Site surveys are discussed in Section 3.7.
FWS, Georgia Ecological Services	Please provide information on the presence of suitable habitat on site for federally-listed species (please see www.fws.gov/athens/endangered for more information).	Protected species.	See Section 3.7 for a discussion of potential federally-listed species or habitat at the Proposal site.
WILDLIFE			
DNR Wildlife Resources Division	Provided web information on highest priority species and natural communities. Referred to the Nongame Conservation Section website. Noted that the information is not complete.	Species of concern.	See Section 3.7 for discussion.
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
DNR SHPO	Look forward to reviewing survey reports. Please refer to project number HP-090625-001 in future correspondence.	Potential cultural resource impacts	The reference number will be included in future correspondence.

Table 1-1. Summary of Comments from Agency Scoping for the Proposal Site.

Agency	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES			
USACE, Savannah District	Potential impacts to jurisdictional wetlands require a formal wetland delineation.	wetlands	See Section 3.7 for wetland delineation.
USACE, Savannah District	The 404(b)(1) guidelines require a sequential approach: first, avoid impacts to Waters of the U.S.; if avoidance is not practicable, minimize and provide compensation. Compensatory mitigation will be required for impacts of 1/10 of an acre or more of wetlands or open water and impacts of 100 linear feet or more of stream channel. Compensatory mitigation is recommended through the purchase of credits from a USACE-approved mitigation bank or through restoration, enhancement, or preservation of wetlands or streams on or near the project site.	Waters of U.S. impact guidance	See discussions in Section 3.7.
FWS, Georgia Ecological Services	Please provide information on impacts of plant construction on Waters of the U.S.	Waters of U.S.	See discussions in Section 3.7.

Table 1-1. Summary of Comments from Agency Scoping for the Proposal Site.

Agency	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
SOCIOECONOMICS			
GADOT	The Proposal will stimulate the regional economy.	Positive economic impact	See Section 3.13 for a discussion of socioeconomic impacts.
Georgia Forestry Commission	The use of biomass will stimulate the regional economy.		

Table 1-2. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Proposal.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS			
1	Oglethorpe and USDA should be commended on pursuing alternatives to non-renewable sources of energy production.	Alternative fuel technologies	No response needed.
1	Building of new biomass plants should require decommissioning of coal plants.	Coal-fired plants	This issue is not addressed in the EIS as it is not related to the proposed action.
1	Converting coal plants to biomass would reduce Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and mercury levels so that waterways could come back into Clean Water Act compliance and allow people to safely eat fish from them.	Coal-fired plants	This issue is not addressed in the EIS as it is not related to the proposed action. Note that with current technologies, there is insufficient biomass available to replace coal as a fuel.
1	Oppose the use of dedicated land application sites for wastewater disposal.	Wastewater alternatives	Oglethorpe will discharge wastewater to local wastewater treatment plants.
1	Support green power.	Renewable energy	No response needed.
PROPOSED ACTION			
1	Securing woody debris from existing industrial operations is favorable. What is the percent of electricity generated will come from these sources?	Fuel sources	See Section 3.6 for the Alternate site for a discussion of the fuel supply. Oglethorpe has not determined percentages of fuel from the various source types. This will depend on pricing and availability, and will likely vary over time.
1	Information of the types, amounts, and relative percentages of biomass and other fuel sources to be used to co-fire the plant needs to be provided.		
1	Recommend a closed-loop system for cooling water, with on-site reuse as much as possible.	Cooling alternatives	See Section 2.4.7 for a discussion of cooling alternatives.
15	Shorten the process and begin construction.	Schedule	Oglethorpe's request for financing assistance triggers the need for the NEPA process. Also, by law, other permits are required.

