

July 31, 2013

Mr. Louis Chiarella
Assistant Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
Habitat Division, NE Regional Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR UPDATED CONSULTATION FOR THE PSEG POWER, LLC,
AND PSEG NUCLEAR, LLC EARLY SITE PERMIT APPLICATION
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Dear Mr. Chiarella:

The purpose of this letter is a request for updated consultation to assist the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in its environmental review of an Early Site Permit (ESP) application submitted by PSEG Power, LLC and PSEG Nuclear, LLC (PSEG). The ESP application is for a new nuclear power plant site, which is located on the southern part of Artificial Island on the east bank of the Delaware River in Lower Alloways Creek Township, Salem County, New Jersey (NJ).

As part of the review of this ESP application, the NRC is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 51, the NRC regulations that implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. The EIS will include an analysis of pertinent environmental issues, including endangered and threatened species and impacts to fish and wildlife. This letter is being submitted under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) of 1934, as amended, and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996.

The PSEG initially submitted the application for an ESP on May 25, 2010, pursuant to NRC requirements in 10 CFR Part 52. The NRC staff accepted the application for docketing on August 13, 2010, and it is available through the web-based version of the NRC Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), which can be found at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who encounter problems accessing the documents located in ADAMS should contact the Public Document Room (PDR) Reference staff by telephone at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at pdr@nrc.gov. PSEG submitted Revision 2 to the ESP application on March 27, 2013. The Environmental Report (Revision 2) portion of the application is listed under accession number ML13098A979. The PSEG ESP application is also available on the Internet at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/esp/pseg.html>.

By letter dated October 26, 2010, we initiated consultation with your office and received a response by letter dated December 9, 2010, from your Habitat Conservation Division office in Highlands, NJ. Per our request, your reply included a list of endangered, threatened, and candidate species, and designated critical habitat under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service that may be in the vicinity of the PSEG site and a list of Federally-managed species that have designated essential fish habitats (EFH) in that area as well as appropriate information under the provisions of the FWCA of 1984, as amended. We are now requesting any updates to that initial information request to assist in our preparation of the ESA biological assessment, EFH assessment, and EIS for this project.

The proposed PSEG ESP Site will encompass approximately 819 acres and will be located immediately adjacent to the existing Salem and Hope Creek Nuclear Power Plants. PSEG proposes to obtain an ESP for the area immediately north of the existing units. PSEG's proposed cooling system for the new unit(s) will use make up water from the Delaware River and dissipate heat through cooling tower(s). Blowdown from the cooling tower(s) would be discharged back to the Delaware River.

The EIS will document the NRC staff's determination regarding the suitability of the proposed site for construction and operation of one or more new nuclear units. If approved, the ESP would not authorize the applicant to begin construction of the unit(s). However, in its review, the NRC staff will evaluate the environmental impacts of construction and operation and will also consider alternatives, including alternative sites. An ESP allows an applicant to set aside a site for potential future construction of one or more new nuclear power plants and provides the opportunity to resolve site safety and environmental issues before construction begins.

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff's environmental review of this ESP application, please contact Dr. Allen Fetter, NRC Environmental Project Manager, at (301) 415-8556 or via e-mail to Allen.Fetter@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Samuel S. Lee, Chief
Environmental Projects Branch 2
Division of New Reactor Licensing
Office of New Reactors

Docket No.: 52-043

cc: See next page

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Sincerely,

/RA/

Samuel S. Lee, Chief
Environmental Projects Branch 2
Division of New Reactor Licensing
Office of New Reactors

Docket No.: 52-043

cc: See next page

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