ORIGINAL PF12-9

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission



established 1866

Division of Environmental Services Natural Diversity Section 450 Robinson Lane

Bellefonte, PA 16823-9620 (814) 359-5237 Fax: (814) 359-5175

October 4, 2012

SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION

2017 OCT 1 1 A 8: 9

RECERAL ENERGY

RECULATION COLLAPSE

IN REPLY REFER TO SIR# 38723

KIMBERLY D. BOSE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION 888 FIRST STREET, NE, ROOM 1A WASHINGTON, DC 20426

RE: Species Impact Review (SIR) - Rare, Candidate, Threatened and Endangered Species

PNDI Search No. LARGE PROJECT REVIEW

CONSTITUTION PIPELINE PROJECT

MULTIPLE MUNICIPALTIES Township/Borough, SUSQUEHANNA County,

Pennsylvania

Dear MS. BOSE:

I have reviewed the map accompanying your recent correspondence, which concerns the above-referenced project. Based on records maintained in the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) database and Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) files, the timber rattlesnake (Crotalus horridus, PA candidate) is known from the vicinity of the proposed project site. Timber rattlesnakes occur in the forested, mountainous regions of the Commonwealth. They prefer forested areas to forage for small mammals (e.g., mice and chipmunks) and southerly-facing slopes for hibernating and other thermoregulatory activities. The timber rattlesnake is threatened by habitat loss/alteration, wanton killing, and poaching.

Given the proximity of the project to known critical timber rattlesnake habitat, we request that a timber rattlesnake habitat assessment be conducted in the project area, in the project segment skirting Taylor Hill (NE of Susquehanna) between Canawacta Creek and Starucca Creek, by a PFBC recognized/qualified timber rattlesnake surveyor. We have included the list of PFBC recognized/qualified surveyors and habitat assessment protocol for your convenience. Upon completion of the habitat survey, the qualified rattlesnake biologist is to submit a report to this office (Natural Diversity Section) for review and comment. The habitat survey report should include color photographs of the project area (keyed to a site map or diagram) and a description of habitats occurring within the immediate area to be developed (including access roads), as well as the surrounding area. Potential timber rattlesnake critical habitat (denning/gestating areas) should be photographed and mapped accordingly. In addition, the report should also include detailed project plans and maps with a description of the proposed work (including access roads), project impacts and alternatives. Pending the review of this information, a survey targeting the presence of the timber rattlesnake in the project area and/or other project modifications may be requested.

In any future correspondence with us regarding this specific project, please contact Kathy Gipe at

814-359-5186 and refer to the SIR number above. Thank you for your cooperation and attention to this matter of timber rattlesnake conservation.

Simberely, the C. We

Christopher A. Urban, Chief Natural Diversity Section

CAU/KDG/kn

Enclosures (2)

PENNSYLVANIA FISH & BOAT COMMISSION

Division of Environmental Services
Natural Diversity Section
450 Robinson Lane
Bellefonte, PA 16823-9620

QUALIFIED TIMBER RATTLESNAKE SURVEYORS

The following list includes persons known to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission whom possess skills and have experience in properly searching for and finding timber rattlesnakes (Crotalus horridus) and in identifying their critical habitat. This information is not to be construed as an endorsement of individuals or firms by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission or any of its employees. Persons not on this list but who have documented experience in conducting scientific studies of, or successful searches for, timber rattlesnakes and their critical habitat may submit their qualifications to the Natural Diversity Section for review and possible inclusion as a recognized biologist/surveyor. Each person added to or deleted from this list shall be at the sole discretion of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. This list is subject to revision at any time without prior notice. Any individuals handling, collecting, or otherwise removing timber rattlesnakes from their natural habitat, even if on a temporary basis for relocation, must first obtain a Scientific Collector's Permit from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. All permitted collector's encounters with timber rattlesnakes must be reported in writing to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Natural Diversity Section.

Stan Boder

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PENNSYLVANIA FISH & BOAT COMMISSION

Division of Environmental Services--Natural Diversity Section 450 Robinson Lane Bellefonte, PA 16823-9620

Timber Rattlesnake Habitat Assessment Form (revised 02/11/10)

,				IR#
Project Type/Description:				
Project Size* (acreage): _				
Applicant/Landowner Nar	ne:			
County:				
* Attach a copy of topogra				
Assessment Site Informat	tion [Areas within	and at least 300 feet arou	nd the entire project as	rea need to be assessed.]
Site ID**:				
Latitude:	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	N Longitude:		W
Map Datum Used:				
Assessment Size** (acrea			•	
** The surveyor should u assessment forms should form for separate habits	l be used to accur at areas within th	rately describe and evalu e project boundaries. Ea	iate large contiguous ich separate area ass	s areas by utilizing a sepa
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regetative Composition:	·	
% Tree Canopy Cover	_	
Dominant species present in and surroundi	ng the described habitat:	
Trees:		
observations)? If so, what species and how many	ds, scat, "forms") observed on-site (include timber rattles?	nake
	•	
	al habitat? Yes□ or No□	
INVESTIGATOR'S OPINION In your opinion, is there timber rattlesnake critic	al habitat? Yes or No cours in this area? See below.	
INVESTIGATOR'S OPINION In your opinion, is there timber rattlesnake critics of Yes, what timber rattlesnake critical habitat of Hibernaculum/Den Yes or No Gestation/Birthing Yes or No Control of No	al habitat? Yes or No cours in this area? See below.	

- (1) Timber rattlesnake habitat assessment form.
- (2) A project narrative/description, exact project location, equipment to be used in earth moving activities
- (3) Color photographs of surveyed area showing: general panorama, rocky areas, and specimens observed.
- (4) Site sketch showing the location and direction of photos taken.
- (5) Topographic map showing location of area surveyed, the identified potential habitat delineated, the proposed project and associated boundaries.

Please mail these items to:

Natural Diversity Section PA Fish & Boat Commission 450 Robinson Lane Rellefonte PA 16823