

September 24, 2001

Ms. Julie Holling
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division
P.O. Box 167
Columbia, SC 29202

SUBJECT: STATE LISTED THREATENED, ENDANGERED AND RARE SPECIES IN THE
VICINITY OF THE MIXED OXIDE FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY

Dear Ms Holling:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) published its Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for construction, operation and deactivation of a Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MOX FFF) in the Federal Register (66 FR 13794) on March 7, 2001 (copy of NOI enclosed). The MOX FFF would be used to manufacture mixed oxide fuel from surplus weapons plutonium.

The proposed MOX FFF would be constructed in F Area at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Savannah River Site (SRS) in Aiken County, South Carolina, (see three enclosed figures). NRC requests that the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources provide information regarding state listed threatened, endangered, and rare species that may occur on or in the vicinity of F Area at SRS that should be considered in preparing the EIS.

The MOX FFF and associated infrastructure would occupy approximately 6.9 ha of the 16.6 ha project site. The remainder of the site will be landscaped. The F area is an upland plateau that is designated for industrial use. A portion of the MOX FFF project site was previously used to store excavation material from another project site facility constructed in the F Area. About 68 percent of the MOX FFF site is composed of planted longleaf and slash pine forest. No wetlands occur within the area proposed for the MOX FFF (see enclosed land cover figure), but wetlands associated with Upper Three Runs Creek are adjacent to and downslope of the project site. Operational impacts would be minimized as airborne and aqueous releases would comply with applicable standards and permit requirements. Preliminary analyses presented in the environmental report for the MOX FFF prepared by the applicant DCS (a consortium formed by Duke Engineering & Services, COGEMA, Inc., and Stone and Webster) indicate that the impacts to ecological resources from facility construction and operation would be limited to the immediate project site vicinity.

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I wish to thank you in advance for the information on the threatened, endangered, and rare species in South Carolina that you believe should be addressed in the EIS. Please mail your response to me within 30 days of the date of this letter.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-7293, or Jennifer Davis at (301) 415-5874.

Sincerely,

/RA/ Phyllis Sobel Acting for

Charlotte E. Abrams, Section Chief
Environmental and LLW Section
Environmental and Performance
Assessment Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket: 70-3098

Enclosures: Notice of Intent
F Area Figures
Land Cover Figure

cc: See attached list

Letter to Julie Holling, South Carolina Department of
Natural Resources, dated September 24, 2001

cc: Mary Birch, P.E., C.H.P.
Environment, Safety and Health Manager
Duke COGEMA Stone & Webster
PO Box 31847
Charlotte, NC 28231-1847

Edna Foster
120 Balsam Lane
Highlands, NC 28741

Edwin D. Pentecost
Argonne National Laboratory
9700 South Cass Avenue
Argonne, IL 60439

James Johnson
U.S. Department of Energy
MD-12
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Henry Potter
Division of Waste Management
Bureau of Land and Waste Management
SC Dept of Health & Environmental Control
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

John T. Conway, Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004

Don Moniak
Blue Ridge Defense League
PO Box 3487
Aiken, SC 29802

Glenn Carroll
Georgians Against Nuclear Energy
PO Box 8574
Atlanta, GA 30306

Ruth Thomas
Environmentalists, Inc.
1339 Sinkler Road
Columbia, SC 29206

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Enclosures: Notice of Intent
F Area Figures
Land Cover Figure

cc: See attached list
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NAME	JDavis		CAbrams					
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