



**ENERCON**

*Excellence—Every project. Every day.*

March 4, 2011

Mr. David Bernhart  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
NOAA Fisheries Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
Protected Resources Division  
263 13th Avenue South  
Saint Petersburg, Florida 33701

RE: Grand Gulf Nuclear Station  
License Renewal Application

Dear Mr. Bernhart,

In 2011, Entergy plans to apply to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for renewal of the operating license for the Grand Gulf Nuclear Station (GGNS), which is located in Claiborne County, Mississippi on the east bank of the Mississippi River at River Mile 406, approximately 25 miles south of Vicksburg, Mississippi and 37 miles north-northeast of Natchez, Mississippi. The existing operating license for GGNS was issued for a 40-year term that expires in 2024. If the NRC approves the application, Entergy will then have the option to continue operating GGNS until 2044. In conjunction with this effort, Enercon is gathering information on Entergy's behalf relative to this license renewal project.

The NRC requires that the license renewal application for GGNS include an environmental report assessing potential environmental impacts from operation during the license renewal term. One of these potential environmental impacts would be the effect of license renewal on threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat located on the GGNS site, its immediate environs (6-mile radius), and transmission line corridors constructed for purposes of connecting the plant to the regional transmission grid. Accordingly, the NRC requires that the environmental report for each license renewal application assess such a potential effect (10 CFR 51.53). Later, during its review of the license renewal environmental report pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the NRC may request information from your office to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

Enercon is contacting you now in order to obtain input regarding issues that may need to be addressed in the GGNS license renewal environmental report, and to assist Entergy in identifying any information your staff believes would be helpful to expedite NRC's review.

The 2,100 acre GGNS site consists primarily of woodlands and former farms as well as two lakes, Hamilton Lake and Gin Lake (see Figure 1). The land in the vicinity of the GGNS site is mostly rural. There are two transmission corridors containing a single-circuit 500-kV transmission lines that were constructed for purposes of connecting

Mr. David Bernhart  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office  
Protected Resources Division  
Page 2 of 2

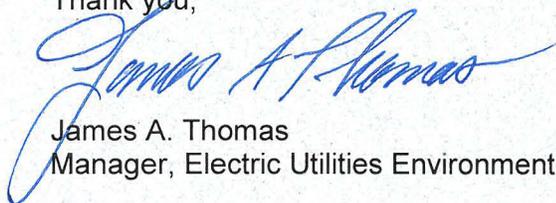
GGNS to the regional electricity grid (see Figure 2). These transmission line corridors are considered by the NRC to be within the scope of its environmental reviews for the renewal of the GGNS operating license. Entergy's Transmission group owns and operates these two lines. The total length of the two corridors is approximately 66 miles, and crosses Claiborne, Warren, Jefferson and Franklin Counties in Mississippi.

Based on a review of information available, Enercon did not identify any threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitats under the jurisdiction of the NOAA fisheries service at the station site, the immediate environs, or the transmission line corridors (see Figures 1 and 2). However, even in the absence of these species or designated critical habitats, Entergy does not expect GGNS operations during the license renewal term to adversely affect any threatened and endangered species or critical habitats since there are no plans to alter current operations during the 20-year license renewal period, and any maintenance activities necessary to support continued operation of GGNS would be limited to currently developed areas of the site. Although administrative procedural controls are in place to comply with applicable state and federal laws to preserve biological resources when facility expansion or land disturbance activities do occur, no expansion is planned or needed in support of license renewal. In addition, Entergy's Transmission group has established maintenance procedures for transmission lines that involve minimal disturbance of land, wetlands, and streams and are protective of threatened and endangered species, and designated critical habitats when present.

