

April 17, 2015

Mr. Reid Nelson, Director  
Office of Federal Agency Programs  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
401 F Street NW, Suite 308  
Washington DC 20001-2637

SUBJECT: NOTICATION OF ISSUANCE OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
STATEMENT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF THE BELL BEND  
NUCLEAR POWER PLANT COMBINED LICENSE APPLICATION

Dear Mr. Nelson:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application submitted by PPL Bell Bend, LLC, (PPL) for a combined license (COL) for construction and operation of one new nuclear power plant at its Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant (BBNPP) site near Berwick, Pennsylvania. As part of the review of the proposed action, the NRC and USACE review team has completed the draft environmental impact statement (EIS). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District (USACE) is participating as a cooperating agency on the draft EIS for the purpose of complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, (NEPA) and is the lead agency for the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 consultation process as stated in a letter from the USACE dated January 7, 2013.

As part of the environmental review of the COL application, the NRC and USACE review team prepared the enclosed draft EIS, NUREG-2179, *Environmental Impact Statement for the Combined License for the Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant*. As stated in the January 7, 2013, letter, the USACE addressed the potential impacts to archaeological and architectural resources within their permit area associated with the BBNPP site.

By letter dated January 9, 2009 (ADAMS Accession No. ML083470501), the NRC staff previously notified you that, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.8(c), the NRC is using the NEPA process to comply with the obligations imposed under Section 106 of the NHPA, in lieu of the procedures set forth in 36 CFR 800.3 through 800.6. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.8(c), the NRC staff is using the preparation of the draft EIS required by NEPA to comply with its obligations under Section 106 of the NHPA. The NRC staff also contacted Federally recognized Indian tribes to request information regarding historic, cultural, and archaeological resources potentially affected by the proposed BBNPP site project.

The NRC and USACE review team conducted an environmental audit at the BBNPP site and reviewed information for cultural resources and historic properties within both the direct and indirect areas of potential effect (APE), as documented in reports prepared by PPL. The results of the NRC staff's review, including conclusions regarding the presence of cultural resources and historic properties within the APEs and the potential effects of the COL action on historic properties, are documented in this draft EIS. Chapter 2 describes historic properties and cultural resources located within the direct and indirect APEs for the BBNPP site. Chapter 4

discusses impacts to cultural resources during pre-construction and NRC-authorized construction, and Chapter 5 discusses impacts during operation of the proposed site. Chapter 7 addresses cumulative impacts to historic properties and cultural resources in the vicinity of the BBNPP site APEs.

On February 13, 2013, the USACE received the enclosed letter (ADAMS Accession No. ML13056A020) regarding consultation on BBNPP site. The letter indicated that the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the USACE's determination of no adverse effect on cultural resources provided that avoidance measures for USACE Permit 36LU288 are included as a special condition in the USACE permit. As stated on page 2-203 of the draft EIS, the USACE plans to include a special condition related to USACE Permit 36LU288.

The NRC and USACE plan to hold two public meetings to go over the analyses and results in the draft EIS on June 4, 2015, at the Bloomsburg University, Monty's Building Upper Campus, 400 East Second Street, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania 17815. The first meeting will convene at 3:00 p.m. and will continue until 5:30 p.m., as necessary. The second meeting will convene at 7:30 p.m. and will continue until 10:00 p.m., as necessary. The meetings will be transcribed and will include: (1) a presentation of the contents of the draft EIS and (2) the opportunity for interested government agencies, organizations, and individuals to provide comments on the draft EIS. Additionally, the NRC and USACE staff will host informal discussions one hour before the start of each meeting during which members of the public may meet and talk with staff members on an informal basis. You and your staff are invited to attend.

Please provide any information or comments you feel are appropriate on the draft EIS during the comment period, which ends on July 7, 2015. Comments can be submitted: (1) by mail to the Chief, Rules, Announcements, and Directives Branch (RADB), Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mail stop: OWFN 12-H08, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001; (2) by e-mail to [BBNP.COLEIS@nrc.gov](mailto:BBNP.COLEIS@nrc.gov); or (3) in person during the public meetings.

R. Nelson

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If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff's environmental review of this COL application, please contact environmental project managers Ms. Tomeka Terry at 301-415-1488 or via e-mail at Tomeka.Terry@nrc.gov or Ms. Patricia Vokoun at 301-415-3470 or via email at Patricia.Vokoun@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Jennifer L. Dixon-Herrity, Chief  
Environmental Projects Branch  
Division of New Reactor Licensing  
Office of New Reactors

Docket No. 52-039

Cc: w/o encls: See next page

R. Nelson

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If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff's environmental review of this COL application, please contact environmental project managers Ms. Tomeka Terry at 301-415-1488 or via e-mail at [Tomeka.Terry@nrc.gov](mailto:Tomeka.Terry@nrc.gov), or Ms. Patricia Vokoun at 301-415-3470 or via email at [Patricia.Vokoun@nrc.gov](mailto:Patricia.Vokoun@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Jennifer L. Dixon-Herrity, Chief  
Environmental Projects Branch  
Division of New Reactor Licensing  
Office of New Reactors

