

BUREAU OF SPORTS, FISH AND WILDLIFE		FAXFORM: <i>4</i>	
TO: Regional Director, FWS Region 4	DATE: <i>2/8/77</i>	TIME: <i>11</i>	
FROM: <i>Kathleen Johnson</i> Director, Fish and Wildlife Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Deliver on regular mail run <input type="checkbox"/> Call to have picked up		
SUBJECT: Draft Letter to TVA for Your Review			

*Consultation
Columbia Dam
Duck River
Mussels*

Mr. Lynn Seeber
General Manager
TVA
New Sprinkle Building
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902

Dear Mr. Seeber:

This letter presents the Biological Opinion of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service relative to the effects of the Tennessee Valley Authority's Columbia Dam segment of the Duck River Project in Tennessee upon the biological needs of Endangered mollusks inhabiting the Duck River. This opinion is presented in response to TVA's request for formal consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Our Biological Opinion is based upon information available to us as a result of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contracted field studies, TVA studies, data submitted by members of the scientific community, and consultation meetings involving personnel of TVA, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

It is our Biological Opinion that if the TVA completes the Columbia Dam project as presently planned, the continued existence of the birdwing pearly mussel (Conradilla caelata) and the Cumberland monkeyface pearly mussel (Quadrula intermedia) will be jeopardized. The impoundment behind the Columbia Dam would completely inundate the only localities where these species are presently known to naturally occur within the Duck River. The impoundment would result in adverse alterations of the chemical, physical, and biological components of the mussels' environment. The extent to which the 49 individuals, transplanted in 1975 to an area below the existing mill dam in Columbia, would be affected by the Columbia Dam has not been determined.

Critical Habitat for the birdwing pearly mussel (Conradilla caelata) and the Cumberland monkeyface pearly mussel (Quadrula intermedia) has not been proposed at this time. However, as was discussed at the Section 7 consultation meetings, the proposed Columbia Dam project will adversely affect an area which we believe to be essential to the survival of these species and may be determined as Critical Habitat. We intend to propose Critical Habitat for these species in the near future.

We are appreciative of your agency's cooperation in the consultation process on the Columbia Dam segment of the Duck River project. This Biological Opinion is intended to assist the TVA in meeting its responsibilities under Section 7 of the Act. The decision to accept or reject our opinion, of course, rests with the TVA.

Confirmation Copy Recy 8/6/80