After your review of the information provided in this letter, I would appreciate you sending a letter detailing any concerns you may have about potential impacts as a result of license renewal to threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat under your jurisdiction on the GGNS property, immediate environs, or along the transmission line corridors, or alternatively, confirming our conclusion that no species or habitats under the jurisdiction of NOAA exists, and thereby no associated impacts. Entergy will include copies of this letter and your response in the environmental report submitted to the NRC as part of the GGNS license renewal application.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (918) 665-7693 or through my email address, [jthomas@enercon.com](mailto:jthomas@enercon.com). Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Thank you,



James A. Thomas  
Manager, Electric Utilities Environmental Services

Attachment – 6-Mile Map  
50-Mile Map

cc: Rick Buckley (Entergy)

Figure 1

Location of GGNS, 6-Mile Radius Map

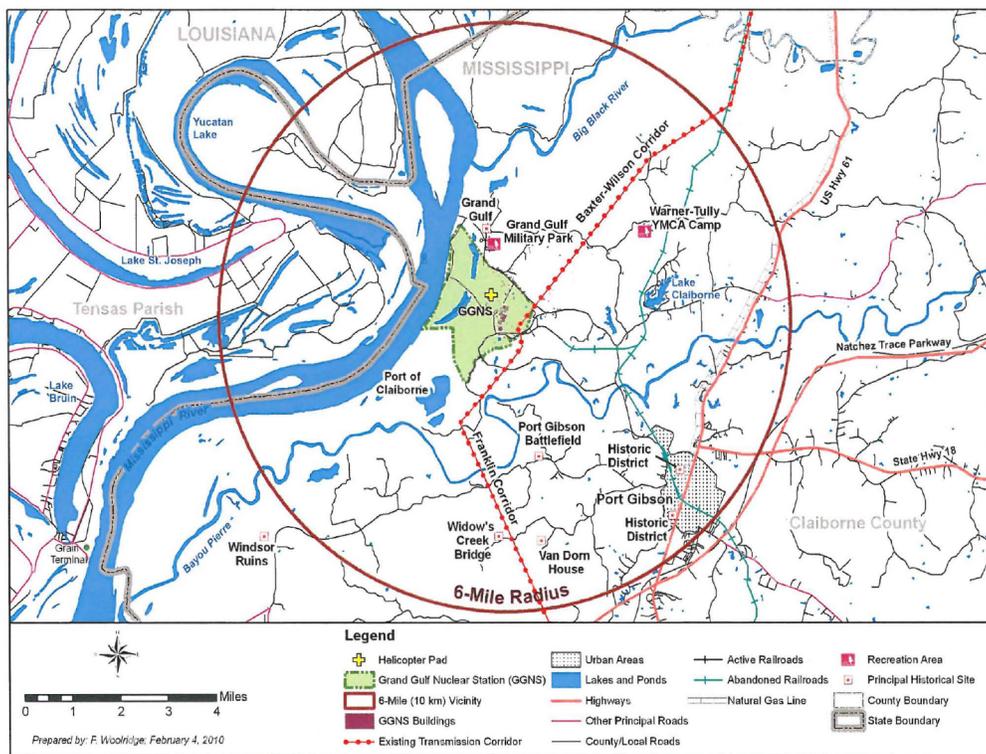
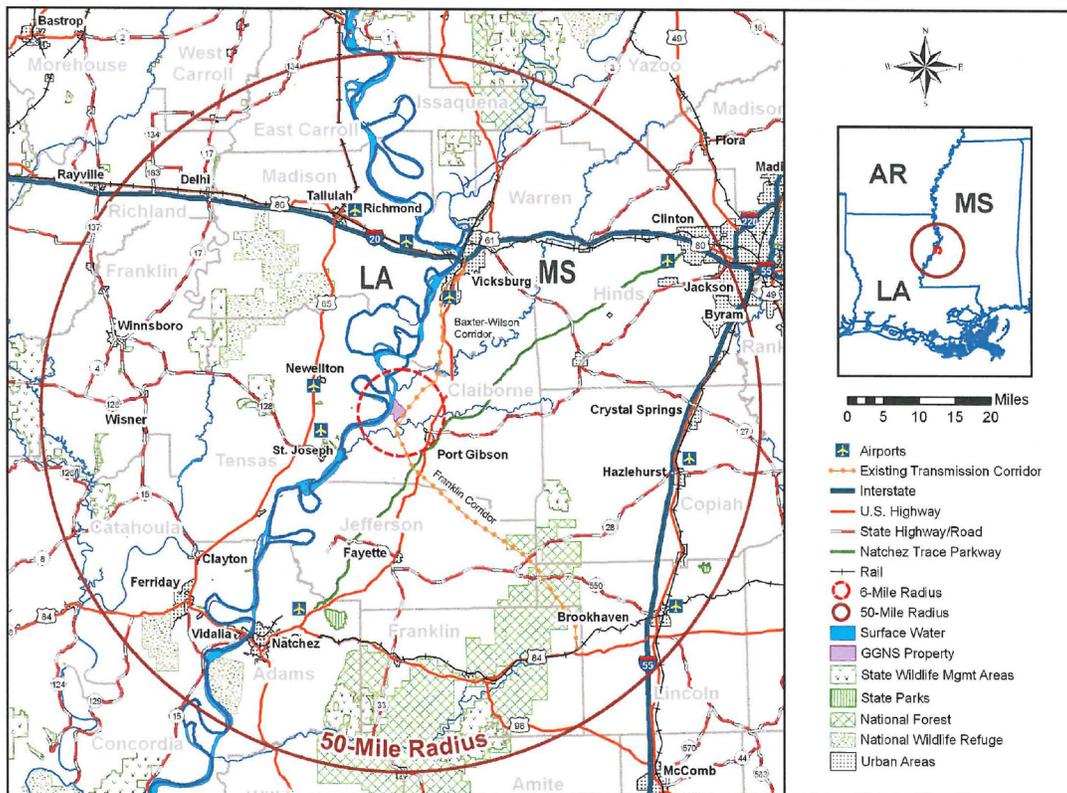


