

December 20, 2001

Roger L. Banks, Field Supervisor
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services
176 Croghan Spur Road
Suite 200
Charleston, SC 29407

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR LIST OF PROTECTED SPECIES WITHIN THE AREA UNDER
EVALUATION FOR THE CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION LICENSE RENEWAL

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is evaluating an application submitted by Duke Energy Corporation for the renewal of the operating licenses for its Catawba Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2. The NRC is preparing a supplement to its "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants" (NUREG-1437) for this proposed license renewal, for which we are required to evaluate potential impacts to threatened and endangered species.

The proposed action would include use and continued maintenance of existing facilities and transmission lines and would not result in new construction or disturbance. The Catawba Nuclear Station is located in York County, South Carolina. The transmission line corridors pass through portions of York and Cherokee counties, South Carolina and Gaston County, North Carolina. In total, the corridors include about 760 acres (42 miles in length). In addition, Lake Wylie, which is fed by the Catawba River, is used as part of the cooling system for Catawba Nuclear Station. Therefore, the lake and portions of the Catawba River in York, Lancaster, and Chester counties in South Carolina, and Gaston and Mecklenburg counties in North Carolina are considered part of the aquatic environment of interest.

To support the environmental impact statement preparation process and to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the NRC requests a list of species and information on protected, proposed, and candidate species and critical habitat that may be in the vicinity of the Catawba Nuclear Station and its associated transmission lines.

Also, we would like confirmation that the South Carolina Field Office will serve as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's point of contact for Endangered Species Act compliance, including any Section 7 consultation that may be needed, for the Catawba Nuclear Station.

If you have any comments or questions, please contact James H. Wilson, Senior Project Manager, at (301) 415-1108.

Sincerely,

/RA/Signed by C. Carpenter

Cynthia A. Carpenter, Chief
Risk Informed Initiatives, Environmental,
Decommissioning, and Rulemaking Branch
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-413 and 50-414

cc: Garland Pardue, Field Supervisor
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services
551-F Pylon Drive
Raleigh, NC 27636

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Land and Water and Conservation Division
1201 Main Street
Columbia, SC 29201

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