Appendix C

Chronology of NRC Staff Environmental Review Correspondence Related to Nuclear Management Company, LLC's Application for License Renewal of Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant

Appendix C: Chronology of NRC Staff Environmental Review Correspondence Related to Nuclear Management Company, LLC's Application for License Renewal of Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant

This appendix contains a chronological listing of correspondence between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and Nuclear Management Company (NMC), and other correspondence related to the NRC staff's environmental review, under Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Part 51, of NMC's application for renewal of the Monticello operating license. All documents, with the exception of those containing proprietary information, have been placed in the Commission's Public Document Room, at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, MD, and are available electronically from the Public Electronic Reading Room found on the Internet at the following Web address: http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm.html. From this site, the public can gain access to the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), which provides text and image files of NRC's public documents in the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of ADAMS. The ADAMS accession number for each document is included below.

March 16, 2005	Letter from Mr. Thomas J. Palmisano, NMC, to the NRC, submitting the application for renewal of the operating license for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML050880241).
March 24, 2005	NRC press release announcing the availability of the license renewal application for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML050830481).
March 31, 2005	NRC letter to Mr. Thomas J. Palmisano, NMC, Receipt and Availability of the License Renewal Application for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML050900052).
May 5, 2005	NRC letter to Mr. Thomas J. Palmisano, NMC, forwarding the Determination of Acceptability and Sufficiency for Docketing, Proposed Review Schedule, and Opportunity for a Hearing Regarding the Application from Nuclear Management Company, LLC for Renewal of the Operating License for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML051260029).

May 9, 2005	NRC letter to Ms. Margo Askin, Head Librarian Monticello Public Library regarding the maintenance of documents related to the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051300167).
May 9, 2005	NRC letter to Ms. Amy Wittmann, Branch Librarian Buffalo Public Library regarding the maintenance of documents related to the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051300195).
May 12, 2005	NRC press release announcing the opportunity for hearing on application to renew operating license for Monticello Nuclear Power Plant (Accession No. ML051320170).
May 12, 2005	*Federal Register* Notice of Acceptance for Docketing of the Application and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing Regarding the Renewal of Facility Operating License No. DPR-22 for an Additional 20-Year Period (70 FR 25117).
May 26, 2005	NRC letter to Mr. Thomas J. Palmisano, NMC, forwarding the *Federal Register* notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and conduct scoping process for license renewal for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML051460549).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to Mr. Don Klima, Director, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, regarding the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051470309).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to Mr. Thomas J. Palmisano, NMC, requesting additional information regarding Severe Accident Mitigation Alternatives (SAMA) for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML051470339).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Fond Du Lac Reservation Tribal Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520264).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Flandreau Santee Sioux Executive Committee, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520356).

May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Tribal Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520418).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Upper Sioux Indian Community, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520483).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520372).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the White Earth Tribal Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520395).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the St. Croix Chippewa of Wisconsin, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520525).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Spirit Lake Tribe, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520546).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Sokaogon Chippewa Community, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520568).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051520578).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Keweenaw Bay Tribal Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051530421).

May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Lac Courte Orielles Governing Board, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051530539).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051540187).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051540250).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051540294).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051540402).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Prairie Island Community Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051540436).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Red Lake Tribal Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051540461).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Santee Sioux Tribal Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051540473).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Shakopee Dakota Community Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML051540487).
May 27, 2005	NRC letter to the Grand Portage Reservation Council, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051550002).

June 1, 2005	NRC letter to the Lower Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota Mdewakanton Sioux Indians, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051560007).
June 2, 2005	NRC letter to Dr. Nina M. Archabal, State Historic Preservation Officer for Minnesota, inviting participation in the scoping process relating to the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051560004).
June 2, 2005	*Federal Register* Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Conduct Scoping Process of Facility Operating License No. DPR-22 (70 FR 32381).
June 3, 2005	NRC letter to Mr. Dan P. Stinnett, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, requesting list of protected species within the area under evaluation for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051560006).
June 3, 2005	NRC letter to the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051560008).
June 3, 2005	NRC letter to the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, inviting participation in the scoping process for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML051560009).
June 6, 2005	NRC meeting notice informing public of scoping meeting to be held in Monticello, Minnesota, on June 30, 2005 (Accession No. ML051610403).
June 14, 2005	NRC letter to Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant summarizing the telecommunication to discuss the Severe Accident Mitigation Alternatives (SAMA) Requests for Additional Information (RAIs) (Accession No. ML051650157).
July 13, 2005	Letter from Dan P. Stinnet, Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service forwarding list of protected species which are under evaluation for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML052070060).

July 27, 2005	Letter from John T. Conway, NMC, to NRC providing the responses to Request for Additional Information Regarding Severe Accident Mitigation Alternatives for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML052130197).
July 28, 2005	NRC letter to NMC, summarizing telephone conference concerning draft Request for Additional Information pertaining to the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal application (Accession No. ML052100060).
July 28, 2005	NRC letter to NMC forwarding summary of public scoping meetings for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML052030005).
August 4, 2005	NRC letter summarizing the site audit regarding the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML052200039).
August 16, 2005	Letter from John T. Conway, NMC providing response to Request for Additional Information regarding Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML052340510).
September 1, 2005	NRC letter to NMC summarizing a telephone conference call held on August 10, 2005, to discuss follow-up items regarding the Severe Accident Mitigation Alternatives (SAMA) Request for Additional Information (RAI) for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML052450030).
October 7, 2005	NRC letter to John T. Conway, NMC, forwarding the Environmental Scoping Summary Report regarding Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML052800329).
December 22, 2005	NRC letter to Dan P. Stinnett, FWS, forwarding the Biological Assessment for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal review (Accession No. ML053570019).
January 23, 2006	NRC letter to John T. Conway, NMC forwarding the Notice of Availability of the Draft Plant-Specific Supplement 26 to the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) regarding Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML060230264).

January 23, 2006	NRC letter to EPA, filling of Draft Supplement 26 to the Generic Environmental Impact Statement regarding Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML060230222).
February 2, 2006	NRC press release announcing the issuance of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Monticello Nuclear Power Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML060330500).
February 10, 2006	NRC letter to Minnesota State Historic Preservation Officer, requesting comments on the Draft Supplement Environmental Impact Statement for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML060440138).
February 28, 2006	Meeting notice announcing the public meeting to discuss the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML060590612).
March 19, 2006	E-mail from Dennis Rykken, providing comments related to the license renewal of the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML061220611).
March 19, 2006	E-mail from Mark Lodermeier, providing comments related to the license renewal of the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML061220619).
April 26, 2006	Letter from John T. Conway, NMC providing comments regarding the Draft Supplement Environmental Impact Statement for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML061210175).
April 26, 2006	Letter from Britta L. Bloomberg, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, providing comments on the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML061520200).
May 2, 2006	E-mail from Darby Valincia submitting comments from U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, on the Draft Supplement Environmental Impact Statement for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Accession No. ML061320037).

Appendix C

May 3, 2006	Letter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, providing comments regarding the Draft Supplement Environmental Impact Statement for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant license renewal (Accession No. ML061370511).

Appendix D

Organizations Contacted

Appendix D: Organizations Contacted

During the course of the staff's independent review of environmental impacts from operations during the renewal term, the following Federal, State, regional, local, and Native American tribal agencies were contacted:

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.

Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Odanah, Wisconsin

Bois Forte Reservation Tribal, Net Lake, Minnesota

City of Monticello, Administrator and Planning, Monticello, Minnesota

City of Monticello Economic Development, Monticello, Minnesota

City of Monticello Administrator, Monticello, Minnesota

Flandreau Santee Sioux Executive Committee, Flandreau, South Dakota

Fond Du Lac Reservation Tribal Council, Cloquet, Minnesota

Grand Portage Reservation Council, Grand Portage, Minnesota

Keweenaw Bay Tribal Council, Baraga, Michigan

Lac Courte Orielles Governing Board, Hayward, Wisconsin

Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin

Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Watersmeet, Wisconsin

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Cass Lake, Minnesota

Lower Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota Mdewakanton Sioux Indians, Morton, Minnesota

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Onamia, Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, St. Paul, Minnesota

Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, St. Paul, Minnesota

Monticello Area Chamber of Commerce, Monticello, Minnesota

Appendix D

Wright County Assessor, Buffalo, Minnesota

Wright County Assessor, Auditor-Treasurer, Buffalo, Minnesota

Prairie Island Community Council, Welch, Minnesota

Red Lake Tribal Council, Red Lake, Minnesota

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Bayfield, Wisconsin

Santee Sioux Tribal Council, Niobrara, Nebraska

Shakopee Dakota Community Council, Prior Lake, Minnesota

Sherburne County, Auditor-Treasurer, Elk River, Minnesota

Sherburne County Department of Public Works, Elk River, Minnesota

Sherburne County Emergency Management, Elk River, Minnesota

Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation, Sisseton, South Dakota

Sokaogon Chippewa Community, Crandon, Wisconsin

Spirit Lake Tribe, Fort Totten, North Dakota

St. Croix Chippewa of Wisconsin, Webster, Wisconsin

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Tribal Council, Belcourt, North Dakota

United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Bloomington, Minnesota

Upper Sioux Indian Community, Granite Falls, Minnesota

White Earth Tribal Council, White Earth, Minnesota

Wright County Emergency Response Management (Civil Defense), Monticello, Minnesota

Wright County Treasury Department, Buffalo, Minnesota

Appendix E

Nuclear Management Company, LLC's Compliance Status and Consultation Correspondence

Appendix E: Nuclear Management Company, LLC's Compliance Status and Consultation Correspondence

Correspondence received during the process of evaluation of the application for renewal of the license for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant is identified in Table E-1. Copies of the correspondence are included at the end of this appendix.

The licenses, permits, consultations, and other approvals obtained from Federal, State, regional, and local authorities for Monticello are listed in Table E-2.

Table E-1. Consultation Correspondence

Source	Recipient	Date of Letter
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	Advisory Council of Historic Preservation (D. Klima)	May 27, 2005
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	Minnesota Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Officer (N. Archabal)	June 2, 2005
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (D. Stinnett)	June 3, 2005
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (D. Stinnett)	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	July 13, 2005
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (D. Stinnett)	December 22, 2005
Minnesota Historical Society, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer (B. Bloomberg)	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	April 26, 2006
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (D. Valincia)	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	May 2, 2006

Table E-2. Federal, State, Local, and Regional Licenses, Permits, Consultations, and Other Approvals for Monticello

Agency	Authority	Description	Number	Issue Date	Expiration Date	Remarks
NRC	10 CFR Part 50	Operating license, Monticello	DPR-22		09/8/10	Authorizes operation of Monticello Unit.
FWS	Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 703-712)	Permit	MB074020-0		03/31/09	Authorizes handling of injured and dead migratory birds.
DOT	49 CFR Part 107, Subpart G	Certificate of Registration for Transportation of Hazardous Materials	062706 552 009O		06/30/07	Authorization to transport hazardous materials.
ACOE	Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1988	General Permit	01-02982-GP-GAE		N/A[a]	Authorizes maintenance dredging, dewatering, and settling system discharge, and dredged material disposal.
MDNR	Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103G.271	Water Appropriations Permit	67-0083		N/A[a]	Authorizes groundwater withdrawals from well #1 and well #2.
MDNR	Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103G.271	Water Appropriations Permit	66-1172		N/A[a]	Authorizes surface water withdrawals from the Mississippi River.
MDNR	Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103G.315 Minnesota Rule Chapter 6115.0200	State Dredging Permit	67-0743 GP-100-MN		N/A[a]	Authorizes maintenance dredging, dewatering, and settling system discharge, and dredged material disposal.
MDNR	Minnesota Statutes Chapter 97A.401	Division of Fish and Wildlife Special Permit	13315		12/31/06	Authorizes collection of fish for biological evaluation.

[a]This permit does not expire.

Table E-2. (contd)

Agency	Authority	Description	Number	Issue Date	Expiration Date	Remarks
MDNR	Minnesota Statutes Chapter 97A.401	Division of Ecological Services Special Perrmit	12683		12/31/08	Authorizes collection of mussels for radioactive exposure analysis.
MPCA	Minnesota Statutes Chapters 115 and 116	NPDES permit	MN0000868		07/31/07	Authorizes discharge of wastewaters to waters of the state.
MPCA	Minnesota Statutes Chapters 115 and 116	General Stormwater Permit for Industrial Activity	MN G611000		10/31/02	Authorizes discharge of stormwater to waters of the state. (Permit renewal application submitted 4/16/02.)
MPCA	Minnesota Statutes Chapters 115 and 116	State Disposal System Permit	12915		N/A[a]	Authorized the construction and operation of a sanitary sewer extension.
MPCA	Minnesota Statutes Chapters 115 and 116	State Disposal System Permit	MN0058343		03/31/04	Authorizes maintenance dredging, dewatering, and settling system discharge, and dredged material disposal. (Permit renewal application submitted 9/24/03.)
MPCA	Minnesota Statutes Chapters 7045.0225	Hazardous Waste Generator License	MND000686139		06/30/07	Authorizes facility to operate as a hazardous waste generator.
MPCA	Minnesota Statutes Chapters 7007.0105	Air Emission Permit	17100019-003		08/16/05	Authorizes facility to operate air emission facility (oil- and gas-fired heating boiler, four emergency diesel generators, and an emergency fire pump diesel engine). (Permit renewal application submitted 2/17/05.)

[a]This permit does not expire.

Table E-2. (contd)

Agency	Authority	Description	Number	Issue Date	Expiration Date	Remarks
City of Monticello	Ordinance Title 14, Chapter 4	Sanitary Sewer Wastewater Discharge Agreement	001		N/A[a]	Authorizes discharge of domestic sanitary waste into the City of Monticello sanitary sewer collection system.
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control	SC ADC 61-83	South Carolina radioactive waste transport permit	0026-22-06-Y		12/31/06	Authorization to transport radioactive materials in South Carolina.
Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation	TDEC 1200-2-10-30	Tennessee radioactive shipment license	T-MN002-L06		12/31/06	Authorization to ship radioactive material to a licensed disposal/ processing facility within Tennessee.

ACOE = U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CFR = Code of Federal Regulations
DOT = U.S. Department of Transportation
FWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
MDNR = Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
MPCA = Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
NRC = Nuclear Regulatory Commission
SC = South Carolina
TDEC = Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
NPDES = National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
USC = United States Code

[a]This permit does not expire.

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 27, 2005

Mr. Don Klima, Director
Office of Federal Agency Programs
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Old Post Office Building
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 809
Washington, DC 20004

SUBJECT: MONTICELLO NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL REVIEW (TAC NO. MC6441)

Dear Mr. Klima:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application to renew the operating license for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Monticello) which is located in the City of Monticello, Wright County, Minnesota, on the south bank of the Mississippi River. Monticello is operated by Nuclear Management Company, LLC (NMC). The application for renewal was submitted by NMC on March 24, 2005, pursuant to NRC requirements at Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 54 (10 CFR Part 54). The NRC has established that, as part of the staff review of any nuclear power plant license renewal action, a site-specific Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to its "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants" (GEIS), NUREG-1437, will be prepared under the provisions of 10 CFR Part 51, the NRC regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). In accordance with 36 CFR 800.8, the SEIS will include analyses of potential impacts to historic and cultural resources. A draft SEIS is scheduled for publication in February of 2006, and will be provided to you for review and comment.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the Environmental Project Manager, Ms. Jennifer Davis, at 301-415-3835 or JXD10@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Pao-Tsin Kuo, Program Director
License Renewal and Environmental Impacts Programs
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No.: 50-263

cc: See next page

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001
June 2, 2005

Dr. Nina M. Archabal
State Historic Preservation Officer
Minnesota Historical Society
State Historic Pres. Office
345 Kellogg Blvd West
St. Paul, MN 55102-1906

