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Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop T6-D59
Washington, DC 20555

RE: Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Power Plants, Supplement 8, McGuire Nuclear Station, Units 1 & 2, Mecklenburg County, NC (NUREG-1437)

Dear Sir:

The Department of the Interior has reviewed the above referenced document, and we have the following comments for consideration by the NRC staff.

We are pleased with the level of detail provided in the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) and are glad the proposal includes regular monitoring following relicensing.

The proposed Federal action by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is renewal of the operating license for McGuire Nuclear Station. McGuire Nuclear Station is located on the shore of Lake Norman, approximately 17 miles north of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. The plant has two Westinghouse-designed, pressurized, light-water reactors, each with a design rating for a net electrical output of 1129 megawatts. The DSEIS considers the environmental impacts of renewing the operating license in the NRC's Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants (GEIS), NUREG-1437. The draft supplement reviews 23 site-specific issues, in addition to those considered in the GEIS. The current operating licenses expire in 2021 (Unit 1) and 2023 (Unit 2).

General Comments

Impingement and Entrainment of Aquatic Organisms. One of several issues identified at McGuire includes impingement and entrainment of aquatic organisms at the cooling water intake. Previous studies at the site by Duke found impingement of some fishes, mostly threadfin shad, some bluegill, and alewife, particularly during periods of cold water. Although the DSEIS concludes that the impacts were SMALL, we recommend that the licensee establish a regular monitoring program and develop a strategy to reduce impingement and entrainment. These periodic reports of findings should be forwarded to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Migratory birds and raptors. We do not agree that there is enough information to conclude that the impacts of potential bird collisions, or electrocution, are small in significance. We believe that a monitoring program should be developed consistent with the draft Memorandum of

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add - J. H. Wilson (JHW1)
H. Beranek (HFB)

Agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NRC for migratory birds. Since bald eagles, osprey, black and turkey vultures, and herons frequent the project vicinity, we recommend lines crossing wetlands and large bodies of water should be maintained to maximize visibility of the line to raptors by one of the following design modifications: (1) remove the static line; (2) enlarge the static line to improve visibility to raptors; or (3) mount aviation balls or similar markers on the static line.

Endangered species. We have reviewed our records and visited the site, and notwithstanding the above comments, we concur with the determination that the proposed project is not likely to affect endangered species. Therefore, we believe the requirements under Section 7 of the Act are fulfilled. However, obligations under Section 7 of the Act must be reconsidered if: (1) new information reveals impacts of this identified action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner not previously considered; (2) this action is subsequently modified in a manner that was not considered in this review; or (3) a new species is listed or critical habitat is determined that may be affected by the identified action.

For further coordination and additional information concerning these comments, please contact Mr. Mark Cantrell of the Asheville Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 160 Zillicoa Street, Asheville, North Carolina 28801; telephone number 828/258-3939, Ext. 227.

I can be reached at 404-331-4524 if I can be of further assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Gregory Hogue
Region Environmental Officer

cc:

OEPC, WASO

MCantrell, FWS, Asheville

AValenta, FWS, R-4