

May 3, 2010

Mr. Barry Thom  
Regional Administrator, Northwest Region  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
7600 Sand Point Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98115-0070

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR LIST OF PROTECTED SPECIES AND ESSENTIAL FISH  
HABITAT WITHIN THE AREA UNDER EVALUATION FOR THE COLUMBIA  
GENERATING STATION LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION REVIEW

Dear Mr. Thom:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is reviewing an application submitted by Energy Northwest for the renewal of the operating license for Columbia Generating Station (CGS). CGS is located on the Columbia River, 12 miles northwest of Richland, WA. As part of the review of the license renewal application (LRA), the NRC is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) under the provisions of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 51 (10 CFR Part 51), the NRC's regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The SEIS includes an analysis of pertinent environmental issues, including endangered or threatened species and impacts to marine resources and habitat. This letter is being submitted under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended; the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934, as amended; and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Energy Northwest stated that it has no plans to alter current operations over the license renewal period and that CGS, operating under a renewed license, would use existing plant facilities and transmission lines and would not require additional construction or disturbance of new areas. Any maintenance activities would be limited to previously disturbed areas. The CGS site is in the southeastern area of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Hanford Site, a 586 square mile reservation established in 1943 by the federal government for the production of defense nuclear materials. The CGS site comprises 1,089 acres that are leased by Energy Northwest from the DOE. The lease describes the site in two parcels – a nearly square section containing the plant power block and associated structures and an elongated area running to the river east of the plant (Please see the area maps, Enclosures 1, 2, and 3).

CGS employs a closed-cycle cooling system that removes heat from its condenser and rejects it to the atmosphere by evaporation using six mechanical draft cooling towers. Water is circulated from the cooling towers through the condenser and back to the circulating water pumphouse at a rate of about 550,000 gpm. Makeup water to replenish water losses due to evaporation, drift, and blowdown is supplied from the makeup water pumphouse located at Columbia River approximately three miles east of the plant. The three 800-hp makeup water pumps are each designed to pump 12,500 gallons per minute (gpm), although normally two pumps are used to supply makeup water to the plant. The intake system for the makeup water pumps includes two offshore perforated pipe inlets mounted above the riverbed and approximately parallel to the river flow. The intake system is designed for a withdrawal capacity of 25,000 gpm.

Actual makeup water withdrawal during operating periods averages about 17,000 gpm. This is about 0.1% of the minimum river flow in the vicinity of CGS or 0.03% of the average annual flow.

To support the SEIS preparation process and to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the NRC requests information on Federally listed, proposed, and candidate species and critical habitat that may be in the vicinity of the CGS site, as shown on the enclosed maps. In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. Also in support of the SEIS preparation and to ensure compliance with Section 305 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the NRC requests a list of essential fish habitat that has been designated in the vicinity of the CGS site.

The NRC staff held two public NEPA scoping meetings on April 6, 2010 at the Richland Public Library in Richland, WA. The week of June 7<sup>th</sup>, we plan to conduct a site audit, which you and your staff are invited to attend. Your office will also receive a copy of the draft SEIS along with a request for comments. The anticipated publication date for the draft SEIS is December 2010.

The CGS license renewal application is available at:

<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/columbia.html>

B. Thom

- 3 -

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff review of this LRA, please contact Mr. Daniel Doyle, Project Manager at (301) 415-3748 or by e-mail at [daniel.doyle@nrc.gov](mailto:daniel.doyle@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

***/RA/***

Bo Pham, Chief  
Projects Branch 1  
Division of License Renewal  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-397

Enclosures:

1. Area Map, 50-mile radius
2. Area Map, 6-mile radius
3. Site Area Map

cc w/encls: See next page

B. Thom

- 3 -

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff review of this LRA, please contact Mr. Daniel Doyle, Project Manager at (301) 415-3748 or by e-mail at [daniel.doyle@nrc.gov](mailto:daniel.doyle@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,  
*/RA/*

Bo Pham, Chief  
Projects Branch 1  
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DATE	04/27/10	05/03/10	

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Columbia Generating Station

cc:

Mr. J.V. Parrish, Chief Executive Officer  
Energy Northwest  
MD 1023  
P.O. Box 968  
Richland, WA 99352-0968

Mr. S. K. Gambhir  
Energy Northwest  
MD PE04  
P.O. Box 968  
Richland, WA 99352-0968

Mr. Douglas W. Coleman, Manager,  
Regulatory Programs  
Energy Northwest  
P.O. Box 968  
MD PE20  
Richland, WA 99352-0968

Mr. William A. Horin, Esq.  
Winston and Strawn  
1700 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006-3817

Chairman, Benton County  
Board of Commissioners  
P.O. Box 190  
Prosser, WA 99350-0190

