



NRC NEWS

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CONTACT: Ken Clark (404)562-4416

E-mail: OPA2@nrc.gov

Roger Hannah (404)562-4417

NRC STAFF SEEKS INPUT ON BRUNSWICK NUCLEAR PLANT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR LICENSE RENEWAL

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has reached the preliminary conclusion that there are no environmental impacts which would preclude renewal of the operating licenses for the Brunswick Nuclear Power Plant located near Southport, N. C.

The information is contained in a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) on the proposed license renewal. The draft EIS is open for public comment until Dec. 2, 2005, and will also be the subject of public meetings on October 18 in Southport.

The NRC has been reviewing the application for extension of the Brunswick license since Progress Energy, which operates the plant, filed it in October 2004. Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant is issued for up to 40 years. The license may be renewed for up to an additional 20 years if NRC requirements are met. The current NRC licenses at Brunswick will expire on Sept. 8, 2016, for Unit 1 and Dec. 27, 2014, for Unit 2.

The possible environmental effects of an additional 20 years of nuclear plant operation are described in the NRC's Generic Environmental Impact Statement or GEIS (NUREG-1437). The NRC issues a site-specific supplement to the GEIS on each plant requesting license renewal to address the potential environmental impacts. Issues specific to Brunswick are addressed in Supplement 25. The NRC staff's preliminary recommendation is that the adverse environmental impacts of license renewal for the two Brunswick reactors are not so great that preserving the option of license renewal for energy-planning decision makers would be unreasonable.

On Tuesday, Oct. 18, 2005, the NRC staff will hold two similar meetings in Southport to obtain comments on the draft supplement to the GEIS. The meetings will be held at the Southport City Hall, 201 E. Moore Street in Southport. The two sessions will begin at 1:30 in the afternoon and at 7:00 in the evening, respectively. In addition, the NRC staff will host informal discussions one hour prior to each meeting. NRC staff members will be available to answer questions and provide additional information about the license renewal process during those informal sessions, but no comment submittals on environmental issues will be accepted then.

The two sessions will begin with identical overviews, including presentations by NRC staff on the draft supplement to the GEIS. There will then be an opportunity for public comments.

For planning purposes, anyone interested in attending or presenting oral comments at the October 18th meetings is encouraged to pre-register by contacting Richard Emch Jr. of the NRC by telephone at 1-800-368-5642, extension 1590, or by e-mail at BrunswickEIS@nrc.gov no later than October 11. Interested persons may also register to speak before the start of each session. Time for individual comments at the meetings may be limited to accommodate all speakers.

Written comments on the draft supplement to the GEIS will also be considered by NRC staff. Comments should be submitted either by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mailstop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by e-mail to BrunswickEIS@NRC.gov .

The draft supplement to the GEIS is available for public review at the William Madison Randall Library, 601 S. College Road, Wilmington, N.C. It is also available in the NRC Public Document Room at NRC Headquarters, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md., and on the Internet at www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/brunswick.html#eis .

At the conclusion of the public comment period on Dec. 2, 2005, the NRC staff will consider and address comments during the preparation of the final supplement to the GEIS, which is scheduled to be issued in April 2006.

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