



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200
Charleston, South Carolina 29407

October 17, 2003

Mr. Pao-Tsin Kuo
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Re: License Renewal at V.C. Summer Nuclear Station
TAC No. MB5227, Docket No. 50-395
FWS Log No. 4-6-03-I-490

Dear Mr. Kuo:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the Biological Assessment and your letter requesting our concurrence regarding the above referenced action in Fairfield, Newberry, Saluda, Aiken, Richland, and Edgefield Counties, South Carolina. We are submitting the following comments under provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

According to the information provided, the renewed operating license would allow 20 additional years of plant operation beyond the current V.C. Summer licensed operating period of 40 years. No major refurbishment or replacement of important systems, structures, or components are expected during the V.C. Summer license renewal period. In addition, no construction activities are expected to be associated with the license renewal.

A threatened and endangered species survey was conducted on the V.C. Summer site and associated transmission corridors in late spring and summer 2002 for 11 federally-listed species that may occur within the action area. Survey results concluded that only one species (bald eagle) was observed to be present within a five mile radius of the site.

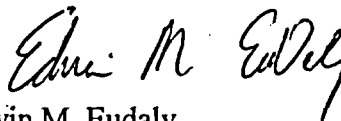
Based on our review and the information provided, the Service concurs with your determination that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect the federally-listed bald eagle. We also concur with your determination that the proposed action will have no effect on the additional federally-listed species that were identified to have potential to occur within the project area. Therefore, the requirements of Section 7 of the Act have been fulfilled relative to the proposed action, and no further consultation is necessary at this time. However, obligations under Section 7 of the Act must be reconsidered if: (1) new information reveals that the proposed project may affect listed species in a manner or to an extent not previously considered, (2) the proposed project is subsequently modified to include activities which were not considered during this consultation; or (3) new species are listed or critical habitat designated that might be affected by the proposed project.

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In accordance with provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the Service has also reviewed the subject project with regard to the effects the proposed action may have on waters of the U.S. and related fish and wildlife resources. Information provided revealed the presence of several streams within the proposed area. Erosion and sedimentation problems are likely to be exacerbated at areas where clearing removes deep-rooted vegetation. Therefore, to maintain the integrity of these aquatic resources during transmission line corridor maintenance, we recommend that at least a 25-foot buffer be left on both sides of any stream crossed or paralleled by a transmission line.

The above views and recommendations constitute the report of the Department of the Interior. If you require additional assistance, please contact Phil DeGarmo of my staff at 843-727-4707 x21.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Edwin M. Eudaly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Edwin" and last name "Eudaly" being clearly legible, and "M." as a middle initial.

Edwin M. Eudaly
Acting Field Supervisor

EME/PMD/km