SUBJECT: MONTICELLO NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL REVIEW (TAC NO. MC6441) (SHPO Number: 2004-2193)

Dear Dr. Archabal:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application to renew the operating license for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Monticello), which is located in Wright County, Minnesota, on the southern bank of the Mississippi River. The nearest large city is St. Cloud, 22 miles to the northwest and upstream of the Monticello site. The Twin Cities area of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and their surrounding suburbs, is approximately 30 miles to the southeast of the site. Monticello is operated by Nuclear Management Company (NMC) and owned by Northern States Power Company, a wholly owned utility operating subsidiary of Xcel Energy, Inc. The application for renewal was submitted by NMC on March 24, 2005, pursuant to NRC requirements at Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 54 (10 CFR Part 54). The NRC has established that, as part of the staff review of any nuclear power plant license renewal action, a site-specific Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to its "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants" (GEIS), NUREG-1437, will be prepared under the provisions of 10 CFR Part 51, the NRC regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). In accordance with 36 CFR 800.8, the SEIS will include analyses of potential impacts to historic and archaeological resources.

In the context of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the NRC staff has determined that the area of potential effect (APE) for a license renewal action is the area at the power plant site and its immediate environs that may be impacted by post-license renewal land-disturbing operations or projected refurbishment activities associated with the proposed action. The APE may extend beyond the immediate environs in those instances where post-license renewal land-disturbing operations or projected refurbishment activities specifically related to license renewal may potentially have an effect on known or proposed historic sites. This determination is made irrespective of ownership or control of the lands of interest.

While preparing its application, NMC contacted your office by letter dated February 10, 2005. In that letter, NMC stated there are no plans to significantly alter current operations or engage in any land-disturbing activities during the license renewal period. NMC further stated that it is currently revising existing site procedures to incorporate guidance for the handling of items of

potential historic and archaeological significance, and cultural resources during any land-disturbing activities. Your office responded by letter dated March 30, 2005, stating that no historic properties listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by the proposed action.

On June 30, 2005, the NRC will conduct two public NEPA scoping meetings at the Monticello Community Center, 505 Walnut Street in Monticello, Minnesota. You and your staff are invited to attend. Your office will receive a copy of the draft SEIS along with a request for comments. The anticipated publication date for the draft SEIS is February 2006. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ms. Jennifer A. Davis, Project Manager, at 301-415-3835 or JXD10@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

for

Pao-Tsin Kuo, Program Director
License Renewal and Environmental Impacts
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No.: 50-263

cc: See next page

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

June 3, 2005

Mr. Dan P. Stinnett
Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1 Federal Drive
BHW Federal Building
Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4056

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR LIST OF PROTECTED SPECIES WITHIN THE AREA UNDER EVALUATION FOR THE MONTICELLO NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL (TAC NO. MC6441)

Dear Mr. Stinnett:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is reviewing an application submitted by Nuclear Management Company, LLC (NMC) for the renewal of the operating license for Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Monticello). Monticello, a single nuclear unit plant, is located in the City of Monticello in Wright County, Minnesota, on the south bank of the Mississippi River. As part of its review of the license renewal application, the NRC is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, which includes an analysis of pertinent environmental issues, including endangered or threatened species and impacts to fish and wildlife. This letter is being submitted under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934, as amended.

If the license is renewed, the unit that would operate under the renewed license would use existing plant facilities and transmission lines and would not require additional construction or disturbance of new areas. Any maintenance activities would be limited to previously disturbed areas. The site consists of approximately 2,150 acres with roughly two miles of frontage on both banks of the Mississippi River in Wright and Sherburne Counties. The majority of the acreage is located on the southern side of the river with approximately 450 acres on the northern side of the River. Approximately 50 acres are occupied by the plant and its supporting facilities. The remaining acres are undeveloped with approximately 174 acres leased by local farmers and 144 acres are under lease for recreational use.

The circulating water system utilizes both open and closed cycle operating modes, as well as a combination of the two. Cooling water is drawn and discharged to the Mississippi River through an approach channel and discharge canal. Monticello is also equipped with two mechanical draft cooling towers enabling complete or partial recirculation of cooling water when required by special permit (NPDES) conditions. The circulating water system components include the intake structure, circulating water pumps, main condenser, discharge structure, cooling tower pumps, two induced-draft cooling towers, and discharge canal.

Currently, there are seven transmission lines emanating from the Monticello Substation. The transmission lines in the scope of the environmental review for license renewal are those that were constructed for the specific purpose of connecting the plant to the transmission system. Transmission lines installed as a result of the construction and operation of Monticello are the Monticello-Coon Creek 345kV line and the Monticello-Parkers Lake 345kV line totaling about 60

miles of rights-of way. Xcel Energy controls these corridors through permanent easements purchased from land owners at the time of construction. These easements prohibit the use of property that could adversely affect the safe and reliable operation of the transmission lines. These transmission line corridors traverse Sherburne, Anoka, Wright, and Hennepin Counties. The transmission lines and site boundary are identified in Enclosures 1 and 2.

To support the environmental impact statement preparation process and to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the NRC requests a list of species and information on protected, proposed, and candidate species and critical habitat that may be in the vicinity of Monticello and its associated transmission line rights-of-way. In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

On June 28 through 29, 2005, we plan to conduct an environmental site audit at the Monticello site. We will hold two public NEPA scoping meetings on June 30, 2005, at the Monticello Community Center in Monticello, Minnesota. You and your staff are invited to attend both the site audit and the public meetings. Your office will receive a copy of the draft SEIS along with a request for comments. The anticipated publication date for the draft SEIS is February 2006. If you have any questions concerning Monticello, the license renewal application, or other aspects of this project, please contact Jennifer A. Davis, Environmental Project Manager, at 301-415-3835 or by e-mail at JXD10@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Pao-Tsin Kuo, Program Director
License Renewal and Environmental Impacts Program
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No.: 50-263

