

January 12, 2009

Mr. Justin Newell
Pennsylvania Department of
Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry
6th Floor Rachel Carson State Office Bldg
P.O. Box 8552
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SCOPING PROCESS AND LIST OF
STATE LISTED PROTECTED SPECIES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
FOR THE BELL BEND NUCLEAR POWER PLANT COMBINED LICENSE
APPLICATION

Dear Mr. Newell:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application submitted by PPL Bell Bend, LLC for a combined license (COL) for construction and operation of one new nuclear power plant at its Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant (BBNPP) Site near Berwick, Pennsylvania. As part of the review of this COL application, the NRC staff is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) as required by Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 51, the NRC's regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. The EIS includes an analysis of pertinent environmental matters including those involving endangered or threatened species and impacts to fish and wildlife. This letter is being submitted to initiate consultation under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) of 1934, as amended. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District is a cooperating agency with the NRC for the purpose of complying with NEPA.

PPL Bell Bend, LLC submitted the application for a COL on October 10, 2008 pursuant to NRC requirements in 10 CFR Part 52. The NRC staff accepted the application for docketing on December 15, 2008. It is available through the web-based version of the NRC's Agency-wide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) which can be found at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. The environmental report portion of the application is listed under the accession number ML082890680. The BBNPP COL application is also available on the Internet at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/col/bell-bend.html>.

The BBNPP Site consists of approximately 882 acres in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, approximately five miles northeast of Berwick, Pennsylvania on the Susquehanna River. The BBNPP Site is located west of the existing Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (SSES) which has two operating boiling water reactors, Units 1 and 2, that have the capacity to generate 2,270 megawatts of electricity combined. PPL Bell Bend, LLC plans to construct one new nuclear unit adjacent to the existing SSES, Units 1 and 2 in an area of open deciduous woodlands interspersed with grasslands, previously cultivated fields and orchards. Land use in the immediate vicinity of the site is primarily forested and agricultural.

PPL Bell Bend, LLC has stated there is no need for new transmission lines or corridors to connect the new reactor unit to the existing electrical grid. The existing 500 kV transmission line is planned to undergo a modification in 2012 to add the Susquehanna-Roseland Interconnection approved by the Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland (PJM) Regional Transmission Organization. This modification is planned independent of and without consideration for the BBNPP Project. On the BBNPP Site, planned facilities include one new 500 kV substation to transmit power from BBNPP, one new 500 kV transmission system switchyard (Susquehanna Yard #2), and two new 500 kV, 4,260 MVA circuits on individual towers connecting the BBNPP substation to the existing SSES 500 kV yard and to the proposed Susquehanna Yard #2. The 230 kV transmission lines currently passing through the BBNPP Site will be relocated to run along the northern boundary of the owner controlled area to provide a buffer from the cooling towers and provide additional areas for the location of structures. There will be an expansion of the existing SSES 500 kV switchyard and numerous breaker upgrades and associated modifications will be required at other existing substations and switchyards. All offsite modifications would be implemented within the existing substations and switchyards. In addition, certain sections of two offsite transmission lines will need to be refurbished to avoid network overloads.

The proposed cooling system consists of a closed-cycle wet cooling system. The system will use two natural draft cooling towers for heat dissipation. An average rate of 23,808 gallons per minute (gpm) would be withdrawn from the Susquehanna River to make up losses from evaporation, cooling tower drift, and blow-down discharge. Blow-down from the cooling towers would discharge to a common retention basin prior to discharging to the Susquehanna River. Enclosed with this letter are copies of the site maps, the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory Project Planning and Environmental Review forms and the associated map needed for each form.

The NRC staff, in its review, will evaluate the environmental impacts of construction and operation of the BBNPP and will consider alternatives including alternative sites. PPL Bell Bend, LLC has identified three alternative sites that will be evaluated in the EIS. The three alternative sites to be evaluated in the EIS are the Sandy Bend Site located in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania along the Juniata River, the Martins Creek Site located in Warren County, New Jersey along the Delaware River, and the Montour Site located in Derry Township in Montour County, Pennsylvania. The NRC staff will also evaluate impacts from transmission line right-of-ways and site preparation activities, such as land clearing and excavation, in cumulative impacts analysis.

