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Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

Comment On: NRC-2013-0169-0003
Exelon Generation Company, LLC; License Renewal Application for Braidwood Station, Units 1 and 2

Document: NRC-2013-0169-DRAFT-0007
Comment on FR Doc # N/A

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General Comment

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is submitting the attached comments on the NRC Notice of Intent.

Attachments

Braidwood Station NOI Comment Letter

SUNSI Review Complete
Template = ADM - 013
E-RIDS= ADM-03
Add= J. Hickman (Jbh)
T. Tran (txt1)



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/AES-CIFO/2013-CPA-0057

September 24, 2013

Cindy Bladey
Chief, Rules, Announcements, and Directives Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop: 3WFN, 06A44M
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Ms. Bladey:

This responds to your Notice of Intent, found in the July 31, 2013, Federal Register, to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) and to initiate the scoping process for the proposed Braidwood Station relicensing. This letter also responds to your September 11, 2013, request for concurrence regarding the list of Federally listed species and habitats that may be affected by the proposed action. The applicant, Exelon Generation Company, LLC, submitted an application to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission for renewal of facility operating licenses for an additional 20 years of operation for Braidwood Station, Units 1 and 2. Braidwood Station is located near Braidwood, Will County, Illinois.

In the past, we have reviewed actions associated with operations at the Braidwood Station. Those reviews were related to impacts to the Kankakee River, which is the source of the Braidwood Station's cooling pond makeup water and the receiving body for the cooling pond's blowdown discharge. During those reviews, our primary concerns were for impacts to fish and mussels, particularly the then candidate designated sheepsnose (*Plethobasus cyphus*) and snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*) mussels. Both mussel species are now Federally listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act). Additionally, a pair of bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nested on an island at the cooling pond in the past. The bald eagle is still protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) and the Migratory Bird Protection Act, and our office provided technical assistance to ensure that the eagles were protected and the BGEPA was followed.

The proposed relicensing and its associated activities should be evaluated for potential impacts to the Federally listed species and other wildlife resources in the project vicinity. The EIS should fully disclose all of the activities that could be associated with the future operation of the Braidwood Station in order to determine the potential impacts to fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. Given the presence of endangered mussel species, particular attention

should be given to potential impacts from water quality (including temperature) and water quantity that may result from proposed operations.

In response to your request for concurrence regarding the species list provided for Braidwood Station, the species list for Kankakee and Will Counties should be updated to include the rattlesnake-master borer moth (*Papaipema eryngii*) and Hine's emerald dragonfly (*Somatochlora hineana*) critical habitat (Will County only). The rattlesnake-master borer moth is a recently designated candidate species. Additional information about the rattlesnake-master borer moth and critical habitat for the Hine's emerald dragonfly can be found at: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/lists/illinois-cty.html>

Please also note that the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) is found in the project vicinity. The Service will be publishing an announcement of a 12-month finding on a petition to list the species as endangered or threatened under the Act and to designate critical habitat in early October of this year. If the northern long-eared bat is found to be warranted for listing, the Service will concurrently announce a proposal to list the species under the Act.

This letter provides comment under the authority of, and in accordance with, the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, as amended P.L. 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1956 (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*), the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (40 Stat. 755, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 703 *et seq.*), and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (54 Stat. 250, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 668-668d).

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Shawn Cirton at 847/381-2253, ext. 19.

Sincerely,


Acting Louise Clemency
Field Supervisor

Cc: DOI, Lisa Treichel
USFWS, Stephanie Nash
USFWS, David Larson
NRC, Dennis Logan
USEPA, Kathleen Kowal