Enclosures: As stated

cc w/encl.: See next page

FIGURE 3.1-2
MONTICELLO 345-KV TRANSMISSION CORRIDORS

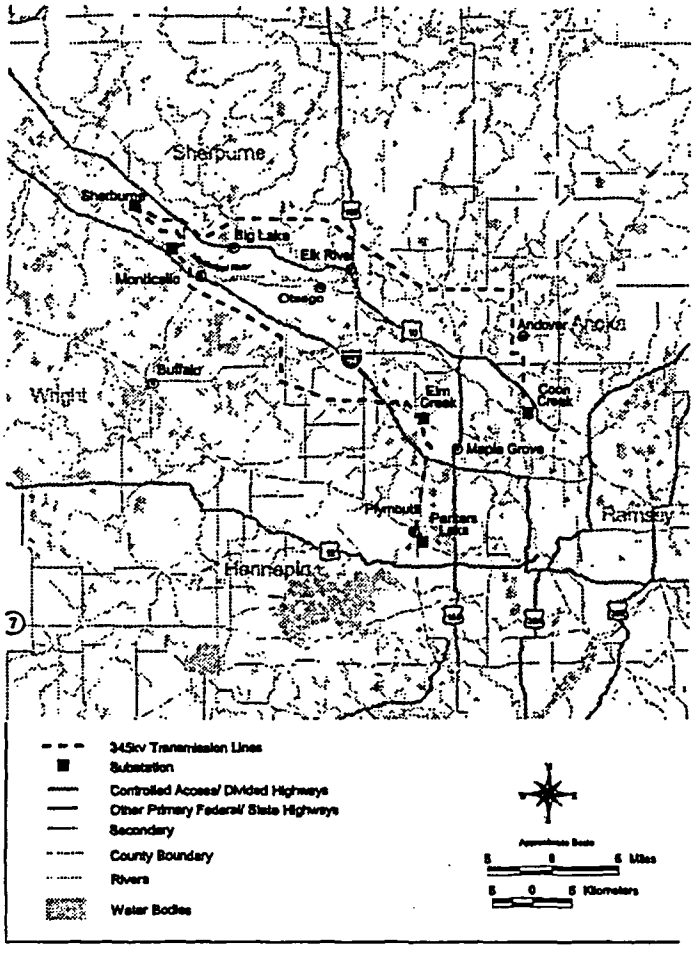
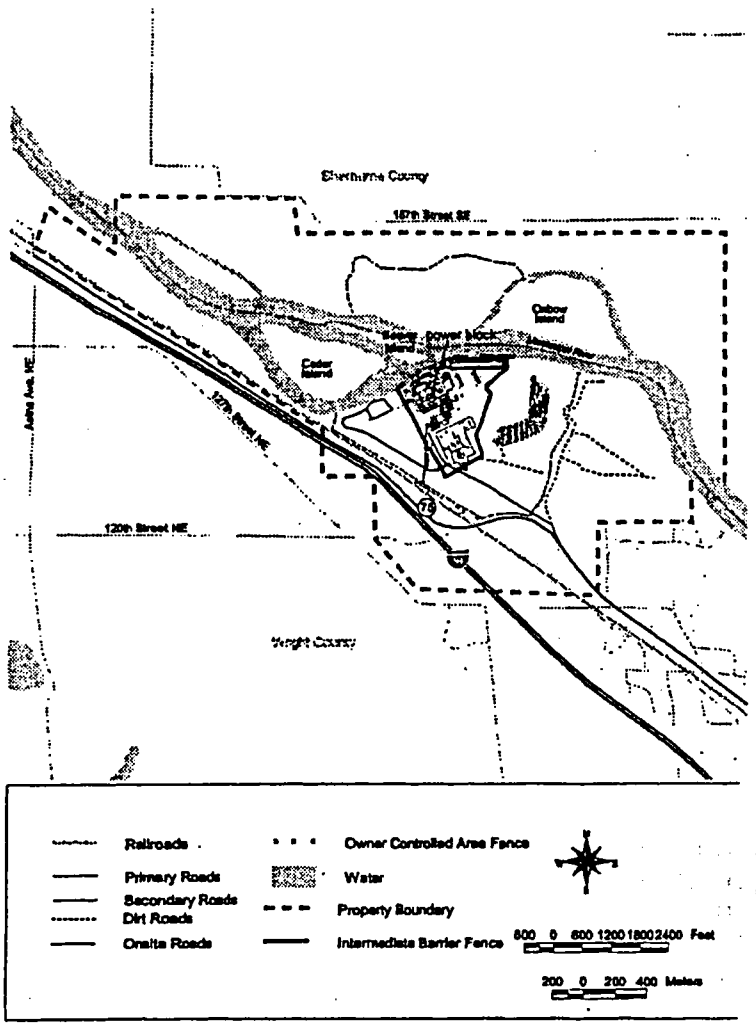


FIGURE 2.1-3
SITE BOUNDARY



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Twin Cities Field Office
4101 East 80th Street
Bloomington, Minnesota 55425-1665

JUL 13 2005

Mr. Pao-Tsin Kuo
Program Director
License Renewal and Environmental Impacts Program
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Dear Mr. Kuo:

This responds to your June 3, 2005, letter, requesting a list of federally threatened or endangered species and information on proposed and candidate species and critical habitat that may be in the vicinity of the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant. The project site is located on the right descending bank of the Mississippi River just upriver of Monticello in the NE1/4 of the SE1/4 of Section 32, T122N, R25W, Wright County, Minnesota. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is currently reviewing an application submitted by Nuclear Management Company, LLC (NMC) for the renewal of the operating license for the Monticello plant. NMC has applied for a 20 year extension on its current operating license, which expires in 2010.

In addition to the nuclear generating plant, the project also consists of two transmission lines. The Coon Creek line extends from the facility across the Mississippi River to Sherburne County and then east to Anoka County and south to the city of Coon Creek. The Parkers Lake line extends from the facility southeast through Wright County to Hennepin County and then south to Parkers Lake in the city of Plymouth. As part of the license renewal application, the NRC is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

The Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) on proposed actions that may affect federally-listed threatened and endangered species and listed critical habitat. The following listed species may be present in the action area:

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	Counties
Bald eagle	*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*	threatened	Anoka, Hennepin Sherburne, Wright
Gray wolf	*Canis lupus*	threatened	Sherburne
Higgins' eye pearlymussel	*Lampsilis higginsii*	endangered	Hennepin

As the lead Federal agency for the proposed action, the NRC is responsible for reviewing the proposed action and determining whether the action may affect any of the above listed species. If the NRC determines that the proposed action may adversely affect any federally listed species then it must notify the Service and initiate consultation under section 7(a)(2) of the Act.

If you have questions regarding our comments, please call Mr. R. Nicholas Rowse of my staff at (612) 725-3548, extension 210 or by email at nick_rowse@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Dan P. Stinnett

Dan P. Stinnett
Field Supervisor

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 22, 2005

Mr. Dan P. Stinnett, Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1 Federal Drive
BHW Federal Building
Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4056

SUBJECT: BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT FOR MONTICELLO NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL REVIEW (TAC NO. MC6441)

Dear Mr. Stinnett:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has prepared the enclosed biological assessment (BA) (Enclosure 1) to evaluate whether the proposed renewal of the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Monticello) operating license, for a period of an additional 20 years, would have adverse effects on listed species. The proposed action (license renewal) is not a major construction activity. Monticello, a single nuclear unit plant, is located in the City of Monticello in Wright County, Minnesota, on the south bank of the Mississippi River, 30 miles northwest of the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

By letter dated June 3, 2005, the NRC requested that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) provide lists of Federally listed endangered or threatened species, and information on protected, proposed, and candidate species, as well as any designated critical habitat, that may be in the vicinity of Monticello and its associated transmission line rights-of-way. The FWS responded to the NRC request on July 13, 2005, and indicated that two threatened species, the bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)* and the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*), and one endangered species, the Higgins' eye pearlymussel (*Lampsilis higginsii*), be considered for potential impacts of license renewal and operation.

This BA provides an evaluation of the potential impact of renewing the Monticello operating license for an additional 20 years of operation on two Federally listed threatened species and one Federally listed endangered species with the potential to occur within the vicinity of the Monticello site or along its associated transmission line corridors.

The NRC staff has determined the license renewal for Monticello may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the bald eagle; it will have no effect on the gray wolf or the Higgins' eye pearlymussel.

D. Stinnett -2-

We are requesting your concurrence with our determination. In reaching our conclusion, the NRC staff relied on information provided by the applicant, on research performed by the NRC staff, and on information from FWS (including current listings of endangered species provided by the FWS). If you have any questions regarding this BA or the staff's request, please contact Ms. Jennifer Davis, Environmental Project Manager, at 301-415-3835 or by e-mail at jxd10@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

Rani Franovich, Branch Chief
Environmental Branch B
Division of License Renewal
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No.: 50-263

Enclosure: As stated

cc w/encl.: See next page

Biological Assessment

Monticello Nuclear Plant
License Renewal Review
Docket Number
50-263

December 2005

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Rockville, MD

1.0 Introduction

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issues operating licenses for domestic nuclear power plants in accordance with the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (AEC 1954), as amended, and NRC implementing regulations. The purpose and need for the proposed action (that is, renewal of an operating license) is to provide an option that allows electric power generation to continue beyond the term of the current nuclear power plant operating license, so future generating needs can be met if the operator and State regulatory agencies pursue that option.