Table 1-2. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Proposal.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
AIR RESOURCES			
1	Not carbon neutral.	Greenhouse gas	See Section 3.1 for a discussion of global climate change and the impacts of the Proposal.
1	Greener emissions.		
1	Removal of mercury from air emissions is not discussed.	Mercury	See Section 3.1.4.3 for emissions. Mercury controls are not planned.
1	Trees and other vegetation sequester mercury. Burning of this material will re-introduce the mercury to the atmosphere. Please address the use of mercury control technology at the proposed plant.		
1	Please discuss other emissions in addition to particulate matter.	Other emissions	See Section 2.5.2.11 for a discussion of emission controls and Section 3.1.4.3 for potential emissions.
GROUNDWATER			
1	Use of groundwater is not recommended. Groundwater supplies in this part of the state have been in steady decline.	Water supply.	Oglethorpe may use some groundwater for a portion of the water supply for the Proposal; but only for construction. Groundwater is considered for the Alternate site. See Section 3.3.3 for a discussion of groundwater.
1	Excessive surface water withdrawals could adversely affect recharge of groundwater resources.	Water supply.	See Sections 3.2 and 3.3.3 for discussions of surface water, groundwater and impacts.
SURFACE WATER			
1	Rocky Comfort Creek provides drinking water for the City of Warrenton. Use of this creek as a water supply for the plant will stress the resource.	Stresses on surface water resources	See Section 3.2 for a discussion of surface water impacts.

Table 1-2. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Proposal.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
1	Use of gray water or water re-use will reduce stress on surface and groundwater resources.		Oglethorpe plans to use gray water as part of its water supply at the Proposal Site (Section 2.5.6.2).
FOREST RESOURCES AND OTHER VEGETATION			
1	Removal of slash could result in soil nitrogen depletion and require soil additives that could affect the river system.		See Section 3.3 for a discussion of soil impacts.
3	The area has a lot of trees.		The abundance of trees in the area is one of the factors that make biomass a reasonable alternative for generating electricity. See discussion in Section 3.6.
1	Best Management Practices need to be enforced to maintain the health and sustainability of the forests and the watershed.	Forest sustainability	See Section 3.6 for a discussion of forestry BMPs.
1	Increased harvesting pressure could lead to the introduction of non-native species and conversion of native forest to monoculture row crop forestry.		See Section 3.6 for a discussion of the Proposal's impacts on forests.
1	Utilization of woody debris from industrial operations will help to reduce pressure on the existing forest resource.		Oglethorpe plans to use woody residues as part of the fuel supply for the Proposal. See Sections 2.5.2.3 and 3.6 for a discussion of fuel supply.
WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES			
1	Avoid siting the facility in wetlands (either jurisdictional or isolated, non-jurisdictional).	Wetland impacts.	See Section 3.7 for a discussion of wetlands and wetland impacts from the Proposal.

Table 1-2. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Proposal.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
SOCIOECONOMICS			
7	Want to see the plant built; believe it will be good for the area	Economic impact	See Section 3.13 for a discussion of the socioeconomic impacts of the Proposal.
4	Proposal would provide needed jobs.		
3	It will have a positive effect on the local economy.		
1	Promote industrial growth in the area.		
1	The biomass plant will provide a market for forest products.		See Section 3.13 for a discussion of the socioeconomic impacts of the Proposal.
CUMULATIVE IMPACTS			
1	Increased harvesting pressure could have negative impacts, such as the conversion of wetlands to pine plantations, introduction of non-native species, and conversion of native forest to monoculture row crop forestry.		See Section 4.4.9 for a discussion of cumulative impacts on forests.
WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES			
1	Avoid siting the facility in wetlands (either jurisdictional or isolated, non-jurisdictional).	Wetland impacts.	See Section 3.7 for a discussion of wetlands and wetland impacts from the Proposal.

Table 1-2. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Proposal.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
PURPOSE AND NEED/ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION			
USACE, Savannah District	Basic purpose of the project needs to be determined so that it does not exclude other potential project sites from consideration	Reasonable alternatives	See Section 1.1.2 for a discussion of the purpose and need for the proposal and Section 2.4 for a discussion of the site selection process. The determination of basic project purpose is a requirement specific to the Clean Water Act Section 404 regulatory program.
USACE, Savannah District	The basic project purpose is a critical element in the USACE's evaluation for compliance with the 404(b)(1) Guidelines	Compliance with USACE 404(b)(1) Guidelines	See Section 3.7.2.2 for wetland delineation for the Alternate site.
AIR RESOURCES			
Georgia Forestry Commission	Utilizing wood is carbon-friendly	Carbon-friendly	See Section 3.1 for a discussion of air resources and impacts, including greenhouse gases.
SOCIOECONOMICS			
Georgia Forestry Commission	This project will stimulate the region's economy	Regional economy	See Section 3.13 for a discussion of the socioeconomic impacts of the Alternate site.

