

March 29, 1995

Mr. John J. Barton
Vice President and Director
GPU Nuclear Corporation
Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station
Post Office Box 388
Forked River, NJ 08731

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SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - OYSTER CREEK NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION
(TAC NO. M90999)

Dear Mr. Barton:

Enclosed is a copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact related to your application for amendment dated November 25, 1994, as supplemented February 15, 1995. The proposed amendment would revise the Technical Specifications to allow 2645 fuel assemblies to be stored in the fuel pool. This is increase of 45 fuel assemblies from the current limit of 2600 contained in Technical Specification 5.3.1.E. The 45 additional storage locations exist in racks in the fuel pool.

The assessment is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Alexander W. Dromerick, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate I-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-219

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alexander W. Dromerick".

Alexander W. Dromerick, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate I-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-219

Enclosure: Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: See next page

Mr. John J. Barton
Vice President and Director

Oyster Creek Nuclear
Generating Station

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONGPU NUCLEAR CORPORATIONDOCKET NO. 50-219OYSTER CREEK NUCLEAR GENERATING STATIONENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OFNO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR-16, issued to GPU Nuclear Corporation (the licensee), for operation of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station (OCNGS), located in Ocean County, New Jersey.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would revise the Technical Specifications (TS) to allow 2645 fuel assemblies to be stored in the fuel pool. This is an increase of 45 fuel assemblies from the current limit of 2600 contained in TS 5.3.1.E. The 45 additional storage locations exist in racks in the fuel pool.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated November 25, 1994, as supplemented by letter dated February 15, 1995.

Background

During the spent fuel pool expansion project in 1983, the licensee designed and installed 10 free standing high density spent fuel racks in the spent fuel pool to increase the spent fuel storage capacity from 1800 to 2645 spent fuel assemblies. However, the licensee elected to impose a TS limit of

2600 spent fuel assemblies (approved by the staff in License Amendment No. 76, dated September 17, 1984) to be stored in the spent fuel pool at the time. The increased capacity from 1800 to 2600 spent fuel assemblies would meet anticipated spent fuel storage requirements through 1992. An Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact supporting this action was issued on September 13, 1984. The additional 45 fuel assembly storage locations were not licensed with License Amendment No. 76 because it was believed that they would not be needed for spent fuel storage. (It was anticipated that an off-site spent fuel storage facility would be available after 1992.) These additional storage locations were, therefore, used for the storage of miscellaneous equipment such as fuel channels.

As the result of the recent refueling (Cycle 15R) which took place in December 1994 and the present unavailability of an off-site spent fuel storage facility, OCNCS has lost the capability to completely offload the reactor core. The licensee is in the process of installing a dry storage facility on-site which is scheduled to be operational in 1996. This provision of a dry storage facility on-site will allow full core offload beyond the current operating cycle (Cycle 15) until such time as an off-site spent fuel storage facility is available. The OCNCS on-site spent fuel storage facility is presently under construction. Consequently, the licensee proposed to use the additional 45 fuel assembly storage locations for spent fuel storage.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is required should a full core offload be necessary during Cycle 15 with the proposed dry spent fuel storage facility not yet in service. Without the ability to fully offload the core, any inspection or

repair activity will most likely result in higher personnel exposure and schedular delays. Full core offload capability, in particular, would facilitate any in-vessel repair which requires draining of the vessel.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that based on its review, the licensee's proposal to increase the spent fuel pool capacity to 2645 fuel assemblies is acceptable. In addition, the staff has determined that the conclusions reached in the staff's SE dated September 17, 1984, supporting Amendment No. 76, and the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact - Spent Fuel Pool Expansion dated September 13, 1994 remains applicable.

Radiological Environmental Impacts

In the staff's Environmental Assessment dated September 13, 1984, regarding increasing the spent fuel pool capability from 1800 to 2600 spent fuel assemblies, the staff concluded that the potential radiological environmental impacts associated with the expansion of the spent fuel storage capacity were evaluated and determined to be environmentally insignificant. The basis for the staff's conclusions were determined by the staff's evaluation of (1) radioactive materials released to the atmosphere, (2) solid radioactive wastes, (3) liquid radioactive waste, and (4) the staff's radiological assessment.

Considering the smaller incremental addition to the licensed storage capacity, the environmental radiological conclusions stated in the staff's Environmental Assessment dated September 13, 1984, are not altered by the storage of 45 additional spent fuel assemblies.

Nonradiological Assessment

In the staff's Environmental Assessment dated September 13, 1984, the staff also concluded that the nonradiological impacts of the OCNGS as designed, were considered in the Final Environmental Statement (FES) issued in December 1974 and that the OCNGS spent fuel pool expansion will not result in nonradiological environmental effects significantly greater or different from those already reviewed and analyzed in the FES.

Considering the smaller incremental addition to the licensed storage capacity, the environmental nonradiological conclusions stated in the staff's Environmental Assessment dated September 13, 1984, are not altered by the storage of 45 additional spent fuel assemblies.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. The principal alternative to the action would be to deny the request. Such action would likely result in higher personnel exposure and schedular delays. As discussed previously the licensee is constructing an on-site spent fuel storage facility.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, the staff consulted with the New Jersey State official regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated November 25, 1994, as supplemented by letter dated February 15, 1995, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Ocean County Library, Toms River, NJ 08753.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 29th day of March 1995.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Phillip F. McKee, Director
Project Directorate I-3
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation