

August 31, 2001

Leon Jones, Principal Chief
Eastern Band of Cherokee
P.O. Box 455
Cherokee, NC 28719

SUBJECT: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION REVIEW OF THE MCGUIRE
NUCLEAR STATION LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION

Dear Principal Chief Jones:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is seeking input for its environmental review of an application from Duke Energy Corporation (Duke) to renew its operating licenses for Units 1 and 2 of the McGuire Nuclear Station (McGuire), located 17 miles north-northwest of Charlotte, North Carolina. As described below, the NRC process includes an opportunity for public participation in the environmental review. The NRC will hold public scoping meetings for the McGuire license renewal supplement to the NRC's "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Power Plants" (GEIS) (NUREG-1437). These scoping meetings will be held in the auditorium of the North Campus of the Central Piedmont Community College, at 11920 Verhoeff Road, Huntersville, North Carolina, on Tuesday, September 25, 2001. There will be two sessions to accommodate interested parties. The first session will convene at 1:30 p.m. and will continue until 4:30 p.m. The second session will convene at 7:00 p.m., with a repeat of the overview portions of the meeting, and will continue until 10:00 p.m. The McGuire plant is in close proximity to lands that may be of interest to the Eastern Band of Cherokee. We want to ensure that you are aware of our efforts and, pursuant to our regulations at 10 CFR 51.28(b), the NRC invites the Eastern Band of Cherokee to provide input to the scoping process relating to the NRC's environmental review of the application. The application and the environmental review process are described below.

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 operating licenses for McGuire will expire in 2021 for Unit 1 and 2023 for Unit 2. Duke submitted an environmental report as part of its application for renewal of the McGuire operating licenses on June 13, 2001. The application can be found on the Internet at www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/LR/DUKE/Welcome.pdf. This document can be viewed in the NRC Public Document Room (PDR) at 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland and in the library at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, North Carolina. Also, the GEIS assesses the scope and impact of environmental effects that would be associated with license renewal at any nuclear power plant site. A copy of this document can also be found on the NRC's website, in the NRC PDR, and in the library.

The NRC is gathering information for the document that will be a McGuire Nuclear Station-specific supplement to the GEIS. The supplement will contain the results of the review of the environmental impacts on the area surrounding the McGuire site that are related to terrestrial

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ecology, aquatic ecology, hydrology, cultural resources, and socioeconomic issues (among others) and will contain a recommendation regarding the environmental acceptability of the license renewal action.

Please submit any written comments the Eastern Band of Cherokee may have to offer on the scope of the environmental review by October 21, 2001. Comments should be submitted either by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Mail Stop T-6-D-59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, or by Internet to McGuireEIS@nrc.gov.

At the conclusion of the scoping process, the NRC staff will prepare a summary of the significant issues identified and the conclusions reached and will send a copy to you.

The NRC will prepare a draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) for public comment and will hold another set of public meetings in the site vicinity to solicit comments on the draft. A copy of the draft SEIS will be sent to you for your review and comment. After consideration of public comments received on the draft, the NRC will prepare a final SEIS. The issuance of a final environmental statement for McGuire is planned for early 2003. If you need additional information regarding the environmental review process, please contact James H. Wilson, Senior Project Manager, at (301) 415-1108.

Sincerely,
/s/CACarpenter
Cynthia A. Carpenter, Chief
Risk Informed Initiatives, Environmental,
Decommissioning, and Rulemaking Branch
Division of Regulatory Improvements Program
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-369 and 50-370

cc: See next page

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*See previous concurrence

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