

December 9, 2002

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

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR UPDATED LIST OF PROTECTED SPECIES WITHIN THE
AREA UNDER EVALUATION FOR THE H. B. ROBINSON STEAM ELECTRIC
PLANT, UNIT 2, LICENSE RENEWAL**

Dear Mr. Banks:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is evaluating an application submitted by Carolina Power and Light Company (CP&L) for the renewal of the operating license for its H. B. Robinson Steam Electric Plant, Unit 2 (Robinson), which expires on July 31, 2010. 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.

To support the supplemental 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 within the area of the proposed action per 50 CFR 402.12(c). Maps are enclosed showing the locations of Robinson and its associated transmission lines.

The following brief description of the proposed action is provided to assist the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in identifying species and habitat that may be affected by the proposed project. 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 plant is located in Darlington County, South Carolina, approximately 4.5 miles west-northwest of the city of Hartsville. The plant is situated on the southwest shore of Lake Robinson, which was created by CP&L in 1959 to serve as a source of cooling water for power production. The plant site encompasses approximately 4,800 acres, including the lake in Darlington and Chesterfield Counties.

The plant is connected to the regional electric transmission grid by 230 kilovolt transmission lines with intra-system tie points at Darlington, Sumter, and Florence in South Carolina and Rockingham in North Carolina. In addition, two lines connect to CP&L's Darlington County Plant, which is located near Robinson.

By letter dated May 31, 2001, CP&L requested information about threatened, endangered, and candidate species that potentially occur in the area to assist in the preparation of an environmental report. Your office responded by letter dated June 7, 2001, and provided the requested information for Darlington, Sumter, Lee, and Florence Counties in South Carolina. On November 6, 2002, we discussed the ongoing preparation of the supplemental environmental impact statement with Ms. Sandy Abbott of your office in a telephone conference call. We discussed information for an additional County; Chesterfield County in South Carolina. We also discussed observations from the site audit, which was conducted by NRC and expert consultants from Pacific Northwest and Los Alamos National Laboratories, on September 24, 2002. Finally, we discussed the level of biological assessments that would be appropriate for license renewal at Robinson. We are submitting this request to obtain documentation of any changes to the list your office provided in the letter dated June 7, 2001. We want to ensure that the supplemental environmental impact statement represents the current status of protected species in the environs of Robinson.

If you have any comments or questions, please contact Mr. Richard L. Emch, Jr., Environmental Project Manager, at (301) 415-1590.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Pao-Tsin Kuo, Program Director
License Renewal and Environmental Impacts
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No.: 50-261

