

***Appendix F - Visual Resource Narrative***



## **Visual Resources**

Beginning at Wilson Dam (TRM 259.4) and traveling downstream, the first noticeable visual features are Patton Island and Jackson Island. Jackson Island, the smaller of the two, is undisturbed, while Patton Island is bisected by an arterial highway. The port of Florence, an industrial port, is located to the north where visual disturbance is evident. The cities of Florence and Sheffield, Alabama, are located on either side of the reservoir and also contribute to the visual discord, with O'Neal Bridge crossing the reservoir at TRM 256.4. Residential developments above the bluff walls to the south and commercial recreation that includes Florence Harbor and McFarland Park on the north shore of the reservoir, just below the bridge crossing, further establish the landscape character of the first section of Pickwick Reservoir, where scenic value is fair and scenic integrity is low.

Seven Mile Island begins near TRM 253. The island grouping comprises the Seven Mile Island WMA and is sanctuary for many diverse wildlife species. The island itself is relatively free of human disturbance and the natural setting of the islands and their juxtaposition with the northern shoreline give observers exceptional views while framing the reservoir for viewers in the middleground. The terrain is moderate to the north, and steeply sloping to the south, with Pride Bluff framing reservoir views for background observers. The expanse of islands in this section of river help to define the sense of place and human scale. The scenic value of the area is excellent, and the scenic integrity is high.

Little Bear Creek meets with the reservoir just across from Buck Island, a smaller island in the Seven Mile Island WMA, and winds southward over three miles to its headwaters. Residential development occurs at the mouth of the embayment where visual quality is moderate to low, but as observers travel further into the embayment, the winding riverine setting adds visual character, and views become more natural and serene. Approaching the headwaters of Little Bear Creek, residential development is intermixed with natural scenes of undisturbed shoreline. The overall scenic value is moderate to high, with the scenic integrity being moderate to high.

Traveling downstream to TRM 247.8, the confluence of Dry Creek and Pickwick Reservoir is located to the south shore. Views into Dry Creek from the reservoir are natural, and vegetation is well established along the shoreline. Aside from a railroad crossing near the headwater, the cove is pleasing visually and the scenic value is moderate to high, with scenic integrity being moderate to high.

The Cane Creek embayment converges with the river just west of the Seven Mile Island WMA and is in direct proximity to TVA's Colbert Fossil Plant, located near TRM 245. Views of the fossil plant are predominant, both upstream and down; however, views to the north shore are wooded with good tree cover. Understory vegetation is established and foreground views are excellent. Residential development, including water use facilities, occur just downstream on the north shore and contrast visually with the pristine shoreline just upstream. Malone Creek, just across the reservoir, is a small cove with good tree cover and moderately sloping terrain. The tree canopy is good, and plant diversity is excellent. The variety of views in this area are somewhat contrasting. The scenic value is moderate to high and the scenic integrity is moderate.

Kogers Island splits the reservoir at TRM 239.7 and serves as an excellent focal point for observers viewing the island from the northwest and southeast. The island is pristine and vegetation and tree cover are superb. Kogers Island helps to frame views and provides human scale, while directing views upstream and down. Vegetation remains lush and tree cover is excellent, forming a horizontal plane above the reservoir to give balance and sequence to the reservoir. The only contrasting view is the Natchez Trace Parkway Bridge that spans the reservoir at TRM 236.6. Two embayments on either side of the shoreline, just downstream from the Natchez Trace Bridge serve to balance views by observers in the foreground and middleground distances. Tree cover remains good, and a small park is visible just upstream from the Natchez Trace Bridge. Passive recreation is visible in the heavily wooded park, allowing only a minor visual detractor. Undisturbed shoreline is visible from all viewing distances, and this section of the reservoir has a scenic value that is excellent and a scenic integrity that is high.