Docket No. 52-039

cc w/o encls: See next page

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AElliott, USACE ([Amy.H.Elliott@usace.army.mil](mailto:Amy.H.Elliott@usace.army.mil))

KLeigh, ([Kimberly.leigh@pnl.gov](mailto:Kimberly.leigh@pnl.gov))

BMcDowell, PNNL([bruce.mcdowell@pnl.gov](mailto:bruce.mcdowell@pnl.gov))

TGrant, Numark, ([tgrant@numarkassoc.com](mailto:tgrant@numarkassoc.com))

**ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML15078A402**

OFFICE	NRO/DNRL/EPB: PM	NRO/DNRL/EPB: LA	NRO/DSRA/RENV:PM	NRO/DNRL/EPB: PM	OGC	NRO/DNRL/EPB: BC
NAME	PVokoun	MBrown	JCushing	TTerry	AHove	JDixon-Herrity
DATE	3/ 4 /2015	3/ 4 /2015	4/ 15 /15	4/16 /2015	4/16/2015	4/17/2015

**OFFICIAL RECORD COPY**

Bell Bend Mailing List  
cc:

Mr. David J. Allard  
Director and State Liaison Officer  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Radiation Protection  
Rachel Carson State Office Building  
400 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Mr. Ted Baird  
Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology  
1123 Drinker Turnpike  
Covington Township, PA 18444

Mr. George Blanchard, Governor  
Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma  
2025 S. Gordon Cooper Drive  
Shawnee, OK 74801

The Berwick Historical Society  
P.O. Box 301  
Berwick, PA 18603-0301

Mr. Anthony T.P. Brooks  
Director of Development  
and Public Relations  
Luzerne County Historical Society  
49 South Franklin Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701

Mr. Robert Cartica  
State of New Jersey Department of  
Environmental Protection  
The New Jersey Natural Heritage Program  
DEP- Office of Natural Lands Management  
Mail Code 501-04  
P.O. Box 420  
501 E. State Street  
Station Plaza #5, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0420

Ms. Carol R. Collier, Executive Director  
Delaware River Basin Commission  
25 State Police Drive  
P.O. Box 7360  
West Trenton, NJ 08628-0360

Mr. Eric Davis, Project Leader  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
New Jersey Field Office  
927 N. Main Street  
Heritage Square, Building D  
Pleasantville, NJ 08232

The Honorable Ed Delgado, Chairman  
Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin  
P.O. Box 365  
Oneida, WI 54155-0365

Ms. Pamela Shellenberger  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Pennsylvania Field Office  
110 Radnor Road, Suite 101  
State College, PA 16801-4850

Ms. Amy Elliott  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Baltimore District  
1631 South Atherton St., Suite 102  
State College, PA 16801

Mr. Clifford Farides  
Mill Memorial Public Library  
495 E. Main Street  
Nanticoke, PA 17101

Dr. Katherine Faull, Ph.D.  
Humanities Department  
Bucknell University  
One Dent Drive  
Lewisburg, PA 17837

The Honorable Leroy Howard, Chief  
Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma  
23701 S. 655 Road  
Grove, OK 74344-6317

Mr. Max Furek  
57 Jeanette Street  
Mocanaqua, PA 18655

Mr. Ray Ganthner, Senior Vice President  
AREVA, NP, Inc.  
3315 Old Forest Road  
P. O. Box 10935  
Lynchburg, VA 24506

Bell Bend Mailing List  
cc:

Mr. Andrew Gavin  
Director, Technical Programs  
Susquehanna River Basin Commission  
4423 N. Front Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-1788

Mr. Tony Gonyea, Faithkeeper  
Onondaga Nation  
Road 11 A, Box 245  
Nedrow, NY 13120

The Honorable Raymond Halbritter  
Nation Representative  
Oneida Nation of New York  
5218 Patrick Road  
Verona, NY 13478

Mr. Clinton Halftown, Nation Representative  
Cayuga Nation  
P.O. Box 803  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Mr. Herbert Harmon  
320 Stone Church Road  
Berwick, PA 18603

The Honorable Paul O. Thompson, Chief  
St. Regis Mohawk Tribe  
412 State Route 37  
Hogansburg, NY 13655

Mr. Chuck Henry  
1051 Scotch Valley Drive  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

The Honorable Leo R. Henry, Chief  
Tuscarora Nation  
2006 Mt. Hope Road  
Lewistown, NY 14092

Mr. Leroy Hess  
124 Hess Road  
Wapwallopen, PA 18660

The Honorable Roger Hill, Chief  
Tonawanda Seneca Nation  
7027 Meadville Road  
Basom, NY 14013

Mr. Rich Janati, M.S., Chief  
Division of Nuclear Safety Administrator  
Appalachian Compact Commission  
Rachel Carson State Office Building  
400 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Ms. Karen J. Karchner  
Building Code Official - No. 000624  
Zoning/Planning Administrator  
Floodplain Administrator  
Salem Township  
38 Bomboy Lane  
Berwick, PA 18603