To support preparation of the NRC EIS on the proposed action, the NRC requests your office provide to the NRC staff information on State-listed, proposed, and candidate species and critical habitat that may be in the vicinity of the BBNPP Site, the alternative sites located in Pennsylvania, and the associated transmission line right-of-ways. In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the FWCA.

The NRC staff plans to hold a public NEPA scoping meeting on Thursday, January 29, 2009 at the Berwick Area Senior High School, 1100 Fowler Avenue, Berwick, Pennsylvania 18603-3799. The meeting will convene at 7:00 p.m., and will continue until approximately 10:00 p.m. The meeting will be preceded by an open house from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., during which members of the public may meet and talk with NRC staff members on an informal basis.

In addition, during the week of March 2, 2009, the NRC plans to conduct a site audit to discuss with the applicant the detailed information that is the basis for the preparation of the environmental report (ER), to perform a walk-down of the site and its environs, and to review documentation. You and your staff are invited to attend both the public meeting and the site audit.

Please provide any information, comments, or concerns you feel are appropriate on the scope of the proposed action during the scoping comment period which ends on March 9, 2009. Comments should be submitted either by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Mail Stop TWB-05-B01M, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001 or by e-mail to BBNP.COLEIS@nrc.gov. When the NRC staff completes the draft EIS on the proposed action, a copy will be sent to your office for comment. The anticipated publication date for the draft EIS is January 2010.

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff's environmental review of this COL application, please contact Mrs. Stacey Imboden, Environmental Project Manager at (301) 415-2462 or by e-mail at Stacey.Imboden@nrc.gov. In her absence, please contact Ms. Tomeka Terry at (301) 415-1488 or by email at Tomeka.Terry@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William Burton, Branch Chief
Environment Projects Branch 1
Division of Site and Environmental Reviews
Office of New Reactors

Docket No: 52-039

Enclosures: As stated

cc w/o Enclosures: See next page

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Sincerely,

/RA/

William Burton, Branch Chief
Environment Projects Branch 1
Division of Site and Environmental Reviews
Office of New Reactors

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Enclosures: As stated
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ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: **ML083500498**

OFFICE	PM:RAP1: DSER:NRO	BIO:RENV: DSER:NRO	LA:RAP1: DSER:NRO	PM:RAP1: DSER:NRO	OGC	BC:RAP1: DSER:NRO
NAME	TTerry	NKuntzleman	GHawkins /gdh/	Slmboden	AGendelman/ NLO	WBurton
DATE	12/ 16 /08	12/18/08	12/ 16 /08	12/19 /08	12/29/08	01/12/09

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY



Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory Project Planning & Environmental Review Form

This form provides site information necessary to perform an Environmental Review for special concern species and resources listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the Wild Resource Conservation Act, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat code or the Pennsylvania Game and Wildlife Code.

Applicant Information

Name: Stacey Imboden
Address: US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, MST-6D38-M, Washington DC 20555
Phone Number: 301-415-2462 Fax Number: 301-415-5389

Contact Person Information - if different from applicant

Name:
Address:
Phone Number: Fax Number:

Project Information

Project Name: Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant
Project Location: 5 miles NE of Berwick, PA
Municipality: Salem Township County: Luzerne
☐ Attach a copy of a U.S.G.S. 7 1/2 Minute Quadrangle Map with Project Boundaries clearly marked.
U.S.G.S. Quad Name: Berwick

Project Description

Proposed Project Activity (including ALL earth disturbance areas and current conditions)

Construction of one new nuclear power plant adjacent to the existing Susquehanna nuclear power plant near Berwick PA.

Total Acres of Property: 882 Acreage to be Impacted: 882

1. Will the entire project occur in or on an existing building, parking lot, driveway, road, maintained road shoulder, street, runway, paved area, railroad bed, or maintained lawn? Yes ☐ No ☒
2. Are there any waterways or waterbodies (intermittent or perennial rivers, streams, creeks, tributaries, lakes or ponds) in or near the project area, or on the land parcel? If so, how many feet away is the project? North Branch
Yes ☒ Feet No ☐ East Fork and Main Stem of Walker Run, of PA Canal
3. Are wetlands located in or within 300 feet of the project area? Yes ☒ No ☐ If No, is this the result of a wetland delineation?

