

December 7, 1993

Docket Nos. 50-390
and 50-391

Tennessee Valley Authority
ATTN: Dr. Mark O. Medford, Vice President
Technical Support
3B Lookout Place
1101 Market Street
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402-2801

Dear Dr. Medford:

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR
EXTENSION OF CONSTRUCTION PERMITS FOR WATTS BAR NUCLEAR PLANT,
UNITS 1 AND 2 (TAC NOS. M88220 AND M88221)

Enclosed is a copy of an "Environmental Assessment and Finding of
No Significant Impact" related to your November 10, 1993, request for an
extension of the latest construction completion date of Construction Permit
No. CPPR-91 to December 31, 1994 and the latest construction completion date
of Construction Permit No. CPPR-92 to December 31, 1999. The assessment has
been sent to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
Peter S. Tam, Sr. Project Manager
Project Directorate II-4
Division of Reactor Projects
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
As stated

cc w/enclosure:
See next page

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TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
WATTS BAR NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2
DOCKET NOS. 50-390 AND 50-391
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING
OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an extension of the latest construction completion dates specified in Construction Permit Nos. CPPR-91 and CPPR-92 issued to Tennessee Valley Authority (permittee) for the Watts Bar Nuclear Plant (WBN), Units 1 and 2. The facility is located at the permittee's site on the west branch of the Tennessee River approximately 50 miles northeast of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of Proposed Action:

The proposed action would extend the latest construction completion date of Construction Permit No. CPPR-91 to December 31, 1994 and the latest construction completion date of Construction Permit No. CPPR-92 to December 31, 1999. The proposed action is in response to the permittee's request dated November 10, 1993.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is needed because the construction and modification of the facility is not yet fully completed. The permittee requested the extension for Unit 1 because, at the time of the last extension request, only

an estimate of the extra time needed to complete construction and modification was made. Furthermore, to ensure that Unit 1 has been properly constructed, the permittee is performing a comprehensive preoperational testing program, instead of relying on the preoperational testing results obtained a few years ago.

The delays associated with the above efforts to ensure that WBN meets regulatory requirements and licensing commitments make it necessary for TVA to request an extension of the expiration date for Construction Permit No. CPPR-91 until December 31, 1994.

With regard to Unit 2, TVA plans to complete Unit 2 construction only after Unit 1 has entered operation successfully. Given the activities described above and the resulting delays at WBN Unit 1, TVA requests an extension of the expiration date for Construction Permit No. CPPR-92 (Unit 2) until December 31, 1999.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The environmental impacts associated with the construction of the facility have been previously discussed and evaluated in the staff's Final Environmental Statement (FES) issued on November 9, 1972 for the construction permit stage which covered construction of both units. The FES issued in December 1978 for the operating license stage addressed the environmental impacts of construction activities not addressed previously. The activities included: 1) construction of the new transmission route for the Watts Bar - Volunteer 500 kV line, (2) construction of the settling pond for siltation control for construction runoff at a different location from that originally proposed in the Final Environmental Statement - Construction Permit (FES-CP),

and (3) the relocation of the blowdown diffuser from the originally proposed site indicated in the FES-CP. The staff addressed the terrestrial and aquatic environmental impacts in the Final Environmental Statement - Operating License (FES-OL) and concluded that the assessment presented in the FES-CP remains valid.

The construction of Unit 1 is essentially 100 percent complete and Unit 2 is approximately 75 percent complete; therefore, most of the construction impacts discussed in the FES have already occurred. Since this action would only extend the period of construction as described in the FES, it does not involve any different impacts as described and analyzed in the original environmental impact statement. The proposed extension will not allow any work to be performed that is not already allowed by the existing construction permit. The extension will merely grant the permittee more time to complete construction and modification in accordance with the previously approved construction permit. The activities related to the various corrective activities will result in additional workforce, being primarily engineering and technical personnel rather than construction. At the present time, this workforce is basically dedicated to the completion of Unit 1. This increase will be temporary and will decline as the corrective activities are completed and Unit 1 approaches fuel loading. A large percentage of the additional workforce is contractors and consultants who do not live in the area and use only temporary quarters. While the current workforce level has caused a temporary, increased demand for services in the community and increased traffic on local roads, there are no major impacts due to the

arrival of workers' families and demands for services necessary to support permanent residents (for example, housing and schools).

Based on the foregoing, the NRC staff has concluded that the proposed action would have no significant environmental impact. Since this action would only extend the period of construction activities described in the FES, it does not involve any different impacts or a significant change to those impacts described and analyzed in the original environmental impact statement. Consequently, an environmental impact statement addressing the proposed action is not required.

Alternatives Considered:

A possible alternative to the proposed action would be to deny the request. Under this alternative, the permittee would not be able to complete construction of the facility. This would result in denial of the benefit of power production. This option would not eliminate the environmental impacts of construction already incurred.

If construction were halted and not completed, site redress activities would restore some small areas to their natural states. This would be a slight environmental benefit, but much outweighed by the economic losses from denial of use of a facility that is nearly completed. Therefore, this alternative is rejected.

Alternative Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of resources not previously considered in the FES for Watts Bar.

Agencies and Persons Contacted:

The NRC staff reviewed the permittee's request and applicable documents referenced therein that support this extension. The NRC did not consult other agencies or persons.

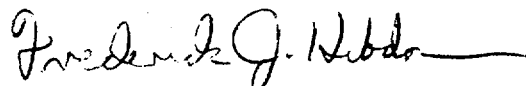
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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

For details with respect to this action, see the request for extension dated November 10, 1993, which is available for public inspection at the Commission Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, D.C. and at the Local Public Document Room, Chattanooga-Hamilton County Library, 1001 Broad Street, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland this 7th day of December 1993.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Frederick J. Heddon, Director
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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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WATTS BAR NUCLEAR PLANT

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