

## APPENDIX C

### SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES CORRESPONDENCE

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Page</u>
Hutton, PECO Nuclear, to Mantzaris, NMFS	<a href="#">E.C-2</a>
Kurkul, NMFS, to Hutton, PECO Nuclear	<a href="#">E.C-6</a>
Hutton, PECO Nuclear, to McCarthy, USFWS	<a href="#">E.C-7</a>
Densmore, USFWS, to Hutton, PECO Nuclear	<a href="#">E.C-11</a>
Hutton, PECO Nuclear, to Camus, PA Game Commission	<a href="#">E.C-15</a>
Camus, PA Game Commission, to Hutton, PECO Nuclear	<a href="#">E.C-19</a>
Hutton, PECO Nuclear, to Byrne, MD Wildlife & Heritage Commission	<a href="#">E.C-20</a>
Byrne, MD Wildlife & Heritage Commission to Hutton, PECO Nuclear	<a href="#">E.C-23</a>



**PECO NUCLEAR**

A Unit of PECO Energy

PECO Energy Company  
965 Chesterbrook Boulevard  
Wayne, PA 19087-5691

June 22, 2000

Mr. Christopher Mantzaris  
Asst. Regional Administrator for Protected Resources  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Northeast Regional Office  
One Blackburn Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

SUBJECT: Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, Units 2 and 3  
Request for Information on Threatened or Endangered Species

Dear Mr. Mantzaris:

PECO Energy Company (PECO Energy) is preparing an application to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to renew the operating licenses for Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station (PBAPS). Current operating licenses for the two-unit plant expire in 2013 and 2014. The renewal term would be for an additional 20 years beyond the original license expiration date. As part of the license renewal process, the NRC requires license applicants to "assess the impact of the proposed action on threatened or endangered species in accordance with the Endangered Species Act" (10 CFR 51.53). The NRC will request an informal consultation with your office at a later date under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. By contacting you early in the application process, we hope to identify any issues that we need to address or any information that we should provide to your office to expedite the NRC consultation.

PECO Energy has operated PBAPS and an associated transmission line since 1974. The facility is located on the west bank of Conowingo Pond in York County, Peach Bottom Township, approximately 3 miles north of the Pennsylvania-Maryland line (see attached map). Conowingo Pond, created in 1928 by impounding a portion of the lower Susquehanna River for a hydroelectric generating facility, is approximately 14 square miles (9,000 acres) in surface area and ranges from 0.5 to 1.5 miles wide. The Conowingo Dam lies about 9 miles downstream from Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station and about 10 miles upstream of the mouth of the Susquehanna River (the Chesapeake Bay).

Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station, a two-unit nuclear plant with a total rated output of 2,160 MWe (mega-watts electrical), uses a once-through cooling water system that withdraws from and discharges to Conowingo Pond. Five mechanical draft ("helper") cooling towers were built on berms adjacent to the discharge canal to supply additional cooling capacity in summer months, but in recent years these cooling towers have not been used.

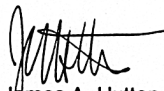
Request for Information on Threatened or Endangered Species  
June 22, 2000  
Page 2

In recent years, anadromous fish have become more abundant up- and downstream of Conowingo Dam. The American shad, in particular, has responded to a restoration program that includes stocking young shad in the Susquehanna River and passing spawning shad upstream by means of fishways at Conowingo Dam, Holtwood Dam, and Safe Harbor Dam. In more than 30 years of monitoring fish populations of Conowingo Pond, PECO Energy and its contractors have never collected a fish species listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as threatened or endangered. One candidate species, the Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*) has been captured by anglers in the lower Susquehanna River below the Conowingo Dam in Maryland, but apparently has not been collected upstream of the Dam in Pennsylvania. In addition, no candidates of Shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) have been captured.

PECO Energy is committed to the conservation of significant natural habitats and protected species, and expects that operation of PBAPS through the license renewal period (an additional 20 years) would not adversely affect any listed aquatic species. PECO Energy has no plans to alter current operations over the license renewal period. Any normal maintenance activities during the license renewal term would be limited to previously disturbed areas. No expansion of existing facilities is planned, and no additional land disturbance outside of the established industrial area is anticipated in support of license renewal. We, therefore, request your concurrence with our determination that license renewal would have no effect on listed or proposed endangered or threatened species and that formal consultation is not necessary.

