

EI-17915



Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

Division of Environmental Services
Natural Diversity Section
450 Robinson Lane
Bellefonte, PA 16823-9620
(814) 359-5237 Fax: (814) 359-5175

OCT 15 2009

October 14, 2009

IN REPLY REFER TO
SIR# 32708

KEVIN STARNER
SKELLY AND LOY
449 EISENHOWER BOULEVARD, SUITE 300
HARRISBURG, PA 17111

RE: Species Impact Review (SIR) – Rare, Candidate, Threatened and Endangered Species
R.J. CORMAN RR - PA LINES INC. RECONSTRUCTION
CLEARFIELD, CENTRE Counties, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. STARNER:

I have examined the map accompanying your recent correspondence, which shows the location for the proposed above-referenced project. Based on records maintained in the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) database and the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) files and databases, the following rare or protected species are known from the vicinity of the project site:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>PA Status</u>
Timber rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus horridus</i>	candidate

Timber rattlesnakes occur in the forested, mountainous regions of the Commonwealth. They prefer forested areas to forage for small mammals (e.g., mice and chipmunks) and talus, south to south-eastern facing rocky slopes for hibernating and other thermoregulatory activities. The timber rattlesnake is threatened by overhunting, poaching and habitat alteration.

Given the proximity of the project to known timber rattlesnake den areas, we request that a timber rattlesnake habitat assessment be conducted in the project area by a PFBC recognized/qualified timber rattlesnake surveyor. We have included a list of PFBC qualified/recognized surveyors and habitat assessment protocol for your convenience. Upon completion of the habitat survey, the recognized/qualified rattlesnake biologist is to submit a report to this office (Natural Diversity Section) for review and comment. The habitat survey report should include color and aerial photographs of the project area (keyed to a site map or diagram) and a description of habitats occurring within the immediate area to be developed (including access roads), as well as the surrounding area. Potential timber rattlesnake foraging, denning and/or basking areas should be photographed and mapped accordingly. In addition, the report should also include detailed project plans and maps with a description of the proposed work (including access roads), project impacts and alternatives. Pending the review of this information, a survey targeting the presence of the timber rattlesnake in the project area and/or other project modifications may be requested.

Our Mission:

www.fish.state.pa.us

To protect, conserve and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities.

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In any future correspondence with us regarding this specific project, please contact Kathy Gipe at 814-359-5186 and refer to the SIR number above. Thank you for your cooperation and attention to this matter of timber rattlesnake conservation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher A. Urban". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christopher" being more prominent than the last name "Urban".

Christopher A. Urban, Chief
Natural Diversity Section

CAU/mr

Enclosures (2)