Northern States Power Company (NSP), which is a wholly owned utility operating subsidiary of Xcel Energy Inc. (Xcel Energy), has exclusive right to the energy generated by Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Monticello). Nuclear Management Company, LLC (NMC) operates and maintains Monticello on behalf of NSP. NMC is the licensee for the purposes of its current operating license (OL) and an applicant for the renewal of the OL. NMC has prepared an environmental report (ER) in conjunction with its application for renewal of the Monticello operating license, as provided for by the following NRC regulations:

- Title 10, *Energy*, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 54, "Requirements for Renewal of Operating Licenses for Nuclear Power Plants," Section 54.23, "Contents of Application — Environmental Information" (10 CFR 54.23).

- Title 10, *Energy*, CFR Part 51, "Environmental Protection Regulations for Domestic Licensing and Related Regulatory Functions," Section 51.53, "Postconstruction Environmental Reports," Subsection 51.53(c), "Operating License Renewal Stage" [10 CFR 51.53(c)].

The NRC is reviewing an application submitted by NMC (the applicant) for the renewal of the operating license for Monticello for a period of an additional 20 years. There will be no major construction, refurbishment, or replacement activities associated with this action. This biological assessment examines the potential effects of the continued operation of Monticello on three Federally-listed species that could occur within the Monticello site, near the site, or along its associated transmission line rights-of-way (ROWs) pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act.

In a letter dated June 3, 2005 (NRC 2005a), the NRC requested that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) provide lists of Federally listed endangered or threatened species, and information on protected, proposed, and candidate species, as well as any designated critical habitat, that may be in the vicinity of Monticello and its associated transmission line ROWs. The FWS responded (FWS 2005a) to the NRC request on July 13, 2005, and indicated that the Federally threatened bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)* and gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) and the endangered Higgin's eye pearlymussel (*Lampsilis higginsii*) be considered for potential impacts of license renewal and operation.

2.0 Proposed Action

The proposed action is the renewal of the operating license for Monticello. Monticello is located in southeastern Minnesota on the southern bank of the Mississippi River, approximately 22 mi southeast of St. Cloud, Minnesota, and 30 mi northwest of Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota. The area within 6 mi of Monticello, Minnesota (see Figure 1), includes portions of Wright and Sherburne counties which are primarily agricultural (NMC 2005). The current operating license for Monticello expires September 8, 2010. NMC has submitted an application to the NRC to renew this operating license for an additional 20 years of operation (until September 8, 2030). The renewed license, if issued, would be effective from the date of issuance until 20 years after the expiration date of the current operating license.

3.0 Environmental Setting

3.1 Aquatic Resources

The principal aquatic resource in the vicinity of Monticello is the Mississippi River, which is the source and receiving body of the water for the Monticello cooling system. The main aquatic habitats on the Monticello site are the cooling-system discharge canal and Mississippi River. The transmission lines that are within scope of the license renewal review for Monticello cross several streams and rivers. The Monticello-Parkers Lake line crosses Otter Creek, County Ditch #9, Crow River, Rush Creek, and Elm Creek; while the Monticello-Sherburne County-Coon Creek line crosses the Mississippi River, Elk River, St. Francis River, Tibbits Brook, Trott Brook, and the Rum River.

The Monticello plant facilities are located on the southern bank of the Mississippi River in Wright County at Mississippi River Mile (RM) 900. Near Monticello, the Mississippi River is broad and turbulent. The average river velocity varies from about 1.5 to 2.5 ft/s. The river 1.5 mi upstream to 1.5 mi downstream of the plant loses 10 ft in elevation, resulting in rapids and current velocities that exceed 4.9 ft/sec (NMC 2005). The main channel of the Mississippi River is approximately 980 ft wide in the vicinity of the Monticello site. This portion of the river is also shallow, averaging about 6.2 ft deep (Knutson et al. 1976). Within backwaters and protected shoreline areas, the river is less than 2 ft deep with silt and mud substrates, whereas the main channel substrates consist of gravel, rubble, and boulders with some sand (Afzal et al. 1975).

A number of physical and chemical stresses have caused major changes and modifications to the aquatic resources within the Upper Mississippi River Basin. Dams, and six associated headwater reservoirs, occur on the Mississippi River between its headwaters at Lake Itasca and St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam (RM 854) near the Twin Cities. Since there are no locks on these headwater dams, the river is not used for commercial navigation above the Twin Cities (NMC 2005). The Mississippi River in Minnesota is used for a variety of purposes, including drinking water, industrial use, irrigation, recreation, tourism, and conservation.

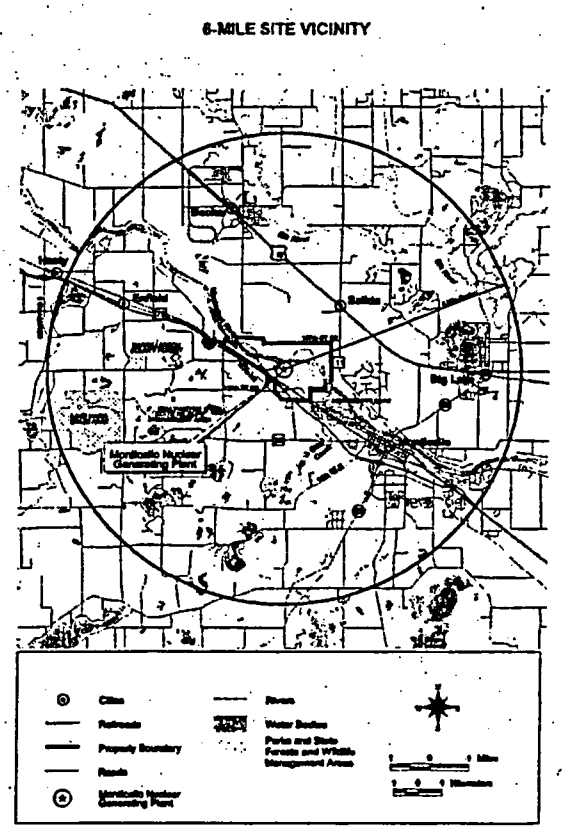


Figure 1. Location of Monticello

Despite the modifications and multiple competing uses of the Upper Mississippi River, the overall fish biodiversity has been persistent and resilient (USGS 1999). Impacts to the river include urban, industrial, and agricultural contaminants; steam modification; water diversions; land use changes; dredging; shoreline modifications; and wetland deliniations and modifications (Weitzell et al. 2003; Genet and Chirhart 2004). In Minnesota, 75 species of fish have been reported within the upper portion of the Mississippi River (Hatch and Schmidt 2004). Fifty-one species have been collected by electroshocking and seining within the Monticello site vicinity since sampling began during pre-operational years (NSP 2004). The fish community in the Monticello area has remained about the same since before the plant became operational, with only minor variations occurring between areas upstream and downstream from the Monticello

discharge (NSP 2004). Among the 27 species collected by electroshocking, the major species include the shorthead redhorse (*Moxostoma macrolepidotum*), silver redhorse (*M. anisurum*), common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*), northern hog sucker (*Hypentelium nigricans*), white sucker (*Catostomus commersoni*), channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*), and walleye (*Sander vitreus*) (NSP 2004). Forty-four species have been collected in seining samples since 1970. The major species collected include the sand shiner (*Notropis stramineus*), spotfin shiner (*Cyprinella spiloptera*), bluntnose minnow (*Pimephales notatus*), and bigmouth shiner (*N. dorsalis*) (NSP 2004).

The spotfin and sand shiners are the major forage fish species in the area (NSP 2004). Common game species included the smallmouth bass, black crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*), yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*), and walleye. Other sport fish include northern pike (*Esox lucius*), common carp, and black bullhead (*Ameiurus melas*) (Amish et al. 1978). A commercial fishery does not occur near Monticello (Amish et al. 1978).

