

Grange, Briana

From: Susco, Jeremy
Sent: Thursday, May 17, 2012 4:43 PM
To: ritchie.graves@noaa.gov
Cc: richard.domingue@noaa.gov; Logan, Dennis; Balsam, Briana
Subject: continuation of section 7 consultation

Mr. Graves,

Our staffs have been interacting regarding an ongoing Endangered Species Act section 7 consultation for Columbia Generating Station, and I would like to provide you an update on our plans.

We received copies of the May 7, 2012, letters that NMFS sent to the EPA and the State of Washington regarding the pending application by Columbia Generating Station for a NPDES permit renewal, in which NMFS' acknowledges NRC's lack of authority under the Clean Water Act to set requirements for Columbia's intake and discharge structures. The letters also refer to the NRC's renewed operating license decision as occurring in June 2012. Recently, the NRC moved that schedule ahead and now intends to grant Energy Northwest (the licensee) a renewed operating license on May 22, 2012.

The issuance of the renewed operating license will not affect our ongoing consultation with NMFS. We fully intend to continue to consult with NMFS regarding the two Federally listed species until NMFS has made its effect determinations and concludes the section 7 consultation. If NMFS, as a result of consultation, suggests modifications that the NRC and Energy Northwest could implement to avoid the likelihood of adverse effects to listed species, issuing the renewed operating license would not affect the NRC's authority to implement such modifications.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this information. My staff will continue to work with Rich Domingue regarding the ongoing consultation.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Susco
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