Mr. Richard Cowley  
Washington State Department of  
Health  
111 Israel Road, SE  
Tumwater, WA 98504-7827

Mr. Ron Cohen  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
P.O. Box 69  
Richland, WA 99352

Regional Administrator  
U.S. NRC Region IV  
Texas Health Resources Tower  
612 E. Lamar Boulevard, Suite 400  
Arlington, TX 76011-4125

EFSEC Manager  
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council  
P.O. Box 43172  
Olympia, WA 98504-3172

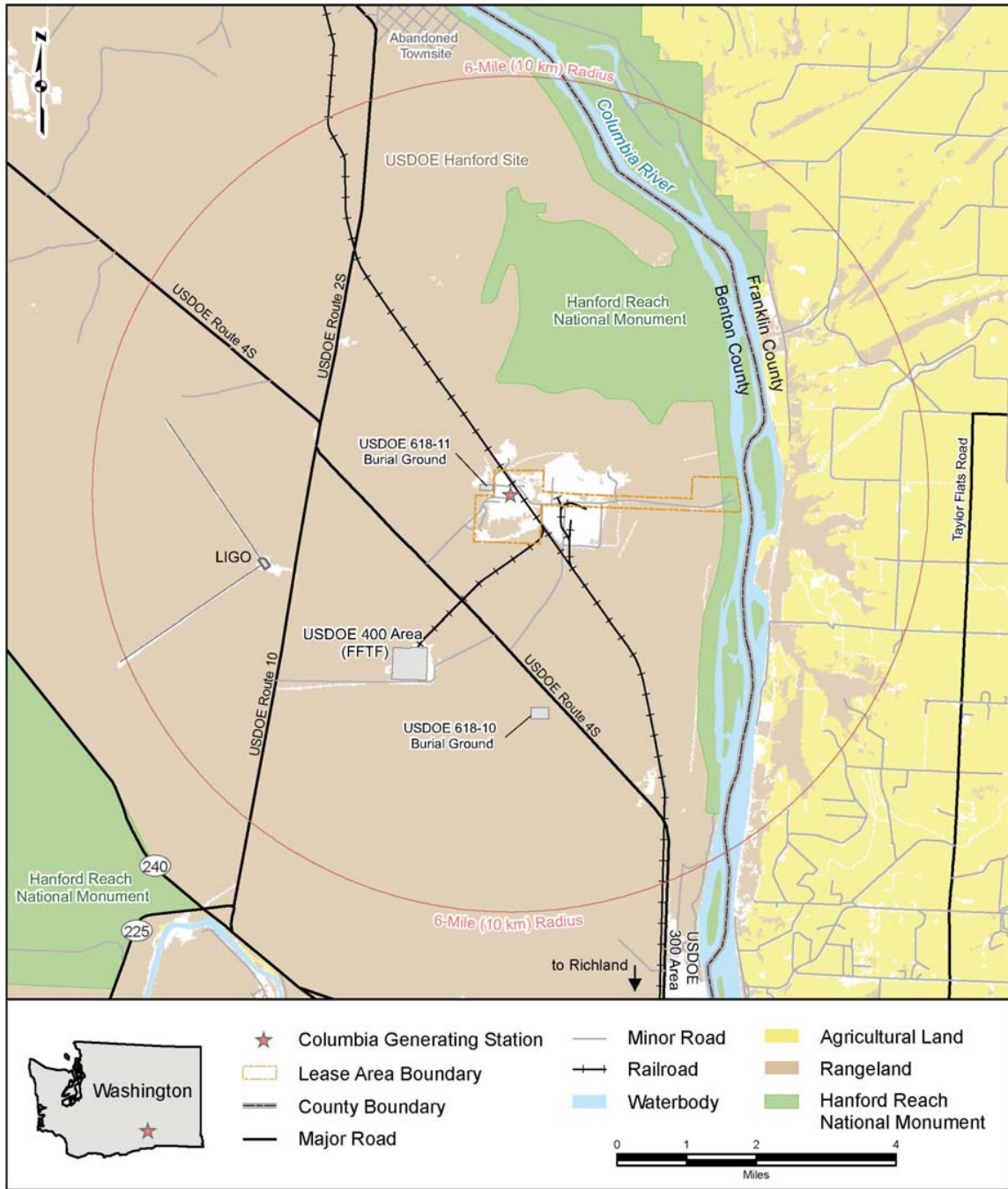
Mr. W.S. Oxenford, Senior Vice President,  
Generation and Chief Nuclear Officer  
Columbia Generating Station  
Energy Northwest  
MD PE08  
P.O. Box 968  
Richland, WA 99352

# Area Map, 50-Mile Radius





## Area Map, 6-Mile Radius



# Site Area Map

