



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

446 Neal Street
Cookeville, TN 38501



February 20, 2008

Mr. Stuart Johnson
Superintendent
National Park Service
Stones River National Battlefield
3501 Old Nashville Highway
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129

2.21.08
Supt. ☒ *MS*
OPS ☒
L.E. Ranger ☐
Int. Ranger ☐
E.N. ☐
Admin. Off. ☐
Admin. Asst. ☐
Ecologist ☐
Maint. Chief ☐
File ☒
Library ☐
Remarks ☐

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for your correspondence of January 17, 2008, regarding the National Park Service's proposed Environmental Assessment to analyze the impacts of managing groundhog populations on Park property at the Stones River National Battlefield, Rutherford County, Tennessee. According to our records, with the addition of Braun's rock-cress (*Arabis perstellata*), the list of federally protected endangered/threatened species addressed in the EA appears to be complete. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists have reviewed the information submitted and we offer the following comments.

The proposed actions are to install enclosure fencing and deploy CO cartridges in and around groundhog den sites. Once the CO cartridge has been deployed into a den site, soil from an off-site source will be placed into the den. According to your report, the treatment sites are not located within or adjacent to sites where endangered species occur; therefore, the Park concludes that groundhog management will not have an adverse impact on federally listed species.

Upon review, we concur with your determination that the proposed groundhog management is not likely to adversely affect federally listed species occurring on the Stone River National Battlefield. In view of this, we believe that the requirements of section 7 of the Endangered Species Act have been fulfilled. Obligations under section 7 must be reconsidered, however, if: (1) new information reveals that the proposed action may affect listed species in a manner or to an extent not previously considered, (2) the proposed actions is subsequently modified to include activities which were not considered during this consultation, or (3) new species are listed or critical habitat designated that might be affected by the proposed action.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this action. Your concern for the protection of endangered species at Stones River National Battlefield is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Brad Bingham of my staff at 931/528-6481, ext. 205.

Sincerely,

Mary E Jennings

for

Lee A. Barclay, Ph.D.
Field Supervisor