

September 24, 2001

Mr. Jon Ambrose, Program Manager  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
Wildlife Resources Division  
Nongame Wildlife & Natural Heritage Section  
Georgia Natural Heritage Program  
2117 US Hwy 278 SE  
Social Circle, GA 30025

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

Dear Mr. Ambrose:

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). The SRS borders several counties of Georgia (i.e., Burke and Screven Counties) and the F Area is within the Savannah River watershed. NRC requests that the Georgia Department of Natural Resources provide information regarding state listed threatened, endangered, and rare species that may occur on or in these areas 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 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 the 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.

J. Ambrose

2

I wish to thank you in advance for the information on the threatened, endangered and rare species in Georgia 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  
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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 Jon Ambrose, Georgia Department of  
Natural Resources, dated September 24, 2001

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