If you have a "PNDI Project Environmental Review Receipt" with potential impacts, please send a receipt copy, this completed form, and a USGS Quad Map to the agency/agencies noted on the receipt. If you are unable to generate a PNDI Receipt because you do not have Internet access, complete this form, attach a USGS Quad Map, and send them to your local DEP or County Conservation District. For review of a "Large Project," please send form and map to all the agencies listed below. See page 2 for more information.

Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry, Ecological Services Section
400 Market St., PO Box 8552
Harrisburg, PA 17105
fax: 717-772-0271

PA Game Commission
Bureau of Land Management
2001 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797
fax: 717-787-6957

PA Fish and Boat Commission
Natural Diversity Section
450 Robinson Lane
Bellefonte, PA 16823
fax 814-359-5175

US Fish and Wildlife Service
Endangered Species Biologist
315 South Allen St., Suite 322
State College, PA 16801
no faxes please

Figure 2.2-5 {BBNPP Site 500 kV and 230 kV Regional Circuit Corridors}

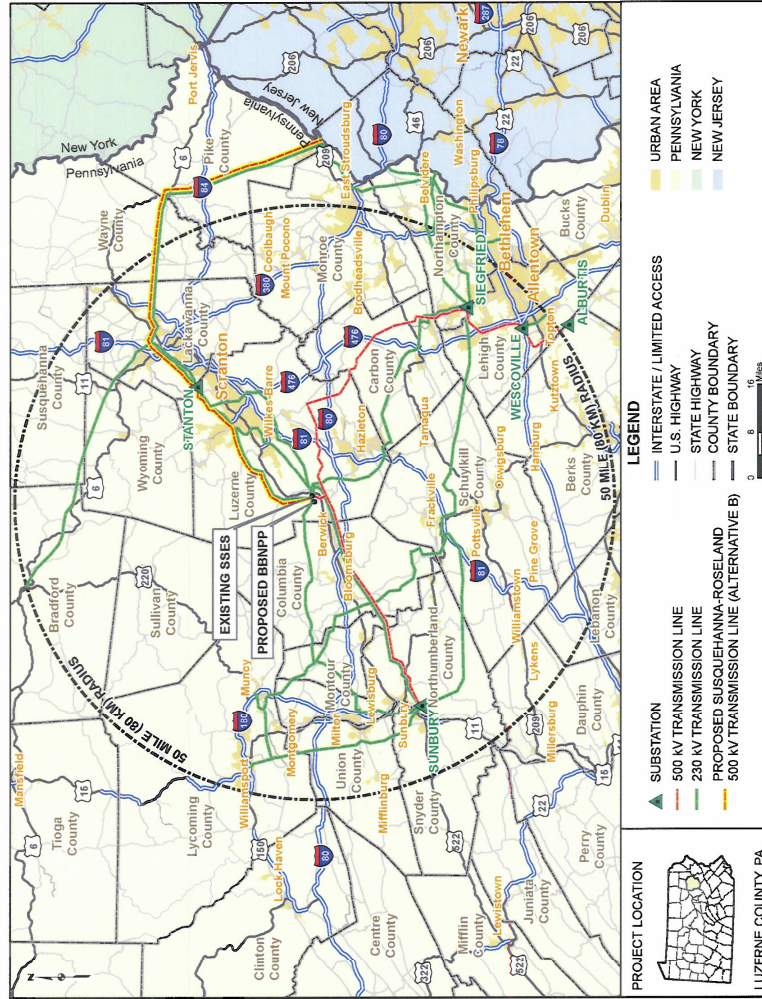
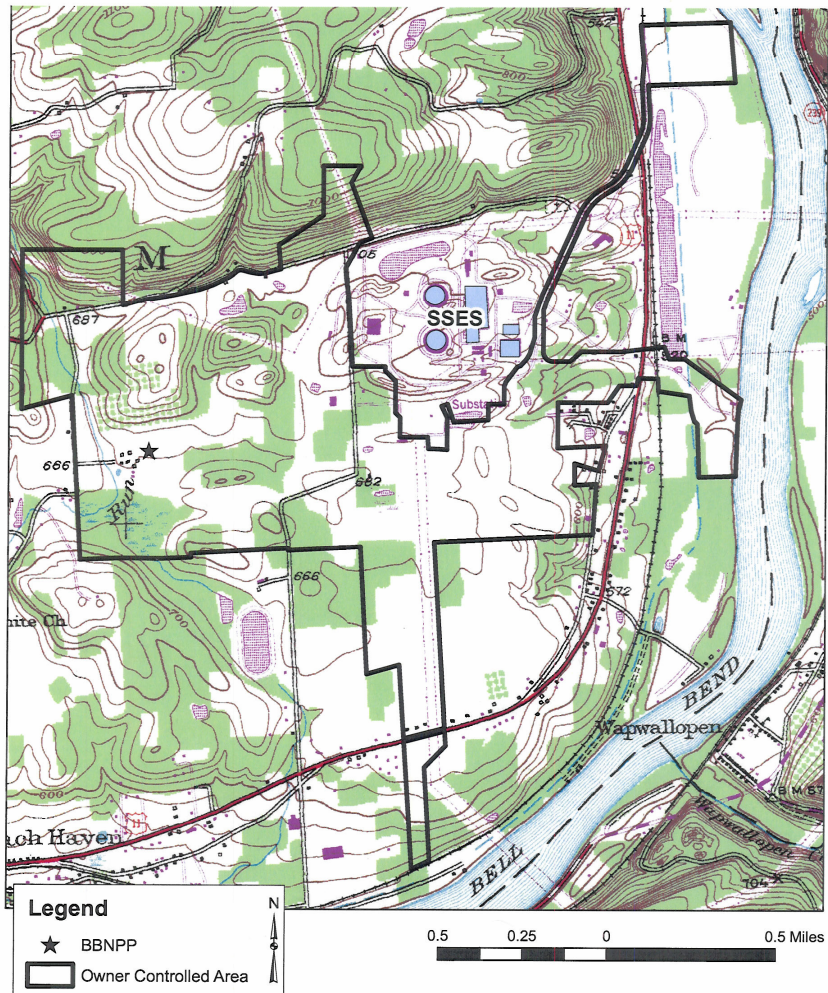


