

# Ocmulgee Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances

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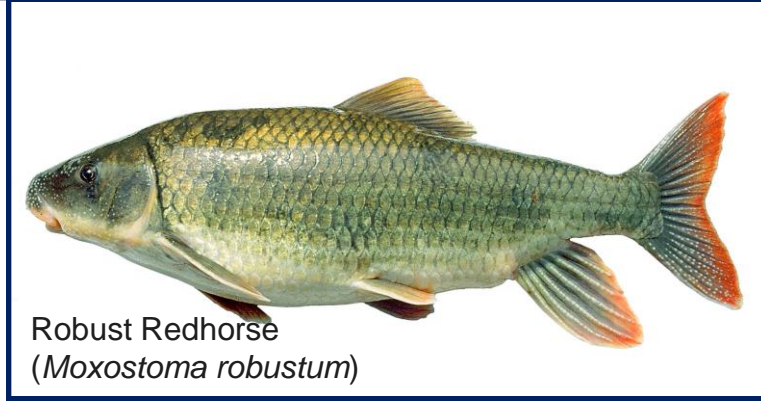
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- Voluntary conservation agreements between USFWS, public or private parties and non-Federal landowners.
- Address non-federal landowner concerns about the potential regulatory implications of having a listed species on their land.
- Implementation of designed conservation activities for candidate species incentivized by assurances of no additional restrictions if the species becomes listed under ESA.
- Candidate species are plants and animals that are candidates or may become candidates for federal listing.

# GPC's Journey into a CCAA

- 1991; rare fish in the Oconee River, GA
- Believed extinct 122 yrs
- Sinclair FERC Hydro (#1951) relicensing studies





1992

- Historically known from other coastal basins in GA, SC & NC
- Oconee population believed to be the last remaining
- Aging population on verge of extinction
- Immediate concern for ESA listing as Endangered

# Journey: Partnership, Process, Commitment

- '95 Voluntary cooperative agreement (MOU, RRCC)
- '96 FERC license GPC's Sinclair Dam
- '98 Conservation strategy
- '99 \*New\* CCAAs
- '02 Recovery progress
  - Existing populations in GA, NC and SC
  - Stocked populations
  - Reintroduction in Ocmulgee River below GPC's Lloyd Shoals Dam (FERC #2336)
  - Utilized the new CCAA policy: (Robust Redhorse) Ocmulgee CCAA (22-yr agreement)



# Ocmulgee CCAA Key Components

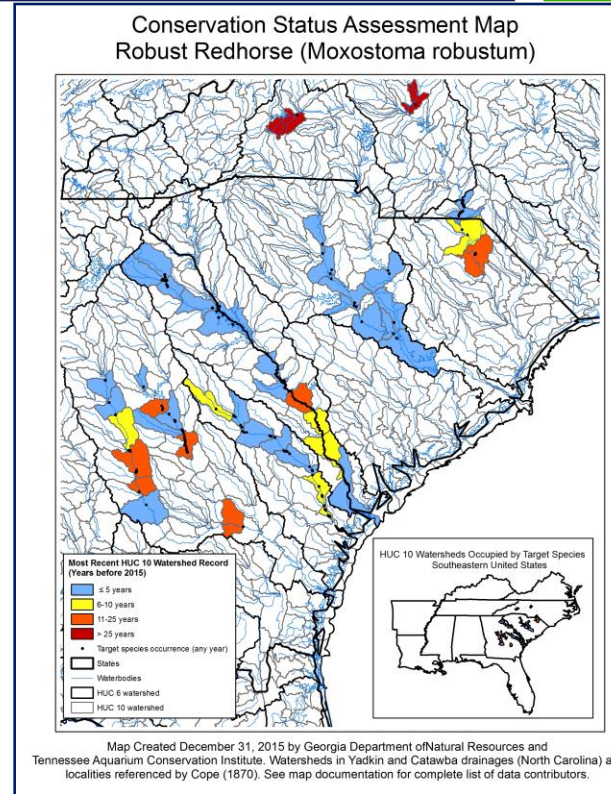
- Partners
- Conservation Actions
- Monitoring and Reporting
- Funding
- Adaptive Management
- Assurances
- Duration



# Success Story

## Robust Redhorse Conservation

- 2<sup>nd</sup> CCAA in nation
- 1<sup>st</sup> in nation for aquatic species
- 1<sup>st</sup> in southeast US
- 1<sup>st</sup> for private company
- Expanded range/conservation
- Regulator relationship



# Investment in Compliance Risk Mgmt via Conservation

## Good fit for GPC

- Financial commitment
- Assurances

*\*additional conservation measures not required, additional water or resource use restrictions not imposed should the species become listed*

- Long-term ESA compliance risk management for hydro operations
- Conservation actions
- Stewardship messaging





## GPC's Approach

- Mitigate growing ESA threats via traditional business model
- Need for cohesive strategy:
  - Focus on efforts that “move the needle”
  - Reduce operational risks
  - Public relations
- Investigate strategic conservation opportunities
- Long-term assurances utilizing ESA tools such as CCAAs

# Summary

- Ocmulgee CCAA successful; intent to renew
- Paved the way - hundreds of listing decisions pending in Southeast US
- ROI in conservation = long-term strategy
  - Minimize costly ESA compliance risks
  - Maintain operational flexibility

