

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-312]

Sacramento Municipal Utility District; Rancho Seco Nuclear Generating Station; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact**AGENCY:** Nuclear Regulatory Commission.**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John B. Hickman, Project Manager, Reactor Decommissioning Section, Decommissioning Directorate, Division of Waste Management and Environmental Protection, Office of Nuclear Material and Safeguards Information, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC, 20555. Telephone: 301-415-3017; fax number: (301) 415-5397; e-mail: jbh@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering granting a partial exemption from the Recordkeeping requirements of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) part 50.71(c); 10 CFR part 50, Appendix A; 10 CFR part 50, Appendix B, for the Rancho Seco Generating Station (Rancho Seco) as requested by Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) on September 2, 2004. An environmental assessment (EA) was performed by the NRC staff in support of its review of the exemption request.

I. Introduction

SMUD is the licensee and holder of Facility Operating License No. DPR-54 for Rancho Seco, a permanently shutdown decommissioning nuclear plant. Although permanently shutdown, this facility is still subject to all rules, regulations, and orders of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

SMUD shut down Rancho Seco permanently on June 7, 1989, after approximately 15 years of operation. On August 29, 1989, SMUD formally informed the NRC that the plant was shut down permanently. On May 20, 1991, SMUD submitted the Rancho Seco decommissioning plan and on March 20, 1995, the NRC issued an Order approving the decommissioning plan and authorizing the decommissioning of Rancho Seco.

II. Environmental Assessment Summary*Identification of Proposed Action*

The exemption will allow the disposal of records, prior to termination of the Rancho Seco Possession Only

License No. DPR-54, that (1) are associated with the operation, design, fabrication, erection, and testing of structures, systems, and components that are no longer quality-related and/or important to safety or have been removed from the plant for disposal, and (2) require storage in their original hardcopy format due to practical and feasibility limitations associated with transferring them to microfilm or microfiche.

Need for Proposed Action

The requested exemption and application of the exemption will eliminate the requirement to maintain records that are no longer necessary due to the permanently shutdown status of the facility and thereby reduce the financial burden on ratepayers associated with the storage of a large volume of hardcopy records.

The Affected Environment and Environmental Impacts

The proposed action is purely administrative in nature and will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents. No changes are being made in the types of effluents that may be released off site and there is no significant increase in the amount of any effluent released offsite. There is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not have a potential to affect any historic sites. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents, and it has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that the proposed action will have no significant effect on the environment.

Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (*i.e.*, the "no-action" alternative). Under this alternative Rancho Seco would continue to store the records in question until license termination which would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Agencies and Persons Contacted

None.

III. Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on this review, the NRC staff has concluded that there are no significant impacts on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the staff has determined that preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted, and a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate.

IV. Further Information

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated September 2, 2004 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML042540018). Publicly available records will be accessible electronically from the ADAMS Public Electronic Reading Room on the Internet at the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who encounter problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, should contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) Reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, (301) 415-4737, or by e-mail to pdr@nrc.gov.

These documents may also be viewed electronically on the public computers located at the NRC's PDR, O 1 F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852. The PDR reproduction contractor will copy documents for a fee.

Please note that on October 25, 2004, the NRC suspended public access to ADAMS, and initiated an additional security review of publicly available documents to ensure that potentially sensitive information is removed from the ADAMS database accessible through the NRC's Web site. Interested members of the public may obtain copies of the referenced documents for review and/or copying by contacting the Public Document Room pending resumption of public access to ADAMS. The NRC Public Document Room is located at NRC Headquarters in Rockville, MD, and can be contacted at 800-397-4209 or (301) 415-4737 or pdr@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 9th day of November, 2004.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Claudia M. Craig,

Acting Deputy Director, Decommissioning Directorate, Division of Waste Management and Environmental Protection, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

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