

NRR-PMDAPEm Resource

From: Julie Crocker - NOAA Federal <julie.crocker@noaa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2016 4:25 PM
To: Gray, Dara F
Cc: Logan, Dennis; EndangeredSpecies Resource
Subject: [External_Sender] Following Up
Attachments: Letter Dated 1-8-16.pdf

Hi Dara -

I am following up on our letter to you dated January 8, 2016. While we realize that letter did not set a date for Entergy to provide a response, we expected we would have heard from you by now. Please advise if we should expect something soon or if we should set up a conference call to discuss. I have attached a copy of the January letter here for your reference.

Thanks,

Julie

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Julie Crocker
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National Marine Fisheries Service
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From: Julie Crocker - NOAA Federal

Created By: julie.crocker@noaa.gov

Recipients:

"Logan, Dennis" <Dennis.Logan@nrc.gov>

Tracking Status: None

"EndangeredSpecies Resource" <EndangeredSpecies.Resource@nrc.gov>

Tracking Status: None

"Gray, Dara F" <dgray@entergy.com>

Tracking Status: None

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Options

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL FISHERIES OFFICE
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

Dara Gray
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
Indian Point Energy Center
450 Broadway, Suite 1
Buchanan, New York 10511

JAN - 8 2016

Dear Ms. Gray,

We have been working with you since December 2013 to develop a monitoring plan as required by the Reasonable and Prudent Measures (RPMs) and Terms and Conditions of the January 30, 2013, Biological Opinion issued by us to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regarding the continued operations of Indian Point Units 2 and 3, pursuant to existing licenses and proposed extended operating licenses. As indicated in an April 2015 letter, we agree in principal to the proposed monitoring plan. We are prepared to approve the monitoring plan with the revisions noted in this letter. Once you submit a revised plan that contains these modifications, we expect to approve it within 30 days. During that time, we will also issue an amendment to the January 30, 2013 Opinion to modify the requirement for monitoring the IP1 forebay and trash racks given the deteriorated condition of the trash racks and modifications to the genetic sampling requirement (see below). We will also need to receive an updated schedule for implementation of the monitoring plan before we issue our approval.

Trash Rack Monitoring

You will conduct a feasibility study and then a pilot study using remote imaging (sonar) to monitor for impinged sturgeon at the IP2 and IP3 trash racks. Acceptable results means that the sonar set up is capable of monitoring the trash racks in compliance with the ITS. We are still conducting research necessary to respond to your request for guidance on the species and size of fish to use for the quarter 4 feasibility study (i.e., securing fish to the rack to test the sonar), we anticipate providing you this information no later than February 1, 2016. Your plan for the feasibility study indicates you will provide us a report at the end of the study; while we agree a formal written report is only necessary at the end of the pilot study, the plan must be modified to provide us with a written update (via email) within 30 days of the conclusion of each of the four study quarters. This report must summarize the activities carried out during the preceding quarter as well as any findings related to the success, failure, or limitations of the equipment tested. In the event that sonar technology does not allow for monitoring that complies with the requirements of the terms and conditions of the Incidental Take Statement, you will need to develop an alternate proposal for our approval. At the end of the feasibility study, you will need to submit a plan for the pilot study. Following the pilot study, you will need to submit a plan for monitoring of the trash racks through the duration of the operating licenses. The monitoring plan needs to be revised to incorporate submittal of these reports to us.



Forebay Studies

You will use sonar technologies to monitor the forebays. In the event that sonar technology does not allow for monitoring that complies with the requirements of the terms and conditions of the Incidental Take Statement, you will need to develop an alternate proposal for our approval. The monitoring plan needs to be revised to include procedures and a schedule for developing an alternate proposal if the sonar technology does not meet the requirements of the ITS.

Ristroph Traveling Screens

You will install sampling nets to filter the screen wash contents from all operating traveling screens at IP1, IP2 and IP3 with the fish sluice and debris sluice at each unit being sampled. Sampling will occur for three 24-hour sampling days per week. Field crews of three will continuously monitor the collection nets during the 24-hour sampling day. Sturgeon will be removed from the nets as quickly as possible from the net. Live sturgeon will be placed in a 150-gallon holding tank for processing with flow-through river water and after processing, released into the river. Dead sturgeon will be processed and retained for necropsy. We request that a second 150-gallon tank be available for holding of any sturgeon that are injured or are otherwise in poor condition so that these fish can be observed for the remainder of the 24-hour sampling period. At the end of the 24-hour period, live fish should be returned to the river, while any fish that died should be retained for necropsy. The monitoring plan must be revised to include this procedure for holding sturgeon that are injured or otherwise in poor condition and include a protocol for determining which sturgeon need to be retained.

We understand you are proposing to carry out the sluice net sampling for one year and then hope to use the results to carry out sampling on a reduced schedule. As noted in previous correspondence, any changes to the monitoring protocol must be approved by us in advance.