Residential development, with water use facilities, is visible through the next section of Pickwick Reservoir. The back-lying land use is fairly consistent along the south shore, with a variety of land uses and available views to the north shore. Small bluff walls serve as a focal point just across the reservoir from Bluff Creek, where residential development occurs and water use facilities are visible. Further downstream, the north shore is a mix of gently sloping terrain, excellent tree cover, and good visual buffers from back-lying land uses. A large embayment known as Second Creek, intersects the reservoir just upstream of the town of Waterloo, Alabama, near TRM 227.5. The Second Creek embayment is the largest embayment along the north shore of Pickwick Reservoir, and contains visual images of residential development and wooded shoreline. water use facilities are conspicuous along the west shoreline of the embayment. The terrain is gently sloping upon reaching the headwaters of the embayment, where the land has the visual character of a wetland. Mixed species of plant materials abound, and vegetation and tree cover are excellent. Observers have superb views from foreground and middleground distances. The scenic value is moderate to high, with scenic integrity being moderate to high.

Just downstream from the Second Creek embayment, the town of Waterloo, Alabama, is visible to reservoir users. Residential development occurs on both the north and south shores. Views from foreground and middleground users are mixed, with development being predominant, being broken by only a few small hollows containing visually pleasing canopy and vegetation. Residential development continues along the south shore into the Bear Creek embayment. The largest embayment to the south shore of Pickwick Reservoir, Bear Creek, swells with lakeside homes and water use facilities. Development is visible on both the east and west shoreline to viewers in the foreground and middleground, and tends to contrast with the natural character of the reservoir. The historic towns of Eastport, Mississippi, and Riverton, Alabama, flank the confluence of Bear Creek and Pickwick Reservoir. These towns serve, in present times, as recreation ports and residential developments for reservoir users. The scenic value near the mouth of the Bear Creek embayment is moderate to low, and the scenic integrity is low.

Traveling further into the Bear Creek embayment, available views change from moderate to high density residential development to a more undisturbed, natural shoreline. A Norfolk Railroad causeway contrasts with otherwise naturalistic views.

Adding to the visual congestion, a derelict bridge that was once U.S. Highway 72, and two existing highway bridges that serve U.S. Highway 72 at present. Beyond the causeways and bridges, to the south of the embayment, the majority of the shoreline is undisturbed, with only minimal views of residential development. The terrain is gently sloping, with mixed plant species and good tree canopy, which provides sequence and gives balance to viewers from all viewing distances. The Bear Creek embayment begins to narrow considerably just downstream from the U.S. Highway 72 bridges. The area begins to have the visual character of a small creek, that is in some areas, only 30 to 40 feet wide. Views available to observers from the south and north are serene and pleasing. To the extreme south of the embayment, a smaller two-lane bridge crosses the creek. Tree cover in this section is good, and the terrain is moderately sloping. The overall scenic value for this section is high, with scenic integrity being moderate to high.

Proceeding downstream, from the mouth of Bear Creek, residential development is evident along the south shore of the reservoir. Small bluff walls, usually not higher than 10 feet, are apparent along the shoreline also. Near TRM 222.5, a small cove, known as Fred Hollow, converges with the Pickwick Reservoir. Residential development exists near the back of the small cove, where a large community water use facility is visible. The remainder of the cove, however, is natural in character with often steeply sloping terrain. The vegetation and tree cover that form a horizontal plane above the reservoir are pleasing visually. Leaving the cove, the downstream views to the south shore are similar, with small bluff walls and moderately sloping terrain, reaching the Indian Creek embayment. The entrance to the embayment is framed nicely with gently sloping and well forested land. A large commercial recreation development with water use facilities is visible when entering Indian Creek. J. P. Coleman State Park occupies land just beyond the mouth of Indian Creek and is visible to foreground and middleground observers. The remainder of the embayment is forested, with gentle to moderate slopes. The headwaters of the cove show characteristics of a wetland, with small streams and creeks feeding the embayment. Aside from the visual congestion caused by the commercial recreation development near the confluence, the scenic integrity remains moderate to high. To the north shore, the Lauderdale WMA covers a massive expanse of the shoreline and back-lying property, reaching downstream to TRM 211. Views are excellent into the Lauderdale WMA from all viewing distances. The tree canopy is unbroken and the vegetation is lush. The topography throughout the Lauderdale WMA is gently sloping to moderate. Since this land is, for the most part, pristine, the scenic value and integrity are high, and the area provides for a pleasing visual contrast to the south shore.

