

Quintero, Jessie

From: Quintero, Jessie
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2019 6:37 AM
To: Sarah Furtak - NOAA Federal
Cc: Mark Lamb - NOAA Federal; Grange, Briana; EndangeredSpecies Resource
Subject: Notification of Publication of Draft Environmental Assessment and Comment Period related to the License Renewal of Westinghouse Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility in Richland County, SC



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

Good morning Ms. Furtak,

The purpose of this email is to notify you that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has issued a draft environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed license renewal of the Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility in Richland County, South Carolina. This email describes the proposed action, summarizes the NRC's environmental review, and explains how the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) may submit public comments on the draft EA. The draft EA is available online at: [ML19228A278](#).

During preparation of the EA, the NRC staff determined that the proposed action "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" the shortnose sturgeon. The staff sought and received the NMFS's concurrence with this determination under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), as described below.

Proposed Action

The proposed action, as requested by the licensee, is the continued operation of the facility for an additional 40 years in Hopkins, South Carolina. The facility has been operating since 1969 and fabricates low-enriched uranium fuel assemblies for commercial nuclear power reactors. The CFFF site occupies 1,151 acres in Richland County and approximately 68 acres of the property are used for facility operations and support activities.

ESA "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" Determination and Concurrence

As part of its environmental review, the NRC staff determined that the proposed Westinghouse license renewal may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the shortnose sturgeon and would have no effect on the Atlantic sturgeon. The NMFS concurred with the NRC's determination for shortnose sturgeon and concluded that the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the Atlantic sturgeon in correspondence dated [April 12, 2018](#). Since that time, the NRC staff has identified no information during its review that would necessitate the NRC to reinitiate consultation for the proposed action.

The NRC's ESA analysis appears within the following sections of the draft EA.

- **Section 3.6.2.1** describes the ESA action area.
- **Section 3.6.2.2** describes the species.
- **Section 4.6** evaluates the potential for the proposed action to affect the seven listed species.

- **Section 6.2** describes the NRC's obligations under Section 7 of the ESA and relevant correspondence with the NMFS in connection with the NRC staff's review of the proposed action.

Additionally, the NRC prepared a [biological evaluation](#) in connection to the proposed action, which the NRC previously transmitted to the NMFS during the consultation.

NEPA Comment Period and Public Meeting

With respect to the NEPA process, the NRC staff is seeking general public comments on the draft EA pursuant to NEPA through November 27, 2019. You may submit NEPA comments either online or via U.S. mail.

- **Email:** WEC-CFFF-EA@nrc.gov;
- **Online:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID NRC-2015-0039; or
- **U.S. Mail:** Address comments to: Office of Administration, Mail Stop TWFN-7-A60M, ATTN: Program Management, Announcements and Editing Staff, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

Conclusion

Should you need to discuss the information in this email or any other matters related to this project, please reach out to me by phone at 301-415-7476 or email at jessie.quintero@nrc.gov. For any questions related to ESA Section 7 consultation, please reach out to the NRC's ESA Consultation Coordinator, Briana Grange, at 301-415-1042 or briana.grange@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,
Jessie Muir Quintero

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