



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

West Virginia Field Office
Post Office Box 1278
Elkins, West Virginia 26241

April 8, 1996

Ms. Nancy Feakes
District Ranger
Potomac Ranger District
HC 59, Box 240
Petersburg, West Virginia 26847

Dear Ms. Feakes:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has reviewed the proposed modifications, dated March 1, 1996, for the planned removal of unexploded ordnance in the Dolly Sods Wilderness Area. These operational measures are to protect the Cheat Mountain salamander, Plethodon nettingi. If proven effective, they could also be adopted for use on the proposed Dolly Sods North ordnance removal project. The measures were formulated in an interagency meeting on January 18, 1996.

The protective measures approximate those proposed in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District's draft environmental assessment, dated July 7, 1995. The Service indicated that implementation of the initial measures would have resulted in no adverse affect to the salamander by letter dated August 22, 1995. The current plan differs from the previous one in that it does not require a walk through survey to determine areas most likely for salamanders; all salamanders would be removed from a 15-foot radius rather than a 40-foot radius during in-situ detonation; and field surveys will not be required at night nor within 48 hours of rainfall.

The proposed changes will not compromise the overall plan to protect the Cheat Mountain salamander. The ordnance removal project should not adversely affect Federally listed species and no further Section 7 Consultation under the Endangered Species Act (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) is required with the Service at this time.

Sincerely,

William A. Tolin
Acting Supervisor

cc:
Huntington District - Jemiola
WVDNR - Dowler
USFS - Kinerson
PAFO - Kulp
Readers file
Project file
ES:WVFO:Tolin:tjf:4/8/96
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