



OFFICE OF WETLANDS, OCEANS AND WATERSHEDS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

September 24, 2025

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Request for additional data and information related to proposed MPRSA research permit No. EPA-HQ-MPRSA-2025-001 for the Carboniferous, Inc. research project

FROM: Stacey M. Jensen
Director, Oceans, Wetlands and Communities Division

TO: Federal Rulemaking Portal Docket ID EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0198

This memorandum announces the reopening of a docket on the Federal eRulemaking Portal ([Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0198](#)) to solicit additional data and information on specific technical topics related to the EPA's assessment of the proposed Carboniferous, Inc. research project (Proposed Permit No. EPA-HQ-MPRSA-2025-001¹). This docket will be open for responses until October 24, 2025, at 11:59 pm EDT.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is requesting additional data and information on specific technical aspects of the proposed Carboniferous, Inc. research project to further inform the EPA's determination on whether to issue a Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act research permit for the proposed project and the terms of any permit, if issued. The EPA is not reopening the public comment period but rather is only soliciting data and information to support or refute assertions on specific topics raised during the public comment period held from June 12 to July 14, 2025.

The EPA is considering information related to (1) the scientific methods and measurements that the applicant would employ to address its stated research questions and monitor for impacts to the marine environment and (2) any additional measures that would further mitigate potential or predicted impacts to the marine environment or other ocean uses, including future scientific research activities within or near the proposed project location.

¹ Proposed MPRSA Research Permit No. EPA-HQ-MPRSA-2025-001 for the Carboniferous Inc. Research Project (June 2025)
<https://www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0198-0004>

Specifically, the EPA is soliciting supporting data or information only on the following six topics identified during the earlier public comment period:

1. Specific endpoints or criteria that should be assessed or monitored to allow for sufficient assessment of environmental impacts from the project.
2. Data or information to support or refute the sufficiency and adequacy of the monitoring methodologies listed in the Proposed Permit (Section III-4) and detailed in the Application² (Section 4 and Appendix D attachments) to produce technically sound data to address the applicant's stated research questions (Application Section 4).
3. Other specific alternative or additional methodologies or measurements that the EPA might consider to assure a robust assessment of environmental impacts from the project.
4. Data or information to support or refute the proposed temporal and spatial resolution of the monitoring listed in the Proposed Permit (Section III-4) and detailed in the Application (Sections 4 and 10) that would both allow the applicant to address its proposed research questions and allow for the robust assessment of environmental impacts from the proposed project.
5. Any additional data or information to further characterize baseline environmental conditions that EPA should consider in its assessment of the impacts of the proposed project. Responses should take into account the environmental baseline data provided in the Application (Section 7) and the EPA's Fact Sheet³ (Section 2.2) and that additional baseline data would be collected during the proposed study as described in the Application (Section 10) and Proposed Permit (Section III-4.2).
6. Any additional data and information to support additional or alternative mitigation or adaptive response actions to minimize the environmental impact of the project as proposed, including to mitigate any potential for possible adverse impacts to future scientific use of the Orca Basin. Responses should take into account the various requirements and contingencies described in the Proposed Permit (Proposed Permit Section III-5) and the reporting on the specific location of any biomass package or Sampler System that would be placed into the marine environment (Proposed Permit III-7.8).

HOW TO SUBMIT RESPONSES

Responses that provide supporting or refuting data and information, including explanations of relevance and applicability to the six topics above, may be submitted through the docket at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0198> until 11:59 pm EDT on October 24, 2025.

The EPA encourages responses that are as specific as possible and that refer to the number(s) of the topics above that the submitted data or information addresses. Responses may include data or information such as scientific literature or other publications that support or refute the response to the topic being addressed. Copies of the Application, the EPA Fact Sheet for the Proposed Permit, and the Proposed Permit referenced within the six topics are available in the docket.

² Carboniferous, Inc. MPRSA Research Permit Application (May 2025)
<https://www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0198-0002>

³ EPA Fact Sheet for Proposed MPRSA Research Permit No. EPA-HQ-MPRSA-2025-001 (June 2025)
<https://www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0198-0003>

Please follow the online instructions for submitting data and information. Once submitted, responses may not be edited or removed from the docket. The EPA may publish any response received to its public docket. Do not submit electronically any information you consider to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Multimedia submissions (audio, video, etc.) must be accompanied by a written comment. The written response should include discussion of all points you wish to make.

The EPA will consider data and information submitted on the six topics as the EPA considers further action on the tentative determination to issue a research permit for the Carboniferous, Inc. research project. The EPA will generally not consider new comments or data or information that does not support or refute the six topics listed above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Ongoing updates about the permitting status of the proposed research project can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/carboniferous>. For further information, please contact the EPA's Marine Protection Permitting Program at MarineProtectionPermitting@epa.gov.