Table 1-3. Summary of Comments from Agency Scoping for the Alternate.

Agency	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
FOREST RESOURCES AND OTHER VEGETATION			
FWS, Georgia Ecological Services	Identify source of biomass and radius around plant from which these materials will be acquired.	Biomass source and distance from the plant	See Section 3.6.2 for biomass sources and distances for acquiring biomass for the Alternate site.
USFS, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest	No National Forests in Oglethorpe, Appling, and Warren Counties.	National Forests	See Section 1.1. Figures 1-1 and 1-2 confirm the absence of National Forests in these areas.
Georgia Forestry Commission	Project will support sustainable use of state's forest resources.	Sustainable use	See Section 3.6 for sustainability of forest resources for the Alternate site.
WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES			
USACE, Savannah District	Potential impacts to jurisdictional wetlands require formal wetland delineation.	Jurisdictional wetlands	See Section 3.7.2.2 for wetland delineation for the Alternate site.
USACE, Savannah District	Compensatory mitigation will be required for impacts of 1/10 of an acre or more of wetlands or open water and impacts of 100 linear feet or more of stream channel. Compensatory mitigation is recommended through the purchase of credits from a USACE-approved mitigation bank or through restoration, enhancement, and preservation of wetlands or streams on or near the project site.	Compensatory mitigation	See Section 3.7.2.2 for wetland delineation for the Alternate site.
FWS, Georgia Ecological Services	Potential impacts of construction on wetlands, streams, and other Waters of the U.S.	Wetland and waters of the U.S. impacts	See Section 3.7.2.2 for wetland delineation for the Alternate site.

Table 1-3. Summary of Comments from Agency Scoping for the Alternate.

Agency	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
FWS, Georgia Ecological Services	Water needs for plant operation and water quality of any discharges proposed into Waters of the U.S.	Water supply and discharge into waters of the U.S.	See Section 2.5.2.62.5.3 for a description of the facility at the Alternate site.
WILDLIFE/THREATENED AND ENDANGERED AND SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES			
FWS, Georgia Ecological Services	Presence of suitable habitat for federally-listed species.	T&E habitat	See Section 3.7.2.6 for federally threatened and endangered species for the Alternate site.
OTHER			
Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR)	GDNR looks forward to reviewing the project.	Review	No response needed.

Table 1-4. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Alternate.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS			
2	Positive project terms of alternative energy use and making the country less dependent on foreign oil.	Alternative energy use	RUS supports renewable energy as noted.
2	Need to look at solar energy – less negative impact	Solar energy	See Section 2.2.1.6 for a discussion of solar energy as an alternative.
1	Burning wood only results in a 20 percent efficiency in terms of Btus.	Fuel efficiency	Wood is less efficient than fossil fuel because of smaller plant size and lower quality fuel. Modern 100-MW biomass plants may be expected to have a net thermal conversion efficiency of approximately 25 percent (based on dry matter higher heating value) (Williams 2008, p. 97; Wiltsee 2000, p. 3).
1	OPC and USDA should be commended on pursuing alternatives to non-renewable sources of electricity production.	Alternative fuel source	RUS supports renewable energy as noted.
1	Converting coal plants to biomass would reduce TMDLs and mercury levels so that waterways could come back into Clean Water Act compliance and allow people to safely eat fish from them.	Alternatives to coal plants	The purpose and need for the proposed action is to provide additional generation resources. Converting coal plants to biomass, or replacing coal plants with biomass plants would not meet the need and is not addressed in this EIS.
1	Building of new biomass plants requires decommissioning of coal plants.		
AIR RESOURCES			
1	The State needs to think about meeting its energy needs without more smokestacks emitting carcinogens into the air.	Health impacts	See Section 2.5.2.11 for a discussion of emission controls and Section 3.1 for federal/state regulations of air pollutants.

