



United States Department of the Interior

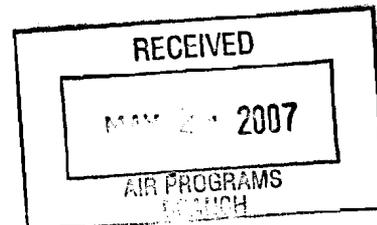
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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IN REPLY REFER
TO:

FWS/RIFO

May 17, 2007



Ms. Pamela Blakley
Chief Air Permits Section
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3590

Dear Ms. Blakley:

This responds to your April 17, 2007 letter with biological evaluation for the Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) permit related to the proposed expansion project at the Continental Tire facility in Mount Vernon, Illinois. You requested our concurrence on your affects determination in the letter pursuant to Section 7 of Endangered Species Act. We have reviewed the information provided in your letter, biological evaluation, technical materials, and have coordinated with your staff. We concur with your findings that approval of this PSD permit will not likely adversely affect the federally listed species in the action area as defined in the biological evaluation.

The technical materials included a variety of analyses that we used to support our concurrence. The analyses included the results of air modeling and contaminant deposition over a period of 100 years. We have not reviewed the air model methods or results and depend on your agency and the state agency for this technical review and approval. The analyses included a comparison of the predicted maximum concentrations of lead and the hazardous air pollutants of concern in the action area media to ecological toxicity reference values published in the scientific literature.

Based on these analyses, we conclude that local fauna, including federally listed species, will be exposed to contaminants from the proposed future emissions at this facility. However, this exposure we believe, based on the best available information, will not elicit a detectable negative response from the listed species. In addition, the increment of change anticipated over the next 100 years when added to the baseline condition is not likely to negatively affect the survival or reproduction of any federally listed species within the action area.

Ms. Pamela Blakley

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An analysis of the cumulative effects from emissions at this facility combined with emissions at other facilities outside of the action area is beyond the scope of this Section 7 review and thus, was not evaluated. An analysis of the ecological effects from this facility's gaseous emissions into the atmosphere is beyond the scope of this Section 7 review and thus, was not evaluated.

This precludes the need for further action on this project as required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Should the project be modified or new information indicate endangered species may be affected, consultation should be initiated. This letter provides comments under the authority of and in accordance with provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*)

Thank you for the opportunity to coordinate with you on this matter. Please feel free to call me at extension 201 or Mike Coffey of my staff at extension 206 if you have any questions or wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard C. Nelson", written over a white background.

Richard C. Nelson
Field Supervisor