



United States Department of the Interior



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Richard B. Russell Federal Building
75 Ted Turner Drive S.W., Suite 1144
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

ER 15/0449
9043.1

November 12, 2015

Lauren McGee
Environmental Scientist
USDA/RUS
1400 Independence Ave. SW.,
Room 2244-S, Stop 1571
Washington, DC 20250

Re: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Energy Answers
Arecibo Waste-to-Energy Recovery Project

Dear Ms. McGee:

The Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Energy Answers Arecibo Waste-to-Energy Recovery Project. The Department has been actively reviewing this project for several years. Our comments are provided in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. et seq.), and the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq. as amended).

We previously commented to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) permit application for this project (SAJ-2011-02233 IP-EWG) on September 22, 2011. The Corps issued the permit on March 3, 2014.

As part of the Corps permit process, a consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) was conducted. In that consultation, we determined that suitable habitat for federally listed species within our purview was not present within the project site. Therefore, no adverse effects to federally listed species were anticipated and consultation under Section 7(a)(2) was not needed. This determination stands for all other federal actions including the DEIS, unless new information becomes available.

With regards to wetland impacts, the permit issued by the Corps includes on site compensatory mitigation which consists of the creation 9.2 acres of wetlands and a conservation easement of 27.67 acres of existing wetlands.

Energy Answers Arcibo Waste-to-Energy Recovery Project – ER 15-0449

The DEIS mentions both the Corps permit conditions and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's ESA determination and adequately addresses those issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. If you have questions, please contact Marelisa Rivera at (787) 851-7297, extension 206. I can be reached at (404) 331-4524 or via email at joyce_stanley@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Stanley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "J" being particularly large and stylized.

Joyce Stanley, MPA
Regional Environmental Protection Specialist

cc:

Anita Barnett – NPS

Gary Lecain – USGS

Christine Willis – FWS

Chester McGhee – BIA

Esther P. Kia'aina – Insular Affairs

OEPC - WASH