The major primary producers within the Monticello area are periphyton, which contribute an estimated 60 to 82% of the primary production in the Monticello area (Amish et al. 1978). Peak periphyton production occurs in summer. Phytoplankton in the Upper Mississippi River is dominated by diatoms and green algae, and contributes 18 to 40% of the primary productivity in the Monticello area (Amish et al. 1978). The macrophytes found in the immediate area near Monticello include the American pondweed (*Potamogeton nodosus*), sago pondweed (*Stuckenia pectinatus*), and antifever fontinalis moss (*Fontinalis antipyretica*). The macroscopic green alga (*Cladophora glomerata*) also occurs in the area. Overall, a low abundance of macrophytes occurs in the Monticello area due to high currents and shifting sand and gravel substrates (Amish et al. 1978).

Near Monticello, the zooplankton community is comprised of protozoans, rotifers, cladocerans, and copepods (Afzal et al. 1975; Amish et al. 1978).

The most abundant groups of benthic macroinvertebrates near Monticello include oligochaetes (aquatic annelid worms), mayflies, caddisflies, aquatic beetles, midges, black flies, aquatic snails, and fingernail clams (Amish et al. 1978). The non-channel areas of the Upper Mississippi River consistently support more benthic macroinvertebrate species than the main channel area (USGS 1999). This was also noted near Monticello where 66 genera of macroinvertebrates were collected in the backwaters, while only 24 genera were collected from the main channel (Amish et al. 1978).

The Upper Mississippi River contains a rich assemblage of freshwater mussels. Historically, as many as 50 species of mussels have been documented from the Upper Mississippi River, but only 30 species have been reported in recent surveys. Many are rare (i.e., listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern by one or more states [USGS 1999]). The freshwater mussels within the Upper Mississippi River have been adversely impacted by activities such as collection for the pearl button and cultured pearl industries, siltation (associated with agriculture, poor land management, and impoundments), pollution from

agriculture and industrial chemicals, establishment and maintenance of the navigation channel, dams, loss of appropriate fish host species, and competition from exotic species, particularly the zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*) (USGS 1999; Weitzell et al. 2003).

The range of some mussel species has been expanding above St. Anthony Falls (located at RM 854, 46 mi downstream of Monticello), as fish (hosts for mussel glochidia [the parasitic larvae of native freshwater mussels]) can now circumnavigate the two navigation locks at this location (Kelner and Davis 2002). About 13 mussel species currently occur upstream of St. Anthony Falls (MNDNR 2003a). Only six species were recently collected above Coon Rapids Dam (RM 866): white heelsplitter (*Lasmigona complanata*), giant floater (*Pyganodon grandis*), plain pocketbook (*Lampsilis cardium*), fatmucket (*L. siliquoidea*), black sandshell (*Ligumia recta*), and pink heelsplitter (*Potamilus alatus*) (Kelner and Davis 2002). No information on mussel species within the immediate area of Monticello is available.

The zebra mussel became established in the Upper Mississippi River by 1992 and has continued to spread throughout the river system. Its increase causes a decline among many native mussels, as it can out-compete native species for oxygen and food and is so prolific that it can smother native mussel beds (FWS 2001b). To date, known populations of the zebra mussel within the Mississippi River have not been found above the Twin Cities area (St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam) (MNDNR 2005). They were not present between RM 854 and RM 848 (Pool 1), and were found to be sparse between RM 848 and RM 797 (Pools 2 and 3) (Kelner and Davis 2002). Similarly, the Asiatic clam (*Corbicula fluminea*), another invasive mollusc species that has caused condenser tube clogging problems at power plants, has not been found above the Twin Cities area of the Mississippi River (MNDNR 2003a).

3.2 Terrestrial Resources

The Monticello site is approximately 2150 acres, and has roughly 2 mi of shoreline on the north and south banks of the Mississippi River in Wright and Sherburne Counties (NMC 2005). The Monticello site is located in a region dominated by rivers, streams, and lakes (NMC 2005). Land use within the region is primarily agricultural; therefore, natural deciduous climax vegetation communities previously found within the city limits of Monticello have been reduced to remnant patches of maple (*Acer* spp.), basswood (*Tilia americana*), elm (*Ulmus* spp.), oak (*Quercus* spp.), and hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*). These patches are restricted mostly to larger river islands and small isolated pockets along the river banks (AEC 1972).

The Upper Mississippi River near the Monticello site supports a variety of plant and animal species that are typical of free-flowing, upper Midwestern rivers (NMC 2005). In general, facilities in use at the Monticello site are located on previously cultivated areas and consist of early-succession forbs and grasses. Upland forests on the Monticello site are predominantly northern pin oak (*Quercus ellipsoidalis*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), basswood, and prickly ash (*Zanthosxylum americanum*). Forested wetlands on the northeast bank of the river and the river islands include American elm (*Ulmus americana*), box elder (*Acer negundo*), silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), and black willow (*Salix nigra*) (MCBS 1998).

Mammals typical of the area and identified within the Monticello site include white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), red squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*), grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*), southern red-backed vole (*Clethrionomys gapperi*), meadow vole (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*), mice (*Peromyscus* spp.), plains pocket gopher (*Geomys bursarius*), white-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus townsendii*), beaver (*Castor canadensis*), muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), eastern fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*), eastern chipmunk (*Tamias striatus*), American mink (*Mustela vison*), weasels (*Mustela frenata, M. erminea,* and *M. nivalis*), and striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) (AEC 1972; NMC 2005).

Furthermore, the Sherco Environmental Monitoring and Ecological Studies Program (NMC 2005) identified 99 avian species over a ten-year monitoring period during breeding season road transects surveys and in a floodplain near the Monticello site. The most abundant species observed during these surveys were mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), cliff swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*), barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), vesper sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*), red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), common grackle (*Quiscalus quicula*), American goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*), and house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). Game species commonly harvested within the vicinity of Monticello are ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*) and ring-necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) (NMC 2005). Waterfowl commonly encountered along the river shoreline are Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), and wood duck (*Aix sponsa*). Grassland/woodland ecotone avian species include eastern meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*), western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*), American robin, blue jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*), eastern bluebird (*Sialia sialis*), northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) (NMC 2005).

In its Environmental Report, the applicant identified seven transmission lines that emanate from the Monticello site. The two transmission lines installed as a direct result of initial construction and operation of the Monticello site (and are, therefore, within the scope of the license renewal environmental report) are the Monticello-Coon Creek 345-kV line and the Monticello-Parkers Lake 345-kV line (AEC 1972), and are pertinent to this analysis (see Figure 2 and Table 1). These transmission lines are expected to remain a permanent part of the regional transmission system even after the decommissioning of Monticello.

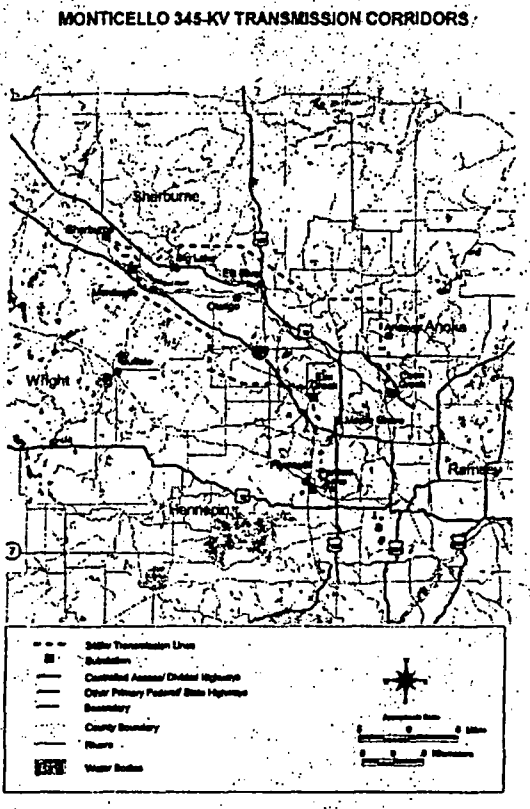


Figure 2. Monticello Transmission Lines

Table 1. Monticello Transmission Line Rights-of-Way

Substation	No. of Lines	kV	Approximate Distance (mi)	Corridor	Corridor Width (ft)	Corridor Area (ac)
Sherburne County	1	345	43.1	Monticello-Coon Creek	Varies from 125 to 240	749.7
Elm Creek	1	345	37.1	Monticello-Parkers Lake	Varies from 165 to 240	957