Table 1-4. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Alternate.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
1	Will the stack height be adequate?	Health impacts	The air permit for the plant requires a stack of sufficient height to prevent exceeding air quality standards. This is discussed in Section 3.1.
1	Burning woody biomass is not carbon-neutral unless the trees burned are replanted and allowed to grow to full size.	Climate change	See Section 3.1.3 for a discussion of global climate change.
1	Diesel trucks serving the plant will idle and pollute the air.	Diesel pollution	See Section 2.3.3.10 for a discussion of emission controls and Section 3.1 for potential emissions.
10	Will top-dollar scrubbers (or other clean technologies) being installed to minimize air pollution?	Stack scrubbers and other clean technologies	See Section 2.5.2.11 for a discussion of emission controls and Section 3.1 for potential emissions.
1	Burning woody biomass contributes directly to the climate crisis.	Climate destabilization	See Section 3.1.3 for a discussion of global climate change.
1	More than 40,000 Americans die each year from illnesses caused by breathing particulate matter.	Diseases caused by air pollution	See Section 2.5.2.11 for a discussion of emission controls and Section 3.1 for potential emissions.
2	Burning biomass releases particulates that are carcinogenic.	Particulates/ carcinogens	See Section 2.5.2.11 for a discussion of emission controls and Section 3.1 for potential emissions.
1	Trees and other vegetation sequester mercury. Burning of this material will re-introduce the mercury to the atmosphere. Please address the use of mercury control technology at the proposed plant.	Mercury	See Section 3.1 for a discussion of potential mercury emissions. Mercury controls are not planned.

Table 1-4. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Alternate.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
1	Diesel fuel contains more than 40 toxic air pollutants, some are carcinogenic.	Diesel pollution/air toxics	See Section 2.5.2.11 for a discussion of emission controls and Section 3.1 for potential emissions.
GROUNDWATER			
1	Concern about depletion of aquifers.	Groundwater impacts	See Section 3.4.3 for a discussion of groundwater impacts.
FOREST RESOURCES AND OTHER VEGETATION			
1	Project promotes sustainable use of the State's Forest resources.	Sustainable forestry	See Section 3.6 for sustainability of forest resources for the Alternate site.
2	How will the haul radius to the plant be controlled?	Plant's haul radius	See Section 3.6 for distances for acquiring biomass for the Alternate site.
2	Need the longleaf pine ecosystem to support the State's wildlife.	Native longleaf ecosystem	See Section 3.6 for sustainability of forest resources, including longleaf pine forests, for the Alternate site.
2	Concern about deforestation.	Deforestation/ stream protection	See Section 3.6 for sustainability of forest resources for the Alternate site.
1	Floodplains have been deforested in the state. How will this plant protect streams and rivers?		See Section 3.6 for a discussion of forestry best management practices (BMPs).
1	Amount of biomass needed to support the plant cannot be supplied from just tree limbs and tops; will need to burn whole trees and hardwoods.	Biomass supply	The fuel supply for the Proposal is described in Section 2.5.2.3.
1	This project does not support sustainable forestry.	Sustainable forestry	See Section 3.6 for sustainability of forest resources for the Alternate site.
1	Forests have become a (field) monoculture of slash pine.	Forest monoculture	The Proposal is not expected to have an impact on the types of forests grown for timber.