Figure 2.2-3 {BBNPP} Site Topographic Map





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Name: *Stacey Imboden*
Address: *US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, MST-6D38-M, Washington DC 20555*
Phone Number: *301-415-2462* Fax Number: *301-415-5389*

Contact Person Information - if different from applicant

Name:
Address:
Phone Number: Fax Number:

Project Information

Project Name: *Bel Bend Nuclear Power Plant - Alternate Site; Sandy Bend, PA*
Project Location: *2.5 miles NE of McVeytown PA on Juniata River*
Municipality: *Bratton Township* County: *Mifflin*
☒ Attach a copy of a U.S.G.S. 7 1/2 Minute Quadrangle Map with Project Boundaries clearly marked.
U.S.G.S. Quad Name: *Belleville*

Project Description

Proposed Project Activity (including ALL earth disturbance areas and current conditions)

Location is an alternate site for possible construction of one new nuclear power plant.

Total Acres of Property: *420 ac.* Acreage to be Impacted: *420 ac.*

- Will the entire project occur in or on an existing building, parking lot, driveway, road, maintained road shoulder, street, runway, paved area, railroad bed, or maintained lawn? Yes ☐ No ☒
- Are there any waterways or waterbodies (intermittent or perennial rivers, streams, creeks, tributaries, lakes or ponds) in or near the project area, or on the land parcel? If so, how many feet away is the project? Yes ☒ Feet No ☐
- Are wetlands located in or within 300 feet of the project area? Yes ☒ No ☐ If No, is this the result of a wetland delineation?

