

September 20, 2007

Mr. Mike LeValley
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Kansas Field Office
315 Houston Street, Suite E
Manhattan, KS 66502

SUBJECT: BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT FOR LICENSE RENEWAL OF WOLF CREEK
GENERATING STATION (TAC NO. MD3182)

Dear Mr. LeValley:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has completed the enclosed draft Supplement 32 to NUREG-1437, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants," to evaluate the proposed renewal of the Wolf Creek Generating Station (WCGS) operating license for a period of an additional 20 years. The Supplement Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) evaluates the proposed action of license renewal for WCGS. The WCGS facility is located in Coffey County in eastern Kansas approximately 75 miles southwest of Kansas City. In accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934, as amended, the NRC Biological Assessment (BA) for license renewal of WCGS is included in Appendix E of the enclosed draft SEIS.

In a letter to the NRC dated January 29, 2007, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) provided information about three Federally listed species and one candidate species with the potential to occur in the project area. One of the three species, the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), has been delisted since receipt of the FWS letter. Because Section 7 consultations do not address candidate species, this BA does not include information on the candidate species Neosho mucket (*Lampsilis rafinesqueana*) that may occur in the area. Therefore, this BA examines the potential effects of the continued operation of WCGS on two Federally threatened species: the threatened Neosho madtom (*Noturus placidus*) and the threatened Mead's milkweed (*Asclepias meadii*).

The NRC staff has examined the species that may be present in the vicinity of WCGS, the known distributions and available habitat for those species, the potential effects of the operation of WCGS on the species, and the studies and mitigation measures that Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (WCNOC) and Westar Energy Inc. (the owner of the transmission lines) employ to protect the species. Based on this analysis, the staff has determined that continued operation of WCGS for an additional 20 years is not likely to adversely affect Mead's milkweed. Likewise, during periods with no water use conflicts, the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect the Neosho madtom. However, when water use conflicts exist during low-flow or drought conditions in the Neosho River, continued operation of WCGS may adversely affect the Neosho madtom.

M. LeValley

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We are requesting your concurrence with our determination in the BA. In reaching our conclusion, the NRC staff relied on information provided by the applicant, research performed by NRC staff and information from the FWS. If you have any questions regarding the enclosed draft SEIS, the BA in Appendix E of the draft SEIS, or the staff's request, please contact Mr. Christian Jacobs, Environmental Project Manager, at 301-415-3874 or by e-mail at cjj@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA by Samuel Hernandez-Quinones for/
Rani L. Franovich, Branch Chief
Environmental Branch B
Division of License Renewal
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-482

Enclosure:
As stated

cc w/encl: See next page

M. LeValley

-2-

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Rani L. Franovich, Branch Chief
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As stated

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Adams Accession Nos.:

1. Ltr. To M. LeValley w/Svc. List: **ML072420149**
2. Draft Supplemental 32 to NUREG-1437 "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants" (GEIS): **ML072540026**
3. Pkg.: **ML072420147**

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DATE	09/04/07	08/30/07	09/04/07	09/20/07

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

Letter to M. LeValley from R. Franovich, dated September 20, 2007

SUBJECT: BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT FOR LICENSE RENEWAL OF WOLF CREEK
GENERATING STATION (TAC NO. MD3182)

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Wolf Creek Generating Station

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