Please do not hesitate to call Robert Matty at (610) 640-6353 if you have any questions or require any additional information. After your review, we would appreciate receiving your input by December 1, 2000, detailing any concerns you may have about any listed species or critical habitat in the area or confirming PECO Energy's conclusion that operation of PBAPS over the license renewal term would have no effect on any threatened or endangered species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service. This will enable us to meet our application preparation schedule. PECO Energy will include a copy of this letter and your response in the Environmental Report that will be submitted to the NRC as part of the PBAPS license renewal application.

Sincerely,



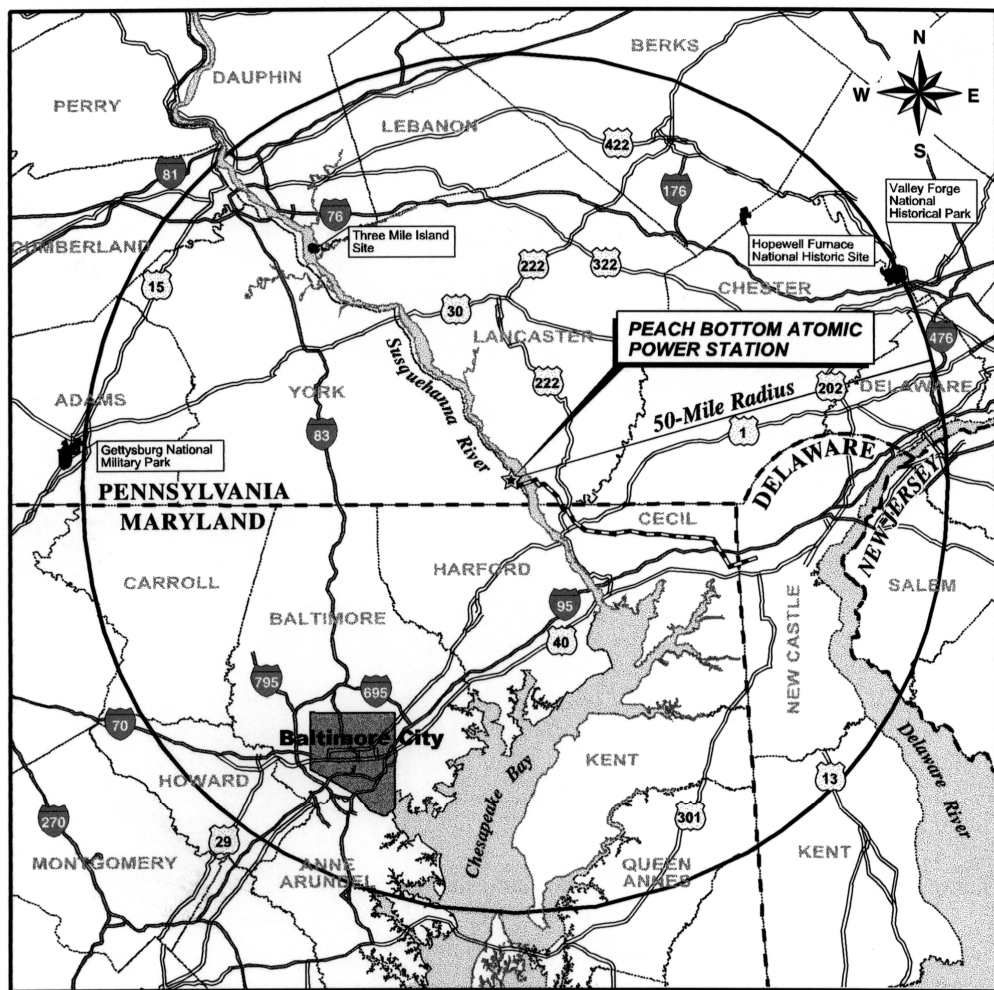
James A. Hutton  
Director - Licensing

Enc: Map of PBAPS and vicinity

cc: R. St. Pierre, USFWS  
M. McCarthy, USFWS  
F. Polaski, PECO Energy  
W. Maher, PECO Energy  
K. Patterson, TTNUS  
H. J. Miller, Administrator, Region I, USNRC  
A. C. McMurtry, USNRC Senior Resident Inspector, PBAPS