Table 1-4. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Alternate.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
1	Georgia has no regulations on logging/timber production.	Logging regulations	See Section 3.6 for a discussion of forestry best management practices (BMPs) and implementation.
1	How will Best Management Practices be implemented and monitored and will Oglethorpe verify that wood has been legally obtained?	Ethics	See Section 3.6 for a discussion of forestry best management practices (BMPs) and implementation. Oglethorpe will not be directly responsible for implementing BMPs. The seller of the biomass will be contractually obligated to comply with the law pursuant to their agreement with Oglethorpe.
1	Best Management Practices need to be enforced to maintain the health and sustainability of the forests and the watershed.	Sustainable forestry	See Section 3.6 for sustainability of forest resources and BMPs for the Alternate site.
1	Utilization of woody debris from industrial operations will help to reduce pressure on the existing forest resources.	Use of industrial debris	See Section 3.6 for sustainability of forest resources for the Alternate site.
	Concern about conversion of native forests and wetlands to pine plantations.		
	Trees/fuel will not be regenerated in the timeframe needed to supply the plant, so the plant as an economic investment will fail.	Investment	
1	Removal of slash could result in soil nitrogen depletion and require soil additives that could affect the river system.	Soil nitrogen depletion	See Section 3.3 for a discussion of soil impacts.
SOCIOECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE			
1	Will Davis Bacon Act wages be used on the project?	Construction	Yes, for a majority of the labor.

Table 1-4. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Alternate.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
2	Area/region needs jobs	Employment	See Section 3.13 for a discussion of the socioeconomic impacts of the Alternate site.
2	Project will stimulate region's economy.	Regional economy	See Section 3.13 for a discussion of the socioeconomic impacts of the Alternate site.
2	How will the plant affect local property values?	Property values	See Section 3.13 for a discussion of the socioeconomic impacts of the Alternate site.
1	The project will be a benefit to the community	Community benefit	No response needed.
1	The residents around the proposed site are mostly low-income and African American.	Environmental justice	See Section 3.13.4.2 for a discussion of impacts on low income and minority residents.
VISUAL			
3	What kind of buffer will be provided between the plant and private properties?	Visual impacts	Landscape buffer would be planted along property boundary to provide additional screening to lessen visual impact on residences.
1	The biomass plant will provide a market for forest products.	Regional economy	See Section 3.13 for a discussion of the socioeconomic impacts of the Alternate site.
HEALTH AND SAFETY			
1	How are the woodchips going to be treated to eliminate pests?	Pest control	Long-term stockpiling is not anticipated. Woodchips will be used on a first-in first-out basis. Pest problems are not expected.
1	Concerned about the smell from the plant (i.e. chemicals).	Chemical odors	Very few chemicals will be used. Chemicals will be stored in sealed containers.
2	Traffic control, especially large trucks serving the plant.	Traffic control	See Section 3.10 for a discussion of transportation.
1	How many trucks per day will be delivering fuel?	Truck traffic	See Section 3.10 for a discussion of transportation.

Table 1-4. Summary of Comments from Public Scoping for the Alternate.

Number of Comments	Comments	Issue	Response/Reference to Draft EIS Discussion
1	Health/stress disorders blamed on complete destruction of forests in south Georgia.	Stress disorder	See Section 3.6 for sustainability of forest resources for the Alternate site.
NOISE			
3	What kind of buffer will be provided between the plant and private properties?	Noise	See Section 3.5 for a discussion of noise
WILDLIFE/THREATENED AND ENDANGERED AND SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES			
1	Many of the State's endangered species rely on the longleaf pine ecosystem.	State's endangered species	See Section 3.7.6.3 for a discussion of state list of endangered species.
1	Concern about wildlife habitat; 98 percent of Georgia's longleaf ecosystem has been destroyed.	Ecosystems	The Proposal is not expected to have an impact on any remaining natural forest systems.
1	Will ornithological, herpetological, and botanical surveys be conducted for the site?	Floral/faunal surveys	See Section 3.7.2 for a discussion of floral/faunal surveys at the Alternate site.

The Proposal incorporates all actions connected with the operation of the biomass plant, including water and waste disposal lines, transmission lines, a new substation and roadways.

According to the CEQ regulations, actions are connected if they:

- i. Automatically trigger other actions which may require environmental impact statements.
- ii. Cannot or will not proceed unless other actions are taken previously or simultaneously.
- iii. Are interdependent parts of a larger action and depend on the larger action for their justification.¹¹

The Proposal will not automatically trigger other actions which may require environmental impact statements.