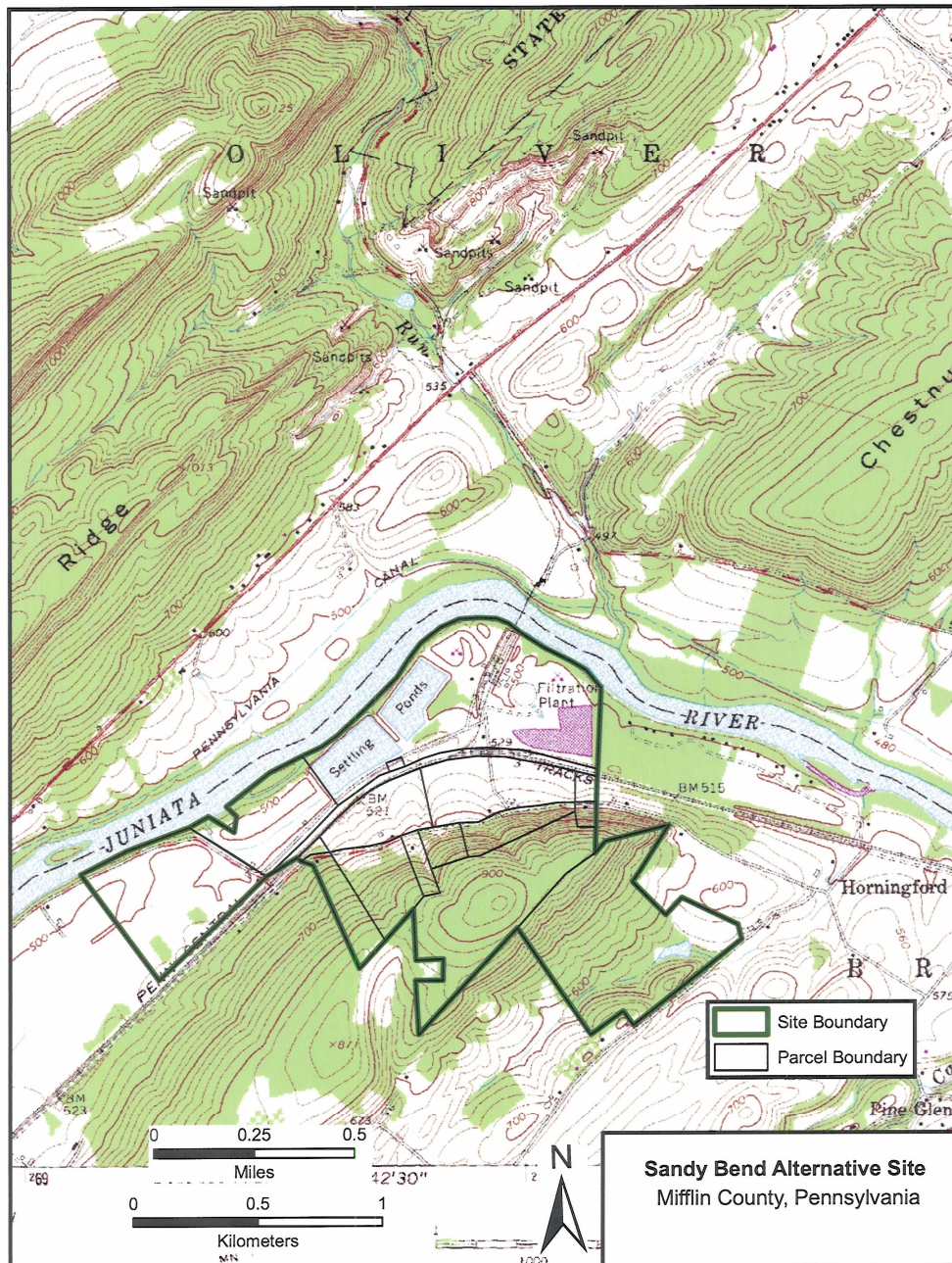
If you have a "PNDI Project Environmental Review Receipt" with potential impacts, please send a receipt copy, this completed form, and a USGS Quad Map to the agency/agencies noted on the receipt. If you are unable to generate a PNDI Receipt because you do not have Internet access, complete this form, attach a USGS Quad Map, and send them to your local DEP or County Conservation District. For review of a "Large Project," please send form and map to all the agencies listed below. See page 2 for more information.

