



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
475 ALLENDALE ROAD
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406-1415

July 13, 2006

David Densmore
Pennsylvania Field Office
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
315 South Allen Street, Suite 322
State College, Pennsylvania 16801

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR COMMENTS REGARDING ENDANGERED/THREATENED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT FOR BUILDING DECONSTRUCTION AND SUBSURFACE REMEDIATION AT THE QUEHANNA SITE IN KARTHAUS, PENNSYLVANIA

Dear Mr. Densmore:

The U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) staff is requesting the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's comments regarding impacts to endangered and threatened species and critical habitat at the Quehanna site in Karthaus, Pennsylvania. The site is owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the site is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP), Bureau of Radiation Protection (BRP). The NRC is considering BRP's request for a license amendment to decontaminate and demolish the building complex on the site. Operations at the site involving radioactive material were conducted from the late 1950s until 2002. Radioactive contamination at the site consists of soils, building surfaces, and concrete contaminated with strontium-90 and other byproduct materials from licensed operations. The Quehanna site is located approximately 21 miles northeast of Clearfield, Pennsylvania in the Quehanna Wild Area of the Moshannon State Forest. A site location map is enclosed.

BRP, in accordance with NRC regulations, has submitted a license amendment request for NRC approval. The request documents the actions BRP plans to undertake to decontaminate and demolish the building complex on the Quehanna site. Principal decommissioning activities are decontamination of structures and soil, dismantlement of the building complex, and offsite disposal of low-level radioactive waste and building demolition debris.

BRP's license renewal request is currently being reviewed by NRC staff in order to assure compliance with NRC's environmental health and safety regulations. As part of the review, the NRC is required to complete an environmental assessment (EA) associated with the approval of this license amendment request. The NRC requests your assistance in completing this EA.

In your letter of June 17, 2003, to this office on the same subject you stated that if the project has not been fully implemented within two years an additional review by your office would be necessary. Because this project has not been completed within two years, due to the discovery of volumetric radioactive contamination within concrete at the site, the NRC again wishes to receive your comments regarding the presence of any endangered or threatened species or critical habitat that may exist at the Quehanna site. Also, the NRC would like to receive your comments regarding any impacts to relevant species or habitat that you identify from

D. Densmore
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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remediation and decommissioning at the Quehanna site for incorporation into the EA. If impacts are identified, please provide acceptable measures to avoid or mitigate impacts. If you have any comments regarding the NRC's license amendment review for the Quehanna site, please provide them within 30 days so they may be fully considered. If you require additional information, please contact James Kottan at (610) 337-5214.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Marie Miller

Marie Miller, Chief
Decommissioning Branch
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety

Enclosure: as stated

Docket No: 030-29288
License No: 37-17860-02

cc:
David J. Allard, BRP/PADEP
Bryan Werner, BRP/PADEP

SUNSI Review Complete: JJK (Reviewer's Initials)

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