

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 2170--Alaska
Cooper Lake Project
Chugach Electric Association, Inc.

RECEIVED
MAR 10 2003
CHUGACH ELECTRIC
CLPP Relicensing Project

Ms. Ann G. Rappoport
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Anchorage
605 West 4th Avenue, Room 61
Anchorage, AK 99501-2249

MAR 04 2003

Subject: Final Report on PCB Sampling at the Cooper Lake Project

Dear Ms. Rappoport:

This is in response to your letter filed on January 22, 2003, regarding the Final Report for the Sediment, Fish and Food Web Sampling Project at the Cooper Lake Hydroelectric Project. This report was filed by Chugach Electric Association, Inc. (CEA) on April 1, 2002, pursuant to "Order Modifying Kenai Lake Sampling Plan" issued February 1, 2001. Your agency's comments on the Kenai Lake PCB sampling plan were addressed in this order and in the "Order Granting Intervention and Denying Rehearing" issued March 29, 2001. Our letter dated June 13, 2002, concluded that the sampling report satisfied the requirements of the February 1, 2001 order and that no further PCB sampling is required pursuant to paragraph (A)(3) of this order.

In your January 22 letter you state that your June 18, 2002 letter, commenting on the PCB final report is not in FERRIS. This letter was filed with the Commission on June 25, 2002, and may be found in FERRIS. Therefore, we did not receive this letter until after we had completed our review of the final PCB sampling report filed April 1, 2002.

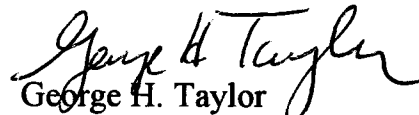
You express concern about the interpretation of data in the final PCB report and that your analysis of the data suggests that there might be a health risk to fish-feeding animals that consume lake trout from Kenai Lake contaminated with PCBs that in part came from the Cooper Lake Project. You state that PCB contamination of Kenai Lake sediments and fish is an ongoing effect of the Cooper Lake Project and should be investigated and mitigated as part of the relicensing process. Further, you request that the Commission rescind the June 13, 2002 letter and recommend that CEA develop a PCB sampling plan consistent with your and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's study requests.

As you may be aware the PCB cleanup of the Cooper Lake Project powerhouse has been completed and the project has resumed operation. This cleanup was conducted pursuant to "Powerhouse PCB Decontamination Plan" approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by letter dated August 9, 2000, and the "Order Modifying Contaminants Control Plan" issued April 18, 2000. During the cleanup process CEA filed weekly reports with the Commission and provided copies to the resource agencies.

We see no reason to rescind our June 13, 2002 letter; as stated above the final PCB report satisfied the requirements of the various Commission orders on this issue. Further, it is unlikely that the Cooper Lake Project powerhouse is a continuing source of PCB contamination to Kenai Lake sediments and fish. The relicensing process for the Cooper Lake Project will provide ample opportunity for resource agency input to include study requests, and any data or information you may have on issues of concern including resolutions would facilitate this process. The relicensing application for the Cooper Lake Project will be processed by the Commission's Office of Energy Projects, Division of Environmental and Engineering Review.

Thank you for your continued interest in the Cooper Lake Project. If you have questions pertaining to this letter, please contact John K. Novak at (202) 502-6076.

Sincerely,



George H. Taylor
Chief, Biological Resources Branch
Division of Hydropower Administration
and Compliance

cc:

Mr. Thomas Lovus
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