Mr. Mark A. Schimmel  
Site Vice President  
Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant  
Northern States Power Company, Minnesota  
1717 Wakonade Drive East  
Welch, MN 55089  

SUBJECT: ANNUAL ASSESSMENT LETTER FOR PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2, (REPORT 05000282/2011001 AND 05000306/2011001)

Dear Mr. Schimmel:

On February 17, 2011, the NRC completed its end-of-cycle performance review of Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2. The NRC reviewed the most recent quarterly performance indicators (PIs) in addition to inspection results and enforcement actions from January 1, 2010, through December 31, 2010. This letter informs you of the NRC’s assessment of your facility during this period and its plans for future inspections at your facility. This performance review and enclosed inspection plan do not include security information. A separate letter will include the NRC’s assessment of your performance in the Security Cornerstone and its security-related inspection plan.

The NRC determined that overall, Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2, operated in a manner that preserved public health and safety and met all cornerstone objectives. The NRC determined the performance for Unit 1 during the most recent quarter was within the Licensee Response Column of the NRC’s Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) Action Matrix because all inspection findings had very low (i.e., green) safety significance, and all PIs indicated that your performance was within the nominal, expected range (i.e., green). The NRC determined the performance for Unit 2 during the most recent quarter was within the Regulatory Response Column of the NRC’s ROP Action Matrix based on one inspection finding in the Mitigating Systems Cornerstone being classified as having low-to-moderate safety significance (White). This finding was from the third quarter of 2009 and related to inadequate design of the component cooling water system. A supplemental inspection (95001) was performed the week of June 14 through 18, 2010. During this inspection, we were unable to close the White finding due to an incomplete extent of condition review. An additional supplemental inspection was performed the week of November 1, 2010.
Based upon the results of this inspection, the NRC closed the White finding and Prairie Island Unit 2 transitioned to the Licensee Response Column of the NRC Action Matrix. Therefore, the NRC plans to conduct ROP baseline inspections at your facility.

In the 2009 mid-cycle assessment letter, dated September 1, 2009 (ADAMS Ref. ML092440367), we advised you of a substantive cross-cutting issue (SCCI) in the area of human performance (HP) with cross-cutting themes in the aspects of systematic process (H.1(a)), procedural adequacy (H.2(c)), and procedural compliance (H.4(b)). During this assessment period there were eight findings documented with cross-cutting aspects in the HP area. Of these eight findings, one shared a common cross-cutting aspect of systematic process. No findings were identified in the procedural adequacy or procedural compliance areas.

With respect to the SCCI areas of systematic process (H.1(a)), procedural adequacy (H.2(c)), and procedural compliance (H.4(b)), both the NRC and your organization have noted an improvement in these areas. Your staff has identified corrective actions that should reasonably address the SCCI. Additionally, the number of findings with a cross-cutting aspect in these areas has been reduced. For these reasons, the NRC has gained confidence in your ability to correct the concerns identified and sustained improvement has been observed in these aspects. Therefore, the SCCI aspects in systematic process (H.1(a)), procedural adequacy (H.2(c)), and procedural compliance (H.4(b)) are closed.

The enclosed inspection plan lists the inspections scheduled through June 30, 2012. Routine inspections performed by resident inspectors are not included in the inspection plan. The inspections listed during the last 9 months of the inspection plan are tentative and may be revised at the mid-cycle performance review. The NRC provides the inspection plan to allow for the resolution of any scheduling conflicts and personnel availability issues. The NRC will contact you as soon as possible to discuss changes to the inspection plan should circumstances warrant any changes.

In addition to the ROP baseline, inspections are planned for Temporary Instructions 2515/177, “Managing Gas Accumulation in Emergency Core Cooling, Decay Heat Removal & Containment Spray System,” and 2515/179, “Verification of Licensee Responses to NRC Requirement for Inventories of Materials Tracked in National Source Tracking System,” and also Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation Inspection Procedure 60855.1, “Operation of an ISFSI at Operating Plants.”

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC’s “Rules of Practice,” a copy of this letter will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC’s document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html (the Public Electronic Reading Room).
Please contact Jack Giessner at 630/829-9619 with any questions you have regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Steven West, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos. 50-282; 50-306; 72-010
License Nos. DPR-42; DPR-60; SNM-2506

Enclosure: Prairie Island Inspection/Activity Plan

cc w/encl: Distribution via ListServ
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<th>Unit Number</th>
<th>Planned Dates Start</th>
<th>Planned Dates End</th>
<th>Inspection Activity</th>
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Letter to M. Schimmel from S. West dated March 4, 2011.

SUBJECT: ANNUAL ASSESSMENT LETTER FOR PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 (REPORT 05000282/2011001 AND 05000306/2011001)

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