Karen/Yvonne

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Fish and Wildlife Enhancement
Columbia Field Office
608 East Cherry Street
Columbia, Missouri 65201

IN REPLY REFER TO:

FWS/AES-CMFO

JUL 29 1996

Jerry S. Van Fossen
Department of Energy
Oak Ridge Operations
Weldon Spring Site
7295 Highway 94 South
St. Charles, Missouri 63304

Dear Mr. Van Fossen:

This responds to your correspondence of July 18, 1996, concerning a removal action of radiologically contaminated sediment from a small stream basin that originates in the vicinity of the Weldon Spring chemical plant area. The Department of Energy has evaluated the effects of the removal action to federally-listed threatened or endangered species from previous species lists provided from our office. It was concluded that the proposed Weldon Spring site remedial action project for the Southeast Drainage is not likely to affect federally-listed threatened or endangered species that could occur in the project site.

Federally-listed threatened or endangered species which potentially could be affected by the project are the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), and pallid sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*). No designated critical habitat occurs in the project area.

The Service has recently revised the list of candidate species declaring only the former "Category 1" species as actual candidates for listing. Candidate species are taxa for which the Service has sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposals to list them as an endangered or threatened species. The sturgeon chub (*Macrhybopsis gelida*) and sicklefin chub (*M. meeki*), Federal candidate species, may also be affected by the project. Candidate species have no protection under the Endangered Species Act, but their possible occurrence is indicated for planning purposes.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurs that the project as described is not likely to adversely affect federally-listed threatened or endangered species. This concludes the informal consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543), as amended. Should additional information indicate that these or other federally-listed species may be affected, however, or should the project proposal be modified, we recommend that you reinitiate coordination with this office.

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We appreciate the opportunity to review the proposed project and effect determination. Should you have questions concerning this response, or if we can be of any further assistance, please contact Ms. Colette Charbonneau at the address above, or by telephone at (573)876-1911 ext. 108.

Sincerely,

Gary D. Frazer
Field Supervisor