Enclosure: As stated

cc w/encl: See next page

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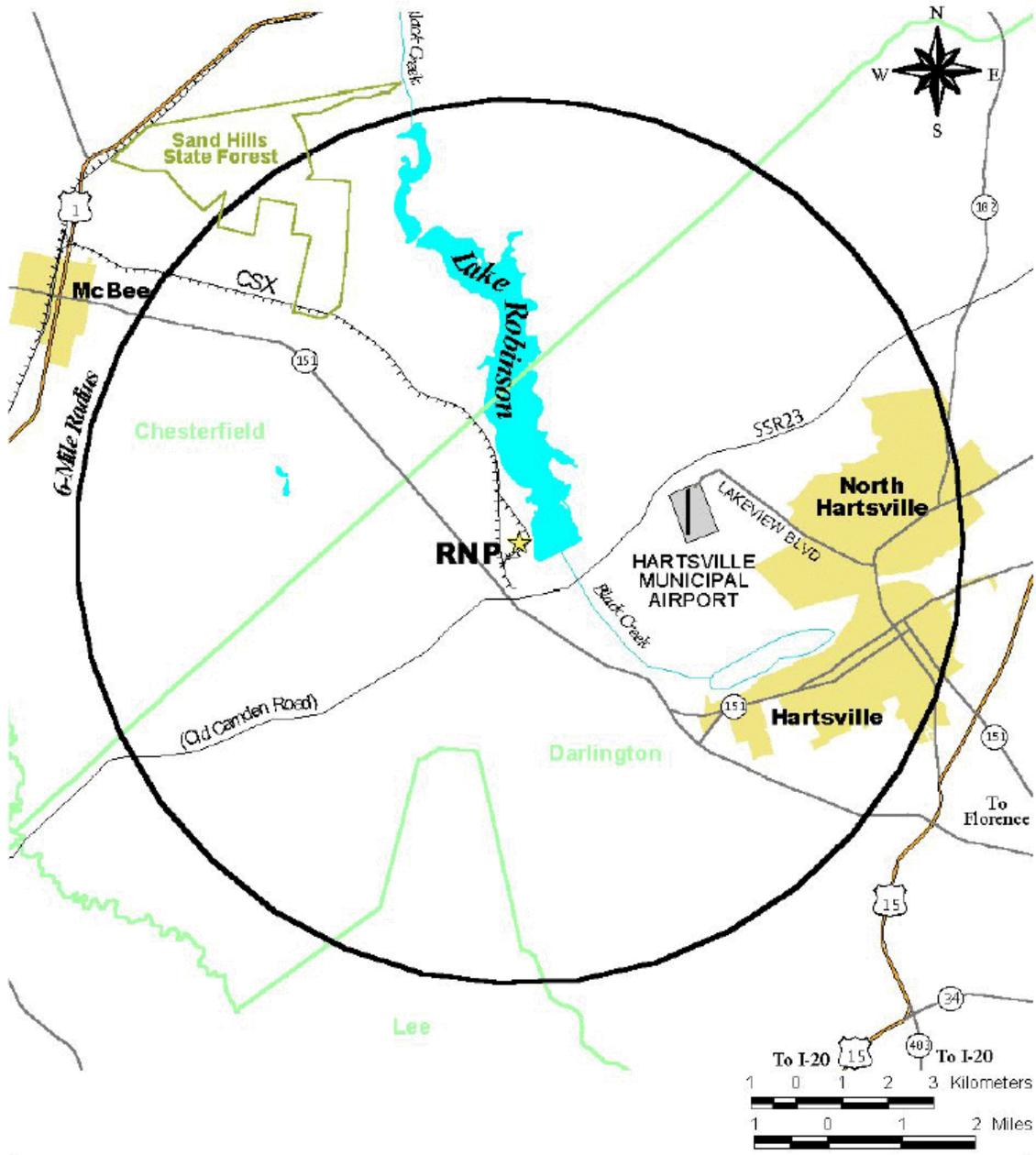
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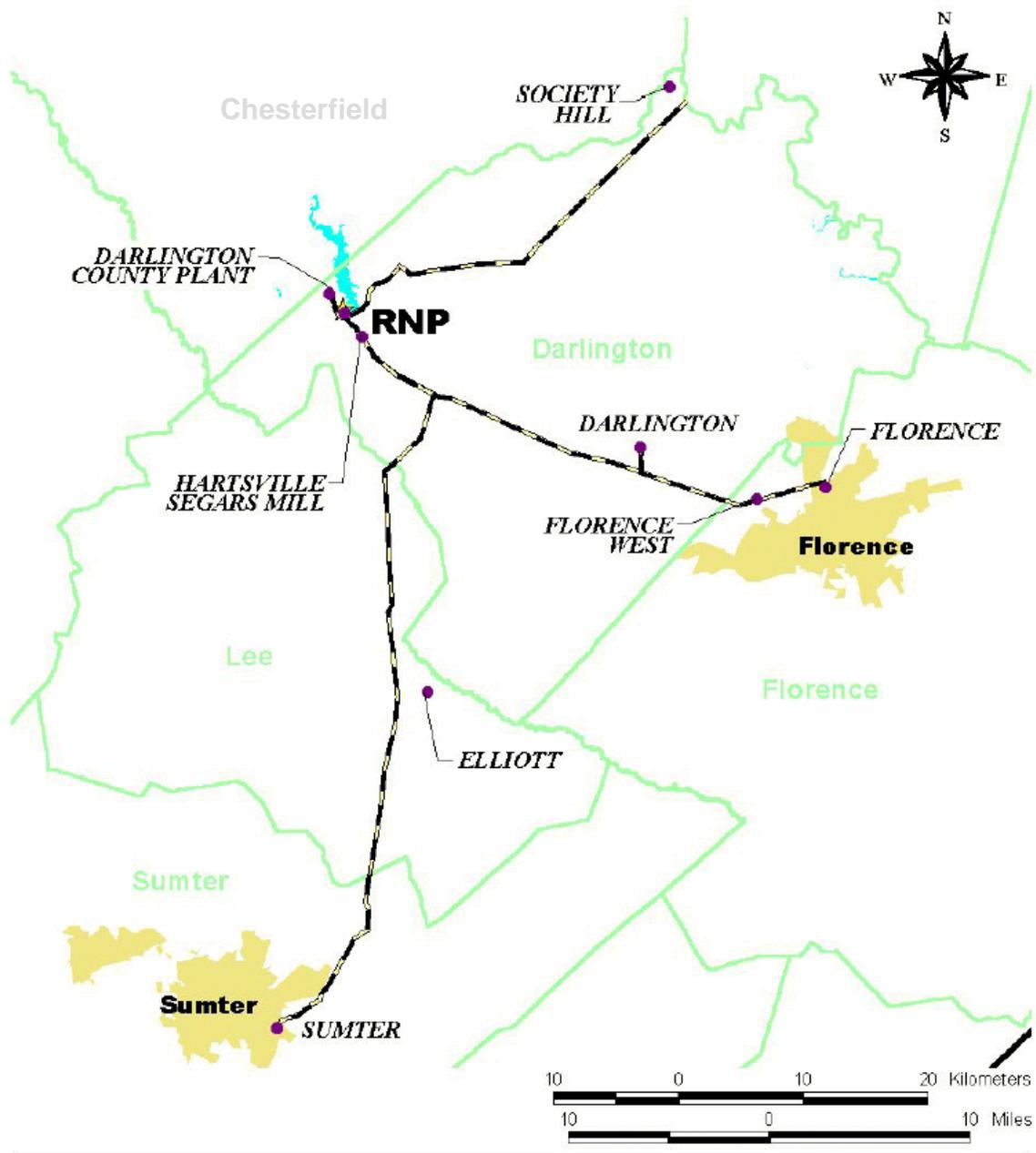
LEGEND

-  Railroad
-  County Boundaries
-  Cities
-  Lakes and Rivers

FIGURE 2-2
6-Mile Vicinity Map
Robinson Nuclear Plant

Figure 1. Location of Robinson Station, Unit 2, South Carolina.

Enclosure



LEGEND

-  Substations
-  Transmission Lines
-  County Boundaries
-  Lakes and Rivers
-  Urban

FIGURE 3-2
Transmission Line Map
Robinson Nuclear Plant

Figure 2. Vicinity of Robinson Station, Unit 2, and transmission line.

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cc:

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