Source: Xcel 2005

Xcel Energy is responsible for maintenance on transmission line ROWs for Monticello's owner (NSP) and operator (NMC). Xcel Energy implements specific programs for ensuring continued operation of its transmission lines, continued compatibility of land uses on the transmission corridors, and environmentally sound maintenance of the corridors (NMC 2005). The Xcel Energy program for conductor and tower maintenance includes monthly fixed-wing aerial patrols for the 345-kV lines and annual helicopter patrols on all lines in the system (NMC 2005). Xcel Energy's vegetation management in ROWs is focused on reducing risk to transmission lines by keeping corridors free of tall-growing vegetation. Low-growing trees, shrubs, and grasses are encouraged by selectively removing tall-growing trees and brush. Qualified line-clearance tree trimmers manually cut and prune using approved mechanical equipment, such as hydro-axes, and selective application of approved herbicides (NMC 2005). Approved herbicides are applied in strict compliance with all Federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Similarly, tall trees typically located just off the right-of-way that have a high probability of failure and sufficient height to make contact with the conductors and/or structures are pruned or cut as appropriate. Vegetation control cycles vary based on line voltage and vegetation conditions, but typically occur on intervals from 2 to 8 years.

4.0 Assessment of Federally Listed Species and Critical Habitat

Three Federally listed species are evaluated in this biological assessment because of their proximity to Monticello or its associated transmission lines (Table 2). No Federally designated candidate species, nor critical habitat for any threatened or endangered species, exist at the Monticello site or along the associated transmission corridors (NMC 2005; FWS 2005a).

Table 2. Terrestrial and Aquatic Species Listed as Endangered or Threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and that Occur or Potentially Occur Within the Monticello Site or the Associated Transmission Line Rights-of-Way

Scientific Name	Type	Common Name	Federal Status	Counties
Lampsilis higginsii	Invertebrate	Higgins' eye pearlymussel	Endangered	Hennepin
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bird	bald eagle	Threatened	Anoka, Hennepin, Sherburne, Wright
Canis lupus	Mammal	gray wolf	Threatened	Sherburne

Source: FWS 2005a

Higgins' Eye Pearlymussel (*Lampsilis higginsii*)

The Federally listed endangered Higgins' eye pearlymussel is only found in the Mississippi River, St. Croix River in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin River, and the Rock River in Illinois. It may be present within Hennepin County over 45 river miles (RM) downstream of the Monticello site (FWS 2005a). It has not been reported from Sherburne or Wright counties where Monticello is located. The Higgins' eye pearlymussel spawns in late summer, but larvae are retained in the marsupia until they are released during the following spring or summer (FWS 2003). The Higgins' eye pearlymussel most frequently occurs in medium to large rivers with current velocities of about 0.5 to 1.5 ft/sec and in depths of 3 to 20 ft, with firm, coarse sand or mud-gravel substrates (FWS 2000, 2001a).

No critical habitat has been designated for the Higgins' eye pearlymussel. However, ten Essential Habitat Areas (EHAs) for the Higgins' eye pearlymussel occur within the Upper Mississippi River watershed. EHAs are locations known to contain reproducing populations of the Higgins' eye pearlymussel in association with a healthy and diverse unionid community (e.g., mussel beds) (FWS 1998). No EHAs occur within the Mississippi River drainage close to Monticello. The most upstream EHA is at Whiskey Rock, Iowa, at Mississippi RM 656, which is downstream from Lock and Dam 8. Monticello is located some 240 RM upstream. The closest EHA for the Higgins' eye pearlymussel occur in the St. Croix River (Hornbach 2004), which flows into the Mississippi River at RM 811 about 89 mi downstream from Monticello.

Suitable fish hosts for the glochidia (larvae) include freshwater drum (*Aplodinotus grunniens*), largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), black crappie, yellow perch, sauger (*Sander canadensis*), and walleye; while marginal fish hosts include northern pike, bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*), and green sunfish (*L. cyanellus*) (FWS 2003).

In 2000-2001, an empty Higgins' eye pearlymussel shell was found in Upper Pool 3 of the Mississippi River (the area below Lock and Dam 3 in the area where the St. Croix River enters the Mississippi River at RM 811 (Kelner and Davis 2002). In 2000, 200 specimens of Higgins'

eye pearlymussel were relocated from Pool 14 of the Mississippi River to Upper Pool 2 and 3 (Kelner and Davis 2002). The transplanted mussels are over 50 RM downstream of Monticello. Reintroductions of the Higgins' eye pearlymussel into the rivers from which it has been extirpated have been conducted since 2000, but it is too early to determine the success of these reintroductions (FWS 2003).

The FWS (FWS 2000) has determined that the continuation of the current operation and maintenance activities of the 9-ft navigation channel in the Mississippi River for another 50 years would jeopardize the continued existence of the Higgins' eye pearlymussel. Two of the EHAs for the Higgins' eye pearlymussel, both located in Wisconsin, are located within the navigation channel (FWS 2000). However, the major adverse effect would be associated with continuing upstream transport of zebra mussels by barge traffic. Currently, there are no effective ways to control established populations of zebra mussels at the scale required to eliminate their threat to the Higgins' eye pearlymussel (FWS 2003).

Coon Rapids Dam, located over 5 mi downstream of where Rum River enters the Mississippi River relative to the plant, serves as a faunal barrier to upstream migration of mussels via their host fish (Kelner and Davis 2002).

The Higgins' eye pearlymussel is not known to occur further upstream than Pool 2 of the Mississippi River, which is mostly located downstream from the Twin Cities area (Kelner and Davis 2002; Hornbach 2004) over 50 RM downstream of Monticello. Therefore, potential impacts from the operation of Monticello are too far removed to adversely affect the species. The Monticello cooling-water intake and discharge are closely monitored under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. NPDES permit limits are reviewed on a regular basis by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to ensure the protection of aquatic biota, including fish species that can serve as hosts for the glochidia of the Higgins' eye pearlymussel. Additionally, there are no plans to conduct refurbishment or construction at Monticello.

On the basis of the negligible anticipated impacts of the cooling-water intake and discharge on the Higgins' eye pearlymussel and its current distribution, the NRC staff concludes that continued operation of Monticello over the 20-year license renewal project will have no effect on the Higgins' eye pearlymussel.

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

One active bald eagle nest is known from the Monticello site. The nest is located on Beaver Island in the Mississippi River north-northwest of the Monticello power block. Beaver Island is wholly within the Monticello site. During the June 2005 site audit, the NRC staff observed an eagle perched next to the nest. Subsequent discussions with the NMC biologist confirm that this is an active nest (NRC 2005b).

During the June 2005 site audit, the NRC staff also observed an additional nest on a transmission tower located on the Monticello-Coon Creek 345 kV line. Again, discussions with the NMC biologist also confirm that this also is an active nest (NRC 2005b).

NMC has adopted the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Management Guidelines for Bald Eagle Breeding Areas, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Northern States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan (MNDNR 2003b) recommendations for protecting individual occupied and active nest sites. Additionally, on April 19, 2002, Xcel Energy entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) which establishes procedures and policies to avoid avian injuries or fatalities on company property (Xcel Energy et al. 2002).

The nest on Beaver Island is located approximately 1000 feet north-northwest from the Monticello power block in which the majority of site activity occurs. Activities that might affect nesting success, such as landscape alterations and construction, would be outside both the Primary and Secondary Protective Zones as defined by the MNDNR management guidelines. The licensee does not engage in any burning or forest maintenance activities within these zones and physical security requirements ban unauthorized human entry and low flying aircraft over company property on both sides of the Mississippi River. Additionally, the island properties located within the river system (e.g. Beaver Island) are posted against trespassing. There is no vehicular access to these areas except by boat; however, unauthorized access by boat would result in action by the site security force.