Leaving the Indian Creek embayment, views to the north and south shores are naturalistic, with bluff walls along the south shoreline. Several small coves are visible along both shorelines and visual character remains consistent until reaching the mouth of Yellow Creek at TRM 215.2. Upon entering the Yellow Creek embayment, observers have views of wooded shoreline that frame the entrance to Yellow Creek. The topography is moderately sloping and the vegetation is lush. Plant species consists of mixed hardwoods and pines scattered throughout. Understory vegetation is evident at the mouth of the embayment and views by foreground and middleground observers are considered good. The visual character changes upon entering Yellow Creek, and mixed land uses and water uses contribute to visual congestion. Residential development and water use facilities are visible on the north shore, along with a commercial marina development. J. P. Coleman State Park is visible to the south shore by observers in the

foreground. An unnamed island is visible beyond the entrance that helps to frame views and define human scale of the embayment. Visual congestion is high in this area, with views of a two-lane causeway (State Route 25) in the distance to the west that is visible to foreground and middleground observers. Industrial ports and monolithic structures are visible in the foreground and middleground distances and contribute to the visual discord in the area near TRM 447.5. As the creek widens beyond the area of heavy development, Goat Island is visible as it bisects the embayment. The small island has moderate topography and good vegetation, which help to define the scale and character of the area. Beyond Goat Island, residential development is seen on the east and west shores of the inlet. Water use facilities are evident and visual congestion is high. Only upon reaching the end of the embayment does the visual character return to a naturalistic state. The topography is gentle to flat and the waters are somewhat shallow, with stumps and trees rising from the lake. As observers near the Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway, the views are of wooded flatlands with good tree cover that at times, resemble wetlands. In this area, the scenic value is moderate, and the scenic integrity is moderate to high.

Exiting the Yellow Creek embayment, views are directed to a relatively large island that splits the reservoir near TRM 214.7. State Line Island, located directly across from the north end of the Lauderdale WMA, is free of human disturbance, visually, and has an excellent scenic value and scenic integrity. Views to the west shore contrast with somewhat high density residential development and water use facilities. This densely populated shoreline contrasts adversely with the east shore which includes the WMA. Scenic value is low in this section and scenic integrity is low. This view remains consistent upon reaching TRM 212 where the visual character changes near Dry Creek, as the Lauderdale WMA ends and heavy residential development begins. The Dry Creek inlet is fronted by residential development as observers enter the embayment traveling into the Lauderdale WMA. The visual disarray at the entrance gives way to pristine forest land toward the rear of the cove, and the scenic value and integrity are high for the majority of the inlet that is included in the WMA. Leaving the cove and continuing around the north shore, views are congested with residential development and water use facilities. There are several small coves that reach off of the main reservoir that also show evidence of residential development. The south shore of the reservoir is predominantly wooded with moderate to gently sloping terrain. Residential development and water use facilities are sparsely located along the shoreline until reaching the commercial recreational development that comprises Pickwick Landing State Park. The scenic value is moderate to low in this area, and the scenic integrity is low.

Near TRM 208, views change as foreground and middleground observers have prevalent views of the Pickwick Landing Dam and a recently constructed recreation facility to the immediate south. The sizable structure of the dam, and the two-lane road (known as Pickwick Road) that crosses the reservoir there, give a sense of terminus to the reservoir. When viewed with the north and south shores, a sense of visual congestion is evident, with residential development along the sometimes sparsely forested, steeply sloping north shore and heavy commercial recreation development along the gently sloping south shore, which contains several densely forested areas. Overall, the scenic value of the area is low, and the scenic integrity is low.