



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
<http://dnr.state.il.us>

Pat Quinn, Governor
Marc Miller, Director

January 26, 2011

Jason Schnepf
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
1021 North Grand Ave. East
P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, IL 62794-9276

RE: Revised Production Increase-US Steel
IDNR Project #1103947

Dear Mr. Schnepf:

This letter concerns the Endangered Species Consultation for a revision to a 1996 US Steel Production Increase Permit to correct sulfur dioxide emission rates for combustion of blast furnace gas and volatile organic material and CO emission rates for combustion of natural gas at its Granite City plant. This action was submitted for consultation in accordance with the *Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act* [520 ILCS 10/11], the *Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act* [525 ILCS 30/17], and Title 17 *Illinois Administrative Code Part 1075*.

Two state-listed species have been recorded a little more than one mile from the facility. The state-endangered Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) occurs north of the facility and the state and federally threatened Decurrent False Aster (*Boltonia decurrens*) occurs to the east and south of the facility.

The change in emission rates will increase total allowable emissions and the Additional Impacts Analysis included in U.S. Steel's Application to Modify did not demonstrate that this potential increase would not adversely impact the listed species near the facility. While it may be correct to state that "the emissions changes resulting from the proposed modification have already occurred in the project area" it appears that production levels have never reached that allowed in the original permit.

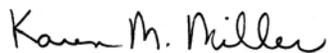
However, modeling indicates the revised permitted emissions will not violate the primary or secondary NAAQS. As the Department is not aware of any data that suggest the NAAQS are not protective of the species present near the facility, it is the Department's Biological Opinion that the action is unlikely to have an adverse effect on the essential habitat of the Yellow-crowned Night Heron and the Decurrent False Aster.

Consultation on the part of the Department is terminated. This consultation is valid for two years unless new information becomes available that was not previously considered; the proposed action is modified; or additional species, essential habitat, or Natural Areas are identified in the vicinity. If the project has not been implemented within two years of the date of this letter, or any of the above listed conditions develop, a new consultation is necessary.

The natural resource review reflects the information existing in the Illinois Natural Heritage Database at the time of the project submittal, and should not be regarded as a final statement on the site being considered, nor should it be a substitute for detailed site surveys or field surveys required for environmental assessments. If additional protected resources are encountered during the project's implementation, you must comply with the applicable statutes and regulations. Also, note that termination does not imply IDNR's authorization or endorsement of the proposed action.

Please contact me if you have questions regarding this review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen M. Miller".

Karen M. Miller
Division of Ecosystems and Environment
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