The majority of adverse human activities would also be restricted throughout the year in the Tertiary zone (660 feet to 1/4 mile from the nest), with restrictions on landscape alterations and burning. The fact that the station predates the construction of the nest, and that the station has been in almost continuous operation during past nesting activity, strongly suggests that the activities associated with Monticello operation are not likely to adversely affect bald eagles using the nest. In fact, the limitations on unauthorized access, the relatively pristine nature of the majority of the 2,150 acre site, the roughly two miles of undeveloped shoreline on the north and south banks of the river (with the exception of the area of the plant), and the warm water discharge that attracts and concentrates fish for foraging, particularly during the winter, suggests that the Monticello site could be considered beneficial to the species.

The nest located on the transmission tower along the Monticello-Coon Creek 345kV line is located in an area of limited public access. Periodic line maintenance for vegetative control is performed, on average, every 4 years and consists of the removal of danger trees on either side of the ROW and the clearing of vegetative growth under the lines that could come within close proximity of the conductors (NMC 2005). Such line maintenance is achieved by selective tree removal along the edges of the transmission corridor that could pose a danger if toppled into the line and selectively removing potentially tall-growing trees and brush in the actual ROW. The area where the Monticello-Coon Creek line nest is located is relatively open and poses little line risk due to danger trees; therefore, future removal of large trees along the margins of the transmission lines is unlikely. Additionally, because of the eagle nest, selective vegetative clearing activities within the ROW is restricted to summer, which is outside the critical period of 10 February to 1 May, as defined in the MNDNR management guidelines.

The remoteness of the Monticello-Coon Creek nest site, and the timing of infrequent vegetative maintenance leads the staff to conclude that continued plant operation is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle nest site on the Monticello-Coon Creek transmission line.

Lehman (2001) summarized the literature regarding raptor electrocutions on power lines, and emphasized that nearly all electrocutions in the United States occur on comparatively low-voltage distribution lines supplying individual users and businesses, not transmission lines. The spacing of conductors on transmission towers is typically greater than the wingspan of raptors, and therefore, electrocutions are highly unlikely.

There are no known reports of bald eagle collisions with the Monticello transmission lines or other Monticello structures. Xcel Energy has a program in place to install flight diverters on its transmission lines to reduce potential for avian collisions and has entered into a MOU with the FWS and MNDNR to develop and implement an avian protection plan (Xcel Energy et al. 2002). The MOU requires that any injuries or mortalities to bald eagles associated with transmission line collisions would be reported to the MNDNR. The requirement to report all onsite raptor mortalities and any bald eagle injuries or mortalities to MNDNR is part of NMC's procedures.

Based on the location of the onsite nest relative to the power block, the remoteness of the nest on the Monticello-Coon Creek transmission line, NMC's commitment to follow the MNDNR Management Guidelines for Bald Eagle Breeding Areas and the FWS Northern States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan, the actual potential for disturbance during nesting/breeding, either from the Monticello site activities or from ROW maintenance, is highly unlikely. The potential for bald eagle electrocutions and collisions is also highly unlikely. Consequently, the NRC staff has determined that renewal of the Monticello operating license for an additional 20 years is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle at the Monticello site or the associated transmission lines.

Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*)

The gray wolf was listed in Minnesota as Federally endangered in 1974 as a result of human persecution and reduced prey availability. Gray wolves in Minnesota were reclassified from endangered to threatened in 1978, to allow for special regulation under Section 4(d) of the Act. Since 1977, gray wolf populations in Minnesota have expanded. Population recovery goals of 1250 to 1400 individuals have been achieved, with populations at or above that level since the late 1970s (FWS 2005b). Today, wolves live in areas with higher road and human densities than previously believed to be suitable for wolf survival. Wolves continue to disperse to areas in west-central and east-central Minnesota (just north of Minneapolis/St. Paul), North and South Dakota, and Wisconsin (FWS 2005b). Potential impacts to the Federally-threatened gray wolf include direct destruction of the habitat from land-disturbing activities on site, and routine vegetation maintenance practices on site and along the transmission corridors. However, NMC has not identified any land-disturbing activities that would be undertaken for license renewal (NMC 2005). As gray wolf populations recover, it is likely that they may traverse the transmission corridors of interest to the license renewal of Monticello. Gray wolves have not been sighted in the Monticello area or on the Monticello site to date. It is possible that if the population of gray wolves continues to increase, the species may use the Monticello site sometime in the future. However, activities associated with future plant operations would not be detrimental to the species.

Vegetation management may improve habitat quality for prey items important to the gray wolf. In fact, the maintenance of a large tract of undeveloped property associated with the site, closed to the public, with no hunting pressure, may in fact be beneficial to the species. However, continued high density development around the plant site will likely preclude the species from the area.

For these reasons, the NRC staff has determined that continued operation of Monticello over the 20-year license renewal period will have no effect on the gray wolf.

5.0 Conclusions

The NRC staff has evaluated the potential impacts of an additional 20 years of continued Monticello operation on two Federally listed threatened species and one Federally listed endangered species with the potential to occur within the vicinity of the Monticello site or along its associated transmission line corridors. Although the Federally protected bald eagle is known to use the Monticello site and associated transmission corridors, NMC and Xcel Energy have developed and implemented procedures to protect the species and important habitat.

The NRC staff has determined that license renewal for Monticello may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the bald eagle; and will have no effect on the gray wolf or the Higgins' eye pearlymussel.

6.0 References

10 CFR Part 51. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 10, *Energy*, Part 51, "Environmental Protection Regulations for Domestic Licensing and Related Regulatory Functions."

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MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
State Historic Preservation Office

April 26, 2006

Rani Franovich, Branch Chief
Environmental Branch B
Division of License Renewal
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Re: Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant License Renewal
Monticello, Wright County
SHPO Number: 2004-2193

Dear Rani Franovich:

Thank you for your recent submittals regarding the above referenced undertaking.

As you know, you consulted with our office regarding the undertaking in 2005, and we concluded at that time that no historic properties would be affected. Based on our review of the information recently submitted, we see no reason to alter that conclusion.

Contact us at 651-296-5462 with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Britta L. Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

345 Kellogg Boulevard West/Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-1906/Telephone 651-296-6126

IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Custom House, Room 244
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-2904

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

May 2, 2006

ER 06/73

Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop T6-D59
Washington, DC 20555-0001

The U.S. Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants, NUREG-1437, Draft Supplement 26 (dated January 2006), regarding the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant, Wright County, Minnesota.

The license renewal for Monticello Nuclear generating Plant does not involve any major construction or physical alteration of the project area. The Generic EIS and Draft Supplement 26 adequately address the concerns of the Department regarding fish and wildlife resources, as well as species protected by the Endangered Species Act. We concur with the preliminary conclusions of the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff with respect to the impacts of continued operations on these resources.

In a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) dated December 22, 2005, the NRC transmitted a Biological Assessment on the proposed license renewal for the Monticello Plant with a determination that the renewal for an additional 20 years is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle at the Monticello site or along the associated transmission lines. The Service has indicated that it concurs with the determination and will be providing an official concurrence directly to the NRC.

Correction needed in Final EIS: On page 2-22, line 16, the statement that "To date, populations of the zebra mussel within the Mississippi River have not been found above the Twin Cities area (St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam)(MNDNR 2005)" is no longer correct. On Oct. 19, 2005, the MNDNR issued a news release confirming the presence of zebra mussels within Rice Lake, an impoundment within the Mississippi River near the City of Brainerd in Crow Wing County. Brainerd is approximately 94 miles upstream of Monticello.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Chezik
Regional Environmental Office

cc: L. MacLean, FWS, Fort Snelling, MN