Other actions upon which the biomass plant depends on are incorporated into the Proposal. One of the planned water sources for the Proposal is treated effluent from the planned new water pollution control plant that will be constructed by the City of Warrenton. Oglethorpe plans to discharge wastewater to this plant. However, Oglethorpe has other water supply and discharge options. The construction and operation of the biomass plant is not dependent upon Warrenton's new water pollution control plant. The City is constructing the plant under a Consent Order with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), following a notice of violation at its existing treatment facilities (G. Ben Turnipseed Engineers, Inc. 2009a, p. 9). The City of Warrenton has applied for financing assistance for the project from RUS, and the City has prepared an Environmental Report evaluating impacts, as required by RUS' NEPA regulations (G. Ben Turnipseed Engineers, Inc. 2009a, p. 1).

The Proposal is not an interdependent part of any larger action, and does not depend on any larger action for its justification.

1.7 ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Draft EIS was available for a 45-day public review and comment period, during which time public hearings were held. Comments received on the Draft EIS, and USDA/RD's responses to those comments, are included in Appendix C. Changes made to the Final EIS as a result of comments received on the Draft EIS are shown in bold. This Final EIS has been revised to address comments received on the Draft EIS, as

¹¹ 40 CFR 1508.25(a)1

appropriate. The Final EIS will be available for a 30-day review and comment period after which the USDA/RD will prepare a Record of Decision (ROD). Notices announcing the availability of the Draft and Final EIS were published in the Federal Register and in local newspapers. Any final action by USDA/RD related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations and completion of the environmental review requirements as prescribed in the USDA/RD Environmental Policies and Procedures¹².

The public and government agencies may submit comments on this Final EIS during the 30-day comment period. Written comments should be addressed to the following:

Stephanie A. Strength USDA, Rural Development
Engineering & Environmental Staff
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Mail Stop 1570, Room 2244
Washington, DC 20250-1570
Email: Stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov

1.7.1 Additional Agency Consultation and Coordination

RUS submitted the Cultural Resources Assessment for the Proposal Site (Oglethorpe Power Corporation 2009e) to those parties consulting under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, along with RUS' finding that no historic property would be affected by the Proposal. RUS' letters to the consulting parties are included in Appendix D.

1.7.2 Future Public and Agency Involvement

1.7.2.1 List of Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals Who Received Copies of the Draft and Final EIS

Following is the list of agencies to whom the Draft EIS was distributed and the Final EIS will be distributed:

- Central Savannah River Area Regional Development Center
- Cherokee Nation
- Cherokee Nation, Policy Analyst
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- City of Warrenton
- Clerk of Courts, Warren County Board of Commissioners
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, THPO
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, Air Protection Branch

¹² 7 CFR Part 1794

- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, Watershed Protection Branch
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife & Natural Heritage Section
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Management Areas Office
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, Nongame & Endangered Wildlife Program
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Georgia Department of Transportation, Office of Transportation Planning
- Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, Centers of Innovation – Energy
- Georgia Forestry Commission
- Georgia Public Service Commission
- Georgia State Clearinghouse, Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget
- Georgia State Government District Offices, District 2
- Georgia State Senate
- Heart of Georgia Regional Development Center
- Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
- Kialegee Tribal Town
- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Choctaw Branch
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma, Culture and Historic Preservation Office
- National Park Service, Air Resource Division
- Office of the District Attorney, Toombs Judicial Circuit
- Poarch Creek Indians, Chairman
- Poarch Creek Indians, NAGRPA Contact
- Seminole Indian Tribe, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Piedmont Branch
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, Oconee Ranger District, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Georgia Ecological Services
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. House of Representatives
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians
- United States Senate
- Warren County Board of Commissioners
- Warren County Board of Education
- Warren County Clerk
- Warren County Courthouse
- Warren County Courthouse, Surveyor

- Warren County Development Authority
- Warren County Tax Commissioner
- Warrenton City Attorney
- Warrenton City Council
- Warrenton City Hall
- Mr. Chris Waters

In addition, during the public comment period, a copy of the draft EIS was available online at the following website: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm> and at the Warren County Public Library. The final EIS is also available for review at both these locations.