



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

June 29, 2026

Lisa D. Jones
Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
468 South Perry Street
P.O. Box 300900
Montgomery, AL 36130

SUBJECT: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Dominance Financing, Section 106 Consultation, Alabama Power Company, South Bessemer Substation Expansion Project, Bibb County, Alabama

Dear Ms. Jones,

The United States Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Energy Dominance Financing (EDF) has issued a Federal loan guarantee to Alabama Power Company (APC or Borrower) pursuant to DOE's authority under Title XVII of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, as amended. The loan guarantee to APC is intended to provide financing for many projects over the life of the Federal loan guarantee. Each project is reviewed and considered individually prior to being approved for financing under the Federal loan guarantee. APC has identified the South Bessemer Substation Expansion Project (the Project), located in Bibb County, Alabama, for potential inclusion in the loan guarantee.

The purpose of this letter is to formally initiate consultation with the Alabama State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (54 United States Code [U.S.C.] 306108), and its implementing regulations, 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800, "Protection of Historic Properties." This letter presents descriptions of the undertaking, the Area of Potential Effects (APE), and the efforts to identify historic properties, and seeks your concurrence with DOE's Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for this Project.

A cultural resources report is included as Attachment 1, and an Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) Review and Consultation Form is included as Attachment 2.

Description of the Undertaking

DOE's proposed action is the issuance of Federal financing to the Borrower for the undertaking (i.e., the Project), which includes the expansion of the existing South Bessemer Transmission Substation (TS), which is a 500/230/115 kilovolt (kV) substation. The TS will be expanded by approximately eight (8) acres to construct an eight-terminal breaker and a half gas-insulated switchgear scheme enclosed in a concrete building. For this expansion, four (4) acres of the existing developed substation property will be utilized for

new equipment, and an additional four (4) acres of new property will be graded to build upon. This expansion will service two existing 500kV transmission lines and one existing 500/230kV autobank. This expansion will also service one new 500kV transmission line as well as the capacity for three future 500kV transmission lines and one future 500/230kV autobank. The expansion to South Bessemer TS will alleviate existing system challenges, provide network operational flexibility, and offer a forward-looking solution to sustain reliability.

Construction activities include 0.02 acres of stream fill, that will be authorized by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act – Nationwide 57 which will not require a pre-construction notification. Activities also include vegetation clearing, grading, and construction of the expanded substation pad and access road, followed by equipment installation and fencing. Incidental tree trimming for access may be required but would not constitute tree clearing.

The existing South Bessemer TS is immediately east of the Project site and is operated by APC. Vacant land west of the existing South Bessemer TS was acquired by APC for the Project. Land-use immediately surrounding the Project site is forested or scrub/shrub. The predominant land cover in the surrounding vicinity includes evergreen forests, cultivated crops, woody wetlands, and residential. The total Project area includes 21 acres consisting of the 8-acre expanded substation and an additional 13 acres of potential land disturbance for an access road, laydown yard, and stormwater pond which are still in design. Additional infrastructure, such as off-site parking areas, railroad links, docks, water outfalls and intakes, pipelines, and waste treatment facilities are not anticipated to be required for the Project.

Additional description of the Project area and maps of the Project are provided in the cultural resource report that is included as Attachment 1.

Description of the Area of Potential Effects

As defined in the Section 106 regulations (36 CFR § 800.16(d)), the APE is the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. The dimensions of the APE are influenced by the scale and nature of an undertaking and may be different for different kinds of effects caused by the undertaking. Within the APE, DOE distinguishes different survey areas for identifying archaeological and historic architectural resources (hereafter, the “archaeological survey area” and “architectural survey area”). The archaeological survey area is defined as the construction footprint of the Project where potential physical effects caused by ground-disturbing activities may occur, also known as the limits of disturbance (LOD). The architectural survey area includes the area in the Project LOD and may apply a distance buffer, as appropriate, within which potential non-physical effects (e.g., visual, vibrational, auditory, or atmospheric) could occur. These survey areas collectively comprise the APE for the Project.

The Project's archaeological survey area includes the area where potential ground disturbance would occur, totaling approximately 21 acres. The Project's architectural survey area includes the area within the Project LOD and the area within a 1-mile radius surrounding the Project.

Description of Efforts to Identify Historic Properties

Tribal Outreach

In accordance with Section 106, DOE identified federally recognized Native American Indian Tribes (Tribes) that may have an interest in the Project area. DOE has notified the following six (6) federally recognized Tribes to see if they have an interest in the Project: Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas; Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town; Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana; Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; Muscogee (Creek) Nation; and Seminole Tribe of Florida.

By separate letter sent concurrently with this submission to the SHPO, DOE EDF has requested Tribal respondents to provide their comments on the undertaking, provide information regarding historic properties of religious or cultural significance to Tribes that may be present in the APE, and to identify any additional Tribes that may share an interest in the Project area so DOE EDF can promptly invite them to consult. DOE EDF will consider all comments received from Tribes during the 30-day consultation period and will coordinate with the SHPO and other consulting parties, as appropriate, if additional consultation is requested or necessary.

Records Search

As part of the Section 106 identification process, the Borrower contracted the Office of Archaeological Research (OAR) at the University of Alabama to conduct cultural resource surveys. OAR prepared the cultural resources report that is included as Attachment 1 and summarized below.