As noted in previous correspondence, we remain concerned about the potential for crowding in the sluice nets to result in stress, injury or mortality to non-sturgeon species. Because sturgeon will be removed from the nets as quickly as possible, we expect the sluice nets to result in little opportunity for stress, injury or mortality of sturgeon.

Despite our previous requests, you are not proposing to record any information on non-sturgeon. This information is important for two reasons: (1) as a supplement to information collected on sturgeon, and (2) to ensure that the proposed sampling methodology has no unacceptable negative impacts on other species.

As noted in previous correspondence, valuable insights on the effects of IP operations on the ecosystems sturgeon occupy and the success of the traveling screens and fish return system can be gained by recording information on all fish collected during impingement monitoring. Such information would be particularly valuable as no impingement monitoring has occurred since the current screening system became fully operational. Information on the number and condition of other species collected during impingement sampling may be useful in understanding more about the impingement of shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon (e.g., size of fish vulnerable to impingement, condition of fish, peak seasons or flow conditions that may require more or less intense monitoring, etc.).

By not recording information on other species, there is no way to determine if the sampling methodology is having a negative impact on other species. While we find the sluice net methodology in compliance with the requirements of the ITS, if it causes negative impacts on other species, we would request the methodology be terminated and an alternate sampling methodology be developed to ensure the protection of other NOAA trust resources. We believe the methodology proposed by you in an earlier version of the monitoring plan, involving diversion of sluice flow to large holding tanks, would minimize impacts to non-sturgeon species (however, with inspection and removal of fish once an hour, not once every 24 hours). We believe that methodology would be better suited for longterm (i.e., duration of more than one year) monitoring of both sturgeon and non-sturgeon species.

We have repeatedly encouraged you to consider recording at least basic data on the other species that are being collected including the number and condition of these fish. While we believe that the best solution would be for you to record species and condition of all fish captured during all days and hours of impingement sampling, we recognize the additional costs and resources, including deployment of additional biologists, which this may entail. As such, for the purposes of obtaining additional information relevant to listed sturgeon, we would be satisfied with you recording information on non-sturgeon species for a subset of the total sampling time (e.g., one 24-hour period per week or 8-hours per sampling day, distributed between daylight and nighttime sampling). Please do not consider this our position on whether such a sampling plan would be sufficient for obtaining information for other purposes; however, our approval of the monitoring plan is dependent on at least some level of monitoring and recording of data on non-sturgeon species.

Sturgeon Handling (alive and dead)

Your proposal for handling and tagging live sturgeon is acceptable. Please note the changes to the genetic sampling requirement noted below. Your proposal for handling dead sturgeon is acceptable. We expect that any necropsies will need to be carried out as soon as possible, and it may be preferable to keep the fish in cold storage, but not frozen. You must secure a laboratory that is qualified to carry out necropsy and obtain information from them on proper handling and storage of dead fish.

Genetic Samples

The sturgeon genetic archive was recently moved from the NOAA lab in Charleston to Dr. Tim King's lab with the U.S. Geological Survey. Transfer of samples must occur once 10 samples are accumulated or every six months, whichever occurs first. The plan must be revised to require this change to the frequency of transfer of samples.

Ancillary Data (temperature, water velocity, plant operating data)

Your proposal for capturing and reporting temperature, water velocity and plant operating data is acceptable. We look forward to reviewing the results of the Computational Fluid Dynamics results.

Reporting

The 24-hour take reports should be provided via email to incidental.take@noaa.gov. Any necropsy reports should be provided to us within 15 days of being sent to you and not wait until

the annual report. A sturgeon salvage form does not need to be completed when samples, parts or whole fish are being handled or tested as required by the ITS. The salvage form is required if parts or whole fish are being handled, tested or sampled in a manner outside the scope of the ITS (e.g., some researchers are interested in obtaining spines for aging studies); however, parts or fish can not be transferred or disposed of without coordinating with us in advance. The monitoring plan must be modified to reflect this.

Other Comments

On page 16 of the plan, you state “genetic sampling, in connection with tagging, effects on sturgeon may confound subsequent movement and survival, and must be accounted for in subsequent assessment.” We are not aware of any information to indicate that removal of a 1cm² section of pelvic fin for genetic sample or the insertion of PIT tags has any negative impact on movement or survival of sturgeon. If you have information to the contrary, please provide it to us.

As noted above, we are working on revised Reasonable and Prudent Measures and Terms and Conditions which reflect the July 2015 draft monitoring plan, the modifications outlined in this letter and changes to the genetic sampling requirements. We plan to issue the amendment to the January 2013 Opinion within 45 days of receiving your updated implementation schedule. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Julie Crocker of my staff (978-282-8480 or Julie.Crocker@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,



Kimberly B. Damon-Randall
Assistant Regional Administrator
for Protected Resources

EC: Crocker, Dow -F/GAR3
Williams – GCNE
Nieder – NYDEC
Grange, Logan, Moser – NRC

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