

**From:** [Mark Caldwell](#)  
**To:** [Quintero, Jessie](#)  
**Subject:** [External\_Sender] FW: [EXTERNAL] REQUEST: Re-Concur on ESA Findings re: Westinghouse Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility - FWS Log No. 2015-I-0359  
**Date:** Thursday, June 27, 2019 7:20:02 AM  
**Attachments:** [Updated Species List - WEC CFFF April 2019.pdf](#)

---

Mr. Quintero,

Upon consideration of the proposal to drill additional wells and through evaluation of the Service's species database we offer no objections. We will continue to concur that the activity is not likely to adversely affect federally listed threatened or endangered species. As always, obligations under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, potential impacts of this project must be reconsidered if: (1) new information reveals impacts of this identified action may affect any listed species or critical habitat in a manner not previously considered; (2) this action is subsequently modified in a manner, which was not considered in this assessment; or (3) a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by the identified action.

If you have questions on this matter, you may contact me using the information below.

Mark

Mark A. Caldwell  
Deputy Field Supervisor  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
South Carolina Ecological Services  
176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200  
Charleston, SC 29407  
843-727-4707 ext 215  
843-300-0426 (direct line)  
843-727-4218 – facsimile

**This email correspondence and any attachments to and from this sender is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and may be disclosed to third parties.**

**From:** [mark\\_caldwell@fws.gov](mailto:mark_caldwell@fws.gov) <[mark\\_caldwell@fws.gov](mailto:mark_caldwell@fws.gov)> **On Behalf Of** Charleston ES, FW4  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2019 11:27 AM  
**To:** Mark Caldwell <[mark\\_caldwell@fws.gov](mailto:mark_caldwell@fws.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] REQUEST: Re-Concur on ESA Findings re: Westinghouse Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility - FWS Log No. 2015-I-0359

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Quintero, Jessie** <[Jessie.Quintero@nrc.gov](mailto:Jessie.Quintero@nrc.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Jun 25, 2019 at 11:41 AM  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] REQUEST: Re-Concur on ESA Findings re: Westinghouse Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility - FWS Log No. 2015-I-0359  
**To:** [charleston@fws.gov](mailto:charleston@fws.gov) <[charleston@fws.gov](mailto:charleston@fws.gov)>, [thomas\\_mccoy@fws.gov](mailto:thomas_mccoy@fws.gov) <[thomas\\_mccoy@fws.gov](mailto:thomas_mccoy@fws.gov)>  
**Cc:** Grange, Briana <[Briana.Grange@nrc.gov](mailto:Briana.Grange@nrc.gov)>

Good afternoon Mr. McCoy,

I wanted to update you on our review of a license renewal application from Westinghouse for its Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility (CFFF) in Hopkins, South Carolina (FWS Log No. 2015-I-0359). The CFFF occupies about 60 acres of an ~1100 acre site. The CFFF fabricates nuclear fuel assemblies for commercial nuclear power plants. If granted, the renewed NRC license would allow the CFFF to continue to operate for an additional 40 years.

In May 2015, the NRC submitted a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) requesting concurrence on the NRC's determination that impacts on listed species from license renewal would be unlikely ([ML15104A238](#)). On May 20, 2015, the FWS concurred with the NRC's finding, which was equivalent to "may effect, but not likely to adversely affect" ([ML15161A543](#)). In July 2017, the NRC confirmed the listed species were still the same via IPAC ([ML17208A668](#)). In June 2018, the NRC published a Final Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The EA ([ML18120A318](#)) discussed the impacts on listed species (Sections 3.6 and 4.6) and included our finding under Section 7 of the ESA. Shortly after, in July 2018, the facility had an equipment leak that released contamination into the subsurface. In addition, Westinghouse was conducting additional investigations into a former buried contaminated wastewater pipe leak. As a result of these activities, the NRC decided to re-open its environmental review. The NRC intends to publish a Revised Draft EA for public review and comment. The schedule is still being developed.

In your May 2015 letter, it stated that under the ESA the potential impacts must be reconsidered if (1) new information reveals impact not previously considered, (2) if the proposed action is modified, or (3) if new species may be affected. Therefore, we would like to re-engage with FWS as a result of Westinghouse's investigations into the leaks and spills. Westinghouse submitted a new environmental report in March 2019 to the NRC for its review ([ML19088A100](#)). The proposed action – 40 year license renewal – and activities have not changed. Westinghouse does not intend to construct any new buildings, however, Westinghouse will be collecting lithographic borings and installing groundwater monitoring wells as part of the site investigations. Well installation activities are short-term, cause minimal land disturbance, and once installed could be sampled several times a year. These activities are not expected to cause any effect on the listed species that could potentially be present at the site. The NRC ran an updated IPAC report in April 2019 and the species list is the same as was considered in the June 2018 EA (see attached file). Therefore, there are no new species that may be affected.

The NRC does not believe that site investigation activities change the NRC's previous determination that the proposed action **may effect, but not likely to adversely affect** the listed species. The NRC is consulting with NMFS on the sturgeon species. **The NRC staff is requesting that the FWS re-concur on the NRC's ESA determination.** If you have any comments or questions, please let me know. We would like to request your response within **30** days of this email. As mentioned above, the NRC intends to publish the Draft Revised EA for public comment.

Sincerely,

***Jessie Muir Quintero***

-----  
***Jessie Muir Quintero***

Environmental Project Manager, NMSS/FCSE/ERB

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Phone: 301.415.7476

Email: [Jessie.Quintero@NRC.gov](mailto:Jessie.Quintero@NRC.gov)

Mailstop: TWFN 4-B16  
-----