OAR conducted a search of the Alabama Cultural Resources Online Database (ACROD), Alabama State Site File (ASSF), Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage (ARLH) and related supplements, and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) to identify previously conducted surveys and previously recorded cultural resources and historic properties within a 1-mile radius of the Project. This background research identified six (6) previous surveys within a 1-mile radius of the Project. One (1) of the previous surveys partially overlaps the current APE, and three (3) of the surveys are partially adjacent to the APE. One (1) previously recorded archaeological site is within the 1-mile search radius but well outside the APE. No NRHP-listed historic properties are located within the 1-mile radius search area. The ARLH identified two (2) previously recorded historic resources that were previously assessed and recommended eligible for the NRHP. One (1) other historic architectural resource which was recorded during a 2026 survey conducted by OAR for another APC project also falls within the 1-mile radius of this Project. One (1)

historic cemetery was identified within the 1-mile radius of the survey area. Historic maps were also reviewed to inform the architectural history reconnaissance survey effort.

Following the completion of background research, OAR completed a Phase I cultural resources survey to identify newly recorded archaeological sites and historic architectural resources within the APE. The results of the survey are provided in Attachment 1 and summarized below.

Archaeological Resources

The archaeological field investigations consisted of pedestrian walkover of the archaeological survey area employing visual inspection of the ground surface and subsurface testing where conditions allowed, following AHC guidelines. While the APE for the Project includes the LOD of up to 21 acres where ground disturbance may occur during construction, OAR conducted archaeological surveys across a broader 85-acre parcel. Photographic documentation was utilized to provide evidence of the varying environments and disposition of the survey area. The majority of the survey area is sloping and has been clear-cut, resulting in extensive erosion. The degree of ground disturbance and erosion resulting from timber harvesting/silvicultural activities leaves little potential for intact subsurface deposits to remain.

A total of 91 shovel tests were excavated during the survey, none of which were recovered cultural material. Therefore, no archaeological sites were identified within the APE. Additional details on the archaeological survey methods and results are provided in Attachment 1.

Historic Architectural Resources

The historic architectural survey included photographic documentation and completion of AHC Historic Building Survey Forms for above-ground resources in the APE that met the minimum 50-year threshold for NRHP consideration. One (1) newly recorded historic-era standing structure was identified and assessed: Resource Bb00001 is a ca. 1972 one-story brick ranch house, and is recommended as not eligible for the NRHP. One (1) other historic architectural resource which was previously recorded during a 2026 survey conducted by OAR for another APC project also falls within the APE of this Project: a ca. 1950, one-story minimal traditional cottage which was recommended as not eligible for the NRHP.

Two (2) previously recorded NRHP-eligible structures were identified during the records search (BB_00303 and BB_00305); however, these resources were likely incorrectly mapped and may not be located within the APE, as described below.

In the ACROD map, previously recorded resource BB_00303 is plotted approximately 0.2 miles southwest of the Project. According to the AHC resource form, the house consists of an early twentieth century, one-story, wood-framed dwelling with weatherboard siding, a side-oriented gable, stone side chimneys, and a shed roof of standing seam metal. The house was noted as being in fair condition and was recommended eligible for the NRHP.

Previously recorded resource BB_00305 is plotted approximately 0.35 miles northeast of the Project. According to the AHC resource form, the house consists of a ca. 1900, one-story, wood-framed dwelling with weatherboard siding, a side-oriented gable, stone side chimneys, and a shed roof with a corrugated metal cover. The house was also noted as being in fair condition and was recommended eligible for the NRHP.

The AHC resource forms state that BB_00303 and BB_00305 are located on County Road 21; however, both resources are plotted elsewhere in the ACROD map. An attempt was made in the field to locate the structures both in the vicinity of their plotted location and along County Road 21. BB_00303 is plotted along a transmission line corridor ROW with no residential roads, and no structure matching the AHC form was located at its mapped location; the 1992 AHC historic resource form states that the structure's façade was observed but overgrown. The home near the plotted point for BB_00305 did not match the description in the AHC resource form; the home at the mapped location is ca. 1996, and not historic in age.

It is likely that the BB_00303 and BB_00305 are incorrectly plotted in the ACROD map. The current Architectural Survey Points for these resources are surrounded by intervening vegetation and would not be visually affected by the Project if this was their location. However, the structures as described in their AHC resource forms were not physically located at their mapped location, nor the location provided in the resource form (County Road 21), and no structures matching the descriptions in the AHC forms were identified along County Road 21 within the APE.

Complete descriptions of the surveyed historic architectural resources, maps, photographs, and AHC historic building survey forms are included in Attachment 1.

In conclusion, no historic properties were identified within the APE.

Requesting your Concurrence and Next Steps

Based on DOE EDF's review of the efforts to identify historic properties and conclusions drawn from this information, DOE EDF is issuing a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected, consistent with 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1). As part of the Section 106 process, DOE EDF requests the concurrence of the Alabama SHPO on the Finding of No Historic Properties Affected, as well as any comments you may have on the APE or the Project **within thirty (30) days of receipt of this letter (by July 29, 2026).**

In the event of a post-review unanticipated discovery of cultural resources and/or human remains during construction, DOE EDF will determine actions to resolve adverse effects and notify the SHPO, any Tribe that might attach religious and cultural significance to the affected property, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) within 48 hours of the discovery, pursuant to 36 CFR 800.13(b)(3).

We look forward to consulting with your office throughout the Section 106 process. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this project further, please contact me at 240-687-7266 or via email at EDF_Environmental@doe.gov.

Sincerely,

Molly R. Cobbs
Environmental Project Manager
Office of Energy Dominance Financing

Attachments:

Attachment 1. OAR Cultural Resources Report

Attachment 2. AHC Project Review and Consultation Form