



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL STATION NEWPORT
690 PEARY STREET
NEWPORT, RI 02841-1522

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5090

Ser PRR41/273

APR 19 2011

Mr. Thomas R. Chapman
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, NH 03301-5087

Dear Mr. Chapman:

Once again, I am writing you regarding a proposed project to install wind turbines on Naval Station Newport property. I first informed you of this project in a letter dated January 29, 2010. At that time, we submitted a draft Avian and Bat Study Plan for your review and comment. You provided comments on that study plan in a letter dated March 26, 2010. The Navy has since refined this project. The exact number of turbines to be installed and at what specific locations is currently under study as part of an Environmental Assessment (EA) to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Enclosure (1) provides a Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives to provide you with a better understanding of the project. A map of the proposed sites and a table of the maximum permitted tower height at each site are provided as enclosure (2).

Based on your previous comments, the Navy has been working to compile data on the usage of the proposed project area by birds and bats. For your awareness, the relevant information collected to date is enclosed. Please find the *Fall 2009 Bird and Bat Biological Survey Report* (enclosure (3)), the *Bird and Bat Biological Survey Report for Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall 2010* (enclosure (4)) and the *Preliminary Final Avian Radar Survey Report for the Development of Wind Energy Facilities at Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island, Fall 2010* (enclosure (5)).

The 2009 and 2010 survey reports were conducted in accordance with the study plan submitted to your office in January 2010 and your comments received in March 2010. The reports include a detailed description of the methods and results of the surveys, as well as a qualitative discussion of the survey conclusions and potential implications of the project on the bird and bat community. These surveys were completed to meet our obligations under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and NEPA. In addition, in response to your comments in the March 2010 letter, the Navy has

conducted a fall avian radar survey for 2010 and will be conducting a spring avian radar survey during the migration of 2011. Finally, additional acoustic monitoring for bats was completed during the fall 2010 migration period and will be completed for the spring migration and summer residency period of 2011. No federally threatened and endangered species or federal species of concern were detected during the survey periods. This data, along with the 2011 avian spring radar survey and additional bat surveys, will be submitted to you for your awareness, and will be analyzed in the final EA for the Naval Station Newport Wind Energy Project.

The most recent species survey completed by the Rhode Island Natural History Survey (*Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment of Naval Station Newport*, February 2006) indicates that no species of state or federal concern are present in the proposed project area. The EA will address effects of the proposed project and alternatives on the project area and surrounding resources. If you have questions pertaining to this matter or would like a copy of the final EA or additional supporting reports, the point of contact is Ms. Shannon Kam at (401) 841-6377.

Sincerely,



D. D. DOROCZ
Environmental Department Head
By direction of the
Commanding Officer

- Enclosures:
- (1) Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives.
 - (2) Map of the proposed sites and table of Federal Aviation Administration permitted tower heights for each site.
 - (3) Fall 2009 Bird and Bat Biological Survey Report
 - (4) Bird and Bat Biological Survey Report for Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall 2010
 - (5) Preliminary Final Avian Radar Survey Report for the Development of Wind Energy Facilities at Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island, Fall 2010

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