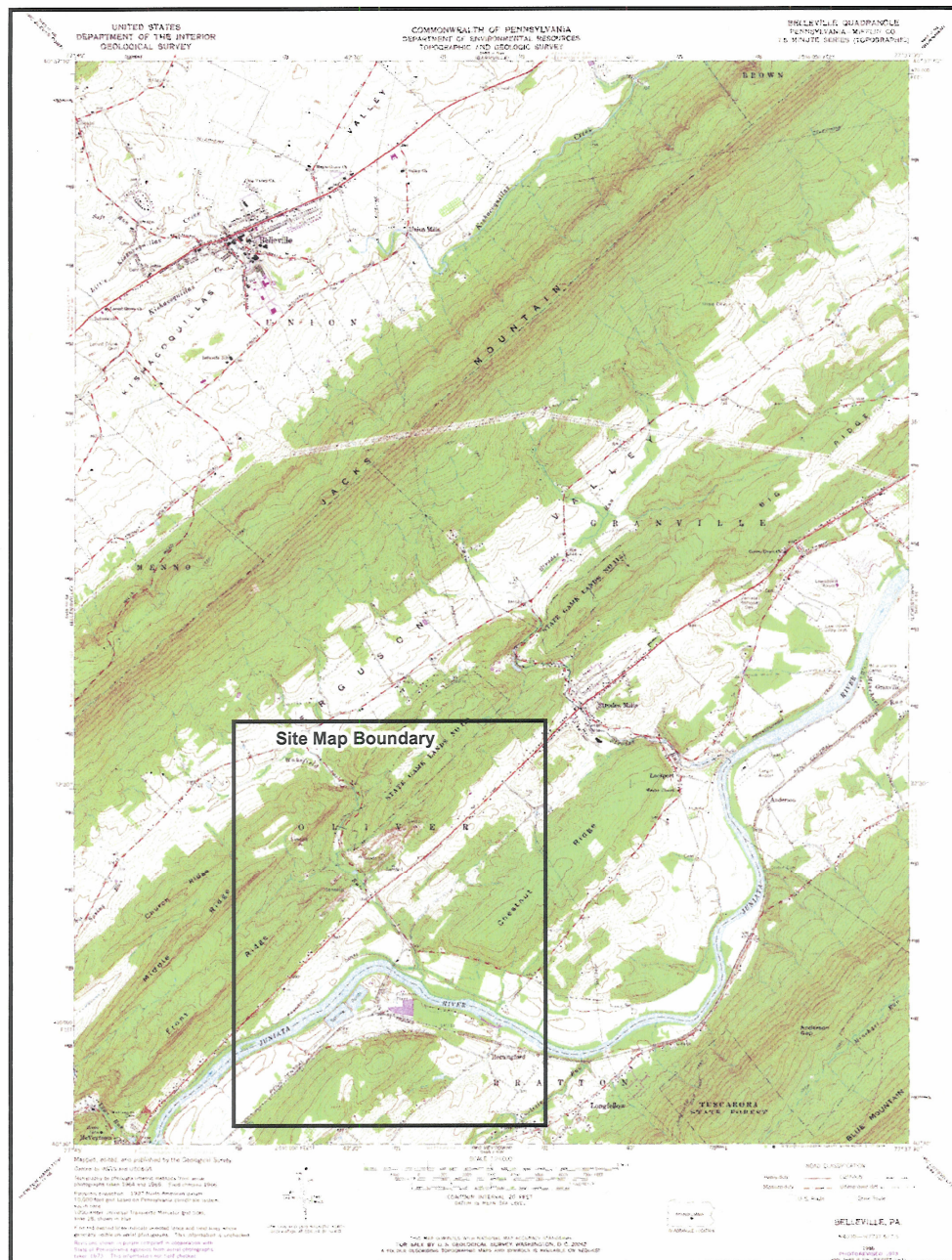
Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry, Ecological Services Section
400 Market St., PO Box 8552
Harrisburg, PA 17105
fax: 717-772-0271

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2001 Elmerton Avenue
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fax 814-359-5175

US Fish and Wildlife Service
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Applicant Information

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Phone Number: 301-415-2462 Fax Number: 301-415-5389

Contact Person Information - if different from applicant

Name:
Address:
Phone Number: Fax Number:

Project Information

Project Name: Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant - Alternate site: Montour, PA
Project Location: 2 mile NE of Washingtonville, PA adjacent to Montour Coal Fired Power Plant
Municipality: Derry Township County: Montour
☒ Attach a copy of a U.S.G.S. 7 1/2 Minute Quadrangle Map with Project Boundaries clearly marked.
U.S.G.S. Quad Name: Washingtonville

Project Description

Proposed Project Activity (including ALL earth disturbance areas and current conditions)

Location is an alternate site for possible construction of one new nuclear power plant.

Total Acres of Property: 2500 ac. Acreage to be Impacted: 420 ac.