Request for Information on Threatened or Endangered Species  
June 22, 2000  
Page 3

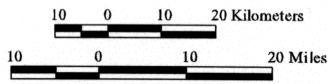
bcc: Manager, Financial Controls and Co-Owner Affairs,  
Public Service Electric & Gas  
R. I. McLean, State of Maryland  
A. F. Kirby, III, Delmarva Power & Light Company  
R. R. Janati, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
G. R. Rainey - 63C-3  
C. P. Lewis - 63C-3  
J. J. Hagan - 62C-3  
J. W. Langenbach - 62C-3  
J. Doering - PB, SMB4-9  
G. L. Johnston - PB, A4-1S  
P. J. Davison - PB, SMB3-2A  
J. P. Grimes - 63B-1  
R. W. Boyce - 63C-3  
R. A. Kankus - 63C-2  
A. A. Winter - PB, A4-5S  
J. G. Hufnagel/TRL - 62A-1  
PBAPS ISEG - PB, SMB4-6  
Commitment Coordinator - 62A-1  
Correspondence Control Desk - 61B-5  
DAC - 61B-5



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**LEGEND**

- ★ Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station
- Transmission Line



**FIGURE 2. Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station 50-Mile Vicinity Map.**



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
NORTHEAST REGION  
One Blackburn Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930

Mr. James A. Hutton  
Director, Licensing  
PECO Nuclear  
PECO Energy Company  
965 Chesterbrook Boulevard  
Wayne, PA 19087-5691

Dear Mr. Hutton:

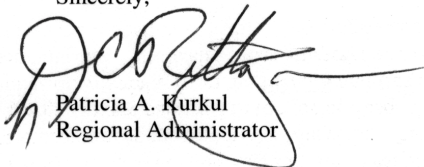
This responds to your inquiry received June 29, 2000, requesting information on the presence of any federally listed threatened or endangered species and/or designated critical habitat for listed species in the vicinity of the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station (PBAPS) on Conowingo Pond on the Susquehanna River, York County, Pennsylvania. The PBAPS, a two-unit nuclear plant with a total rated output of 2,160 mega-watts electrical, uses a once-through cooling water system that withdraws from and discharges to Conowingo Pond. The current operating licenses for the PBAPS expire in 2013 and 2014 and the renewal term would be for an additional 20 years. There are no plans to alter current operations over the license renewal period and no expansion of the existing facilities is planned.

Endangered shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) have been documented in the Chesapeake Bay and in the lower Susquehanna River. During a reward program conducted in the Maryland waters of the Chesapeake Bay from 1996 to 1998, two shortnose sturgeon were captured in the lower Susquehanna River. The Conowingo Dam lies approximately 9 miles downstream from the PBAPS and this dam has been equipped with fishways to pass migrating American shad. While shortnose sturgeon have difficulty using fishways, there is a possibility that sturgeon can migrate upstream of the Conowingo Dam. However, no sturgeon have been captured above the Conowingo Dam to date.

Due to the limited documentation of shortnose sturgeon in the lower Susquehanna River, the presence of the Conowingo Dam and resulting impediment to shortnose sturgeon migration, and the lack of any incidental capture of shortnose sturgeon above the dam, the operating license renewal of the PBAPS on Conowingo Pond is likely to have no effect on endangered shortnose sturgeon. No further consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, is required by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Federal action agency responsible for Section 7 consultation. Should project plans change or new information become available that changes the basis for this determination, consultation should be reinitiated.

Should you have any questions about these comments, please contact Carrie McDaniel at (978) 281-9388.

Sincerely,



Patricia A. Kurkul  
Regional Administrator

File Code: 1514-05 (A), NRC General

