December 8, 2006

Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
Northeast Regional Office
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 09130-2298

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR LIST OF PROTECTED SPECIES WITHIN THE AREA UNDER EVALUATION FOR THE HOPE CREEK NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION EXTENDED POWER UPRATE (TAC NO. MC3002)

Dear Ms. Kurkul:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is reviewing an application submitted by PSEG Nuclear, LLC (PSEG) for an admendment to the operating license for the extended power uprate of Hope Creek Generating Station (HCGS). HCGS is a single-unit nuclear plant occupies an artificial island in Lower Alloways Creek Township, New Jersey. HCGS is situated adjacent to the Salem Nuclear Generation Station. As part of the review of the extended power uprate application, the NRC is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, which includes an analysis of pertinent environmental issues, including endangered or threatened species and impacts to fish and wildlife. This letter is being submitted under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934, as amended.

PSEG stated that the power increase associated with the proposed action will not disturb any existing plant facilities or transmission lines and will not require any additional construction or disturbance of new areas. Any maintenance activities would be limited to previously disturbed areas. HCGS is located approximately 35 miles southwest of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. HCGS operates in one protected area of approximately 750 acres site surrounded by wetlands and a variety of wildlife indigenous to the region.

HCGS uses a closed cycle cooling water system (CWS) to dissipate waste heat to the atmosphere and the cooling water is drawn from Delaware River. The CWS consist of a natural draft cooling tower (HCCT), circulating water pumps, condensers, service water pumps, a circulating water line, and a blowdown line. Circulating water pumps force a large cooling water flow through the condensers, which raised the temperature of the cooling water. The heated water is passed to the HCCT, which lowers the temperature primarily through evaporation.

To support the EA 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 HCGS and its associated transmission lines.

In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. Also to assist in the preparation of the Environmental Assessment and to ensure compliance with Section 305 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the NRC requests a list of essential fish habitats that have been designated in the vicinity of the HCGS site and its associated transmission line corridors.

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff review of this license renewal application, please contact Mr. Andrew Luu, Environmental Project Manager at 301-415-1078 or via e-mail anl@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Pao-Tsin Kuo, Acting Director
Division of License Renewal
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-354

In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. Also to assist in the preparation of the Environmental Assessment and to ensure compliance with Section 305 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the NRC requests a list of essential fish habitats that have been designated in the vicinity of the HCGS site and its associated transmission line corridors.

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