1. Will the entire project occur in or on an existing building, parking lot, driveway, road, maintained road shoulder, street, runway, paved area, railroad bed, or maintained lawn? Yes ☐ No ☒
2. Are there any waterways or waterbodies (intermittent or perennial rivers, streams, creeks, tributaries, lakes or ponds) in or near the project area, or on the land parcel? If so, how many feet away is the project?
Yes ☒ Feet No ☐ Susquehanna River is 12 miles away
3. Are wetlands located in or within 300 feet of the project area? Yes ☒ No ☐ If No, is this the result of a wetland delineation?

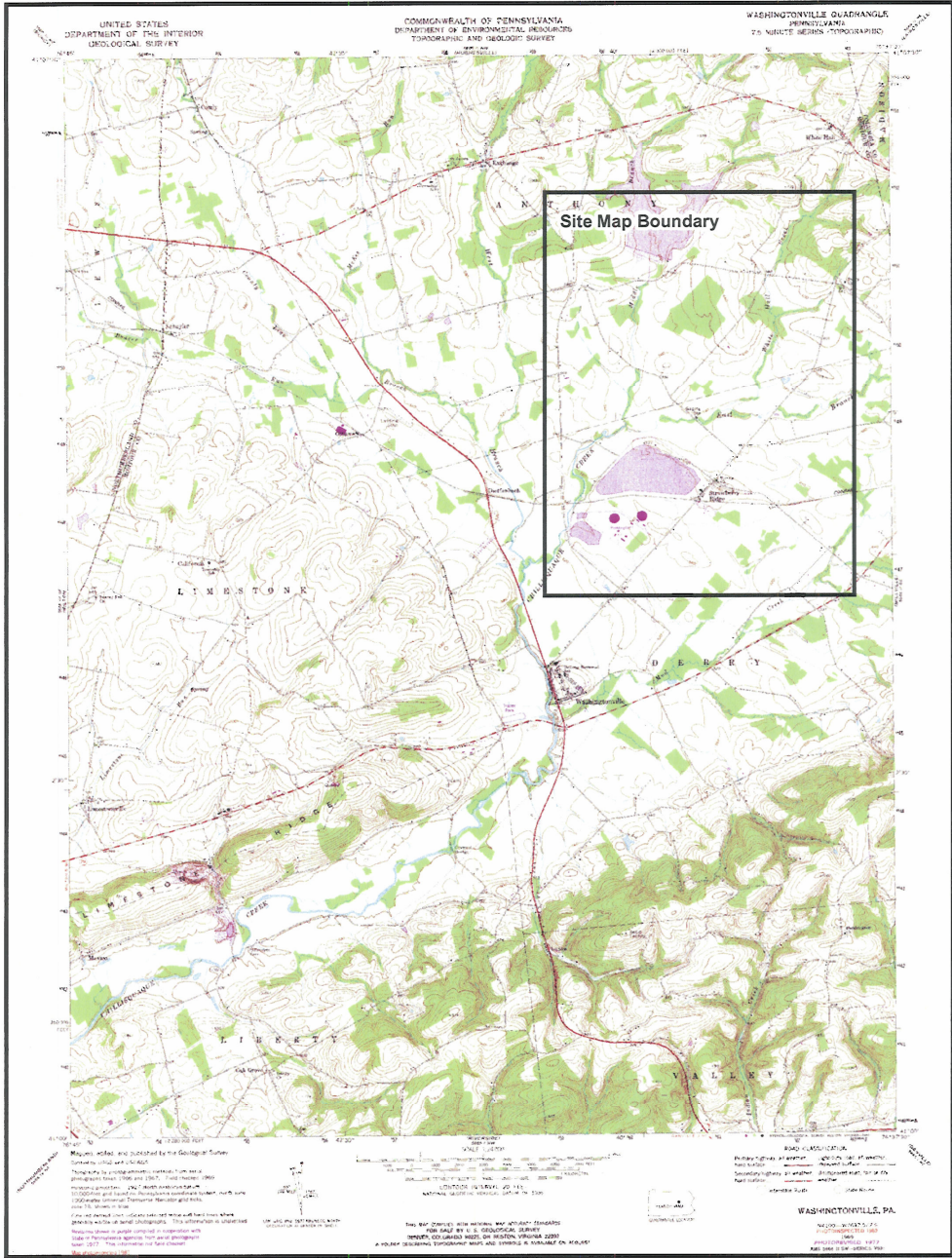
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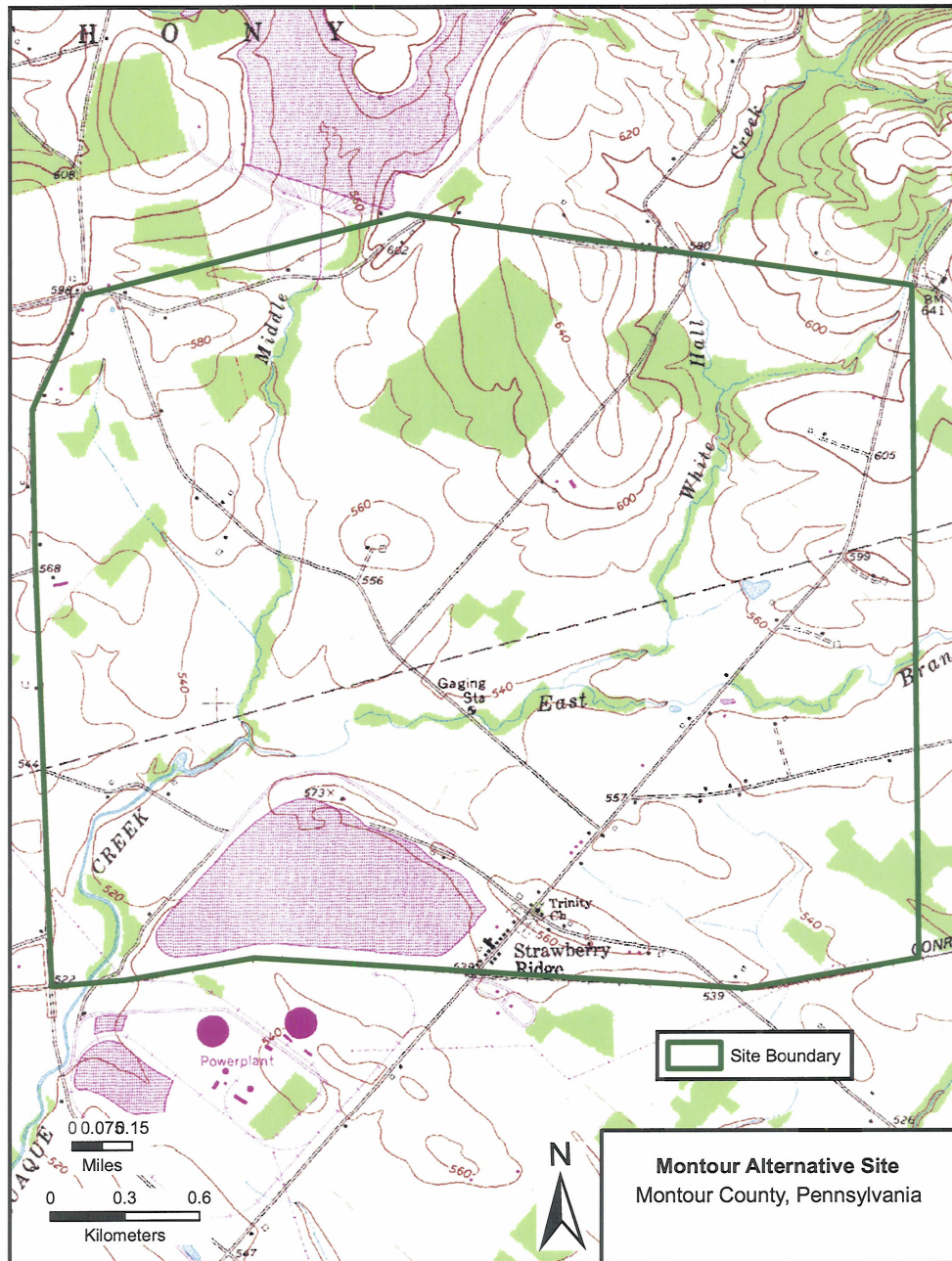
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Bellefonte, PA 16823
fax 814-359-5175

US Fish and Wildlife Service
Endangered Species Biologist
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no faxes please





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