Figure 2

Location of GGNS, 50-Mile Radius Map





**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Regional Office

263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South

St. Petersburg, FL 33701-5505

727.824.5312, FAX 824.5309

<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

F/SER31:NB

Mr. James A. Thomas  
Manager, Electric Utilities Environmental Services  
Enercon  
5100 East Skelly Drive, Suite 450  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74135

JUN 14 2011

Dear Mr. Thomas:

This is in response to your letter, received by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on March 4, 2011, regarding the operating license renewal for the Grand Gulf Nuclear Station near Port Gibson, Mississippi. The current 40-year operating license expires in 2024. Enercon is gathering information on Entergy's behalf relative to this license renewal project.

The Gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*) was listed jointly by NMFS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as threatened on September 30, 1991 (56 FR 49653). Gulf sturgeon are known to inhabit the Mississippi River and have been collected upstream of the project site in the region of Vicksburg, Mississippi<sup>1</sup>. The project area is not within designated Gulf sturgeon critical habitat (50 CFR 226.214).

Pursuant to the jurisdictional responsibilities outlined in the final rule designating Gulf sturgeon critical habitat (68 FR 13400), the USFWS would be the lead agency for activities on the Mississippi River. Therefore, consultation regarding potential impacts to Gulf sturgeon from the license renewal of the Grand Gulf Nuclear Station should be coordinated with Karen Harrington, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1601 Balboa Avenue, Panama City, Florida 32405-3721 (tel:850/769-0552).



Thank you for providing the opportunity to provide comments on the project. We look forward to further cooperation with you on other projects to ensure the conservation of our threatened and endangered marine species and designated critical habitat. If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Bailey, ESA Consultant, at (727) 824-5336, or by e-mail at Nicole.Bailey@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,



David Bernhart  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
for Protected Resources

File: 1514-22.m

Ref: T/SER/2011/01889

---

<sup>1</sup> Ross, S.T. 2001. The Inland Fishes of Mississippi. University Press of Mississippi, Jackson.