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REQUEST REPLY BY 2/9/00

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

COMSECY-00-0011

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February 2, 2000

No Objection.

RELEASED TO THE PDR
Greta Joy Dicus 2/9/00
2/10/00 date
initials

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Meserve
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield

FROM: William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF COMMENT PERIOD ON DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT ON DECOMMISSIONING CRITERIA FOR WEST VALLEY

In response to the staff requirements memorandum (SRM) dated June 3, 1999, the staff held a public meeting January 5, 2000, on the draft Policy Statement on the decommissioning criteria for the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) and West Valley site. The draft Policy Statement was published in the Federal Register on December 3, 1999. The public meeting resulted in an informative discussion on the decommissioning criteria for West Valley, and many substantive comments on the draft Policy Statement.

One of the primary concerns expressed by many members of the public was that the comment period on the draft Policy Statement is not long enough. The 60-day comment period, stipulated in the SRM and specified in the Federal Register notice, started with the December 3, 1999, publication of the draft Policy Statement and ends February 1, 2000. The U.S. Department of Energy and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, the agencies that would be responsible for applying the criteria, believe that a reasonable extension of the comment period will not impact their work on the joint Environmental Impact Statement for completion of the WVDP and closure or long-term management of the site. Therefore, a reasonable extension of the comment period is supported by the agencies involved at the site and there were no objections.

Although the commentors requested extensions for time periods for as long as six months, the staff believes that a 60-day extension would be sufficient. Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Commission, the staff plans to extend the comment period for an additional 60 days, or until April 1, 2000.

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