

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Public Affairs
Washington, DC 20555
Phone 301-415-8200 Fax 301-415-2234
Internet:opa@nrc.gov

No. 99-58

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Tuesday, March 23, 1999)

NRC AMENDS REGULATIONS TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
PARTICIPATION BY INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN NRC HEARINGS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is amending its regulations to provide Federally-recognized Indian tribes with the option to participate in NRC adjudicatory proceedings as an "interested governmental participant," rather than requiring them to intervene as a formal "party" to the proceeding.

Formal intervention is currently the only course of action available to such tribal governments. The amendment to NRC's Rules of Practice would recognize that they exercise inherent sovereign powers over their members and territory, similar to the powers exercised by state and local governments. It would also give tribes the same options now available to state governments, units of local governments, and their official subdivisions, any of which can take part in NRC proceedings as an "interested governmental participant."

The rule is being published in final form because NRC considers this action noncontroversial and routine. It will become effective 60 days from the date of publication in an upcoming edition of the Federal Register, unless significant adverse comments are received within 30 days of publication of the notice.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments to : Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attention: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff. Comments may also be submitted electronically through the NRC homepage: <http://www.nrc.gov> by selecting the "comments" link on the rulemaking web site.

###