

18. **In the response to question #30, AES states that it is still in discussions with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding the NMFS request to use horizontal directional drilling (HDD) at five specific waterway crossings. MDE notes that HDD will be utilized at Wildcat Branch if it is technically feasible. When available, MDE requests additional information on the feasibility of HDD at this crossing. If feasible, MDE supports HDD at all sensitive wetlands/waterways crossings. When available, MDE requests additional information on the outcome of AES's coordination with NMFS on the feasibility of using HDD at the other locations that NMFS has requested that HDD be utilized. MDE will coordinate with NMFS in this regard.**

Response:

As indicated in the response to Comment 30 of MDE's May 7, 2007 Data Request, AES has initiated follow-up consultation regarding the proposed crossing methods at each location with Mr. John Nichols of NMFS. Mr. Nichols indicated that NMFS was in the process of reviewing the application materials submitted by AES and would submit questions or comments when their initial review was complete. AES will continue to consult with NMFS regarding the proposed waterbody crossing method determinations and request concurrence.

When available, AES will provide MDE with additional information on the outcome of AES's coordination with NMFS on the feasibility of using HDD at the other locations that NMFS has requested that HDD be utilized.