Ms. Patricia A. Kurkul  
Northeast Regional Administrator  
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service  
Northeast Regional Office  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

Mr. James R. Leigey  
Pennsylvania Game Commission  
2001 Elmerton Avenue  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797

Ms. Emily McBracken  
494 Mingle Inn Road  
Berwick, PA 18603

Mr. Douglas C. McLearen, Chief  
Division of Archaeology and Protection  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Pennsylvania Historical  
and Museum Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Mr. Adrian Merolli, Director  
Luzerne County Planning Commission  
Penn Place  
20 N. Pennsylvania Avenue  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711

Bell Bend Mailing List  
cc:

Mr. Wallace A. Miller, Acting Chief  
Stockbridge-Munsee Community of  
Wisconsin  
N8476 Mo He Con Nuck Road  
Bowler, WI 54416

Mr. Reid Nelson, Director  
Office of Federal Agency Programs  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
401 F Street NW, Suite 308  
Washington, DC 20004

Mr. Justin Newell  
Bureau of Forestry  
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation  
and Natural Resources  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor Rachel Carson State Office Bldg  
P.O. Box 8552  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552

Ms. Lisette Ormsbee  
McBride Memorial Library  
500 N. Market Street  
Berwick, PA 18603

Mr. Malcom S. Plevyak  
1446 Salem Boulevard  
Berwick, PA 18603

The Honorable Ron Sparkman, Chief  
Shawnee Tribe  
29 South Highway 69A  
Miami, OK 74355

Mr. Barry E. Snyder Sr., President  
Seneca Nation of Indians  
P.O. Box 231  
Salamanca, NY 14779

Mr. Chris Urban  
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission  
450 Robinson Lane  
Bellefonte, PA 16823

The Honorable Glenna J. Wallace, Chief  
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma  
P.O. Box 350  
Seneca, MO 64865

Ms. Karen Walsh  
614 N. Front Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Mr. Clifford Peacock, President  
Delaware Nation  
P.O. Box 825  
Anadarko, OK 73005

Mr. Jack Wirbicki  
212 Deer Run Drive  
Mountaintop, PA 18707

Bell Bend Mailing List

cc:

Email:

djallard@pa.gov (Dave Allard)  
pballaron@srbc.net (Paula Ballaron)  
sbeeler@pa.gov (Shawn Beeler)  
hbiggs@pa.gov (Heidi Biggs)  
bob.brown@ge.com (Robert E. Brown)  
bbusher@pa.gov (Brian Busher)  
kcarey960@gmail.com (Kyle Carey)  
mjcaverly@pplweb.com (Mike Caverly)  
davis.jamie@epamail.epa.gov (Jamie Davis)  
psychndesign@verison.net (Barbara DeRonde)  
derddafdl@verizon.net (Robert DeRonde)  
wilburdennisjr@hotmail.com (Wilbur Dennis, Jr.)  
Amy.H.Elliott@usace.army.mil (Amy Elliott)  
lechambon@comcast.net (Eric Epstein)  
greshaja@westinghouse.com (James Gresham)  
chebrink@localnet.com (Rev. Chad A. Hebrink)  
wholtsmast@pa.gov (Walter Holtsmaster)  
ecology3@gmail.com (Ted Jacobsen)  
rjanati@pa.gov (Rich Janati)  
vincekelly@gmail.com (Vince Kelly)  
knutson.lingard@epa.gov (Lingard Knutson)  
tolewis@pa.gov (Tonda Lewis)  
clombard@pa.metrocast.net (Cynthia Lombard)  
Magerr.Kevin@epamail.epa.gov (Kevin Magerr)  
steve\_mars@fws.gov (Steve Mars)  
smcdougal@pa.gov (Steve McDougal)  
kaysm@verizon.net (Catherin Stuccio Mentrinkoski)  
smonatesti@verizonl.net (Sabatini Monatesti)  
omowery@pa.gov (Olivia Mowery)  
pnaugle@srbc.net (Pat Naugle)  
rmpaley@pplweb.com (Robert M. Paley)  
ajlaquin@verizon.net (Patricia Perlake)  
kpetock@curtisswright.com (Kelly Petock)  
TomPopko@hotmail.com (Tom Popko)  
ruppert125@aol.com (Greg Ruppert)  
eschloyer@yahoo.com (Erin Schloyer)  
signs@bellessigns.com (Ryan Search)  
rrsgarro@pplweb.com (Rocco R. Sgarro)  
tshervinsk@pa.gov (Tom Shervinsk)  
Jennifer\_Siani@fws.gov (Jennifer Siani)  
dsimpson@bloomu.edu (David Simpson)  
nate@nathansnavely.com (Nate Snaveley)  
dasuper@verizon.net (Dave Superdock)  
RKTemple@cpsenergy.com (R.K. Temple)  
Doug.Tifft@nrc.gov (Doug Tifft)  
etrowbridg@pa.gov (Gene Trowbridge)  
kevwhite@pa.gov (Kevin White)  
lwinker@pa.gov (Larry Winker)  
Lora\_Zimmerman@fws.gov (Lora Zimmerman)