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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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Fort Calhoun Station
Evening Public Meeting

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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The Fort Calhoun Station

LICENSE RENEWAL

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

+ + + + +

EVENING PUBLIC MEETING

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2003

The meeting was held at 7:02 p.m. at the
Days Hotel Carlisle, 10909 M Street, Omaha,
Nebraska, Chip Cameron, Facilitator, presiding.

SPEAKERS:

CHIP CAMERON, FACILITATOR

JOHN TAPPERT

WILLIAM BURTON

JACK CUSHING

KEN ZAHN

W. GARY GATES

ROB HALL

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1 MR. CAMERON: Well, good evening
2 everyone. My name is Chip Cameron, and I'm the
3 special counsel for public liaison at the Nuclear
4 Regulatory Commission. And I'd like to welcome
5 you to our public meeting tonight. And our
6 subject is the draft environmental impact
7 statement that the NRC has prepared on the request
8 from the Oklahoma (sic) Public Power District to
9 renew the operating license at the Fort Calhoun
10 Nuclear Power Station.

11 And I'm going to serve as your facilitator
12 tonight, and hopefully help all of you have a
13 productive meeting and to meet the objectives that
14 we have for the meeting tonight. One of which is
15 to clearly explain what the NRC's process for
16 evaluating a request for license renewal, and also
17 to explain what findings are in the draft
18 environmental impact statement that has
19 prepared -- we've prepared. And the most
20 important objective, of course, is to listen to
21 any comments or suggestions that you have in terms
22 of process or the findings in the draft
23 environmental impact statement.

24 The format is fairly simple. We're going
25 to have a number of brief NRC presentations. And

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1 we'll be going out to you to see if there's any
2 questions on the material in this presentation.
3 And then the latter part of the meeting is going
4 to be devoted to giving any of you who want to
5 make a formal comment to us, to come up to the
6 podium, or I'll bring you this microphone and you
7 can make your comment.

8 Ground rules are simple. If you want to
9 talk, give me a signal and I'll bring this
10 microphone to you. And please tell us who you are
11 and what your affiliation is, if appropriate. And
12 I would just ask you to only have one person
13 speaking at a time so that we can get a clear
14 transcript. Camie is our stenographer. We are
15 taking a transcript of the meeting that will be
16 available on the NRC's web site, and we can get
17 you a hard copy if you need a hard copy.

18 Please try to be concise in your comments.
19 Again, like this afternoon, I don't think that
20 we're going to have a problem with that, but there
21 may be more people coming, so we'll see what
22 happens.

23 The agenda is -- starts with John Tappert,
24 who is right here. John is going to give you a --
25 an official welcome from the NRC and tell you a

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1 little bit about license renewal. And he is the
2 chief of the environmental section in the office
3 of Nuclear Reactor Regulation at the NRC, and it's
4 the license renewal and environmental impact
5 program. And John and his staff prepare the
6 environmental reviews for all activities that
7 happen in the office of Nuclear Reactor
8 Regulation, including all environmental impact
9 statements on a license renewal application.

10 John has been with the agency about 11
11 years, and he was a resident inspector for the NRC
12 at one point. He has a bachelor's from Virginia
13 Tech in oceanographic and aeronautical
14 engineering, and a master's degree in
15 environmental engineering from Johns Hopkins
16 University.

17 After John gives you a welcome, we're going
18 to go to the project manager -- the environmental
19 project manager who's responsible for overseeing
20 the preparation of the environmental impact
21 statement, and that's Mr. Jack Cushing, who is
22 right here. And Jack is going to let you know
23 what the environmental review process is on
24 license renewal. But actually, before we go to
25 Jack, we're going to have Butch Burton -- William

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1 Butch Burton, who is the safety project manager on
2 the Fort Calhoun license renewal application -- he
3 will tell you about the safety evaluation and
4 about what the process is generally for license
5 renewal. And then we'll focus in on the
6 environmental evaluation.

7 In terms of Mr. Burton's background, he was
8 the project manager -- safety project manager for
9 the plant Hatch down in Georgia, license renewal
10 application. He's been involved in emergency
11 operations work at the NRC, and also developing
12 performance indicators for the review of nuclear
13 power plants. And Butch has a bachelor's in
14 science nuclear engineering from Rensselaer
15 Polytechnic Institute.

16 And jumping back to Jack in terms of what
17 his background is, he's been with the NRC for five
18 years. And before that he was a licensed reactor
19 operator working for Maine Yankee. And he has a
20 bachelor's in marine engineering from the Mass.
21 Maritime Academy.

22 So we're going to give you some process
23 presentations and then we're going to go to the --
24 to the heart of the environmental impact
25 statement. We're going to go to Dr. Ken Zahn,

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1 who's right here who's going to talk about the
2 findings in the draft environmental impact
3 statement.

4 And Ken is with Lawrence Livermore Lab.
5 And they're the leading laboratory that's helping
6 the NRC prepare this environmental impact
7 statement. And he is the -- the group leader of
8 the environmental evaluation group at Lawrence
9 Livermore Lab in Livermore, California. And they
10 not only do work on Department of Energy projects
11 in terms of environmental evaluation, but also for
12 the NRC like this license renewal application.
13 And he has a Ph.D. in chemistry from the
14 University of Illinois. He'll tell you about the
15 draft findings.

16 And then we're going to ask Jack Cushing to
17 come back to talk about something called "severe
18 accident mitigation alternatives," and that is
19 also part of the environmental impact statement.
20 He'll tell you about that, what the overall
21 conclusion is, and the draft environmental impact
22 statement and how to submit comments.

23 And I would just thank you all for -- for
24 coming out tonight. And I'm going to turn it over
25 to John.

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1 MR. CUSHING: Thank you, Chip, and
2 good evening and welcome. As Chip said, my name
3 is John Tappert, and I'm the chief of the
4 environmental section in the office of Nuclear
5 Reactor Regulation. On behalf of the Nuclear
6 Regulatory Commission, I want to thank you for
7 coming out here tonight and participating in our
8 process. Chip said there's several things we'd
9 like to cover today, and I'd like to briefly go
10 over today's -- the purpose of today's meeting.

11 First of all, we're going to give you a
12 brief overview of the entire licensure of the
13 program. This includes both the safety review as
14 well as environmental review, which is the
15 principal focus of today's meeting.

16 Last we're going to give you the
17 preliminary results of our review, which
18 necessitate environmental impacts associated with
19 extending the operating licenses for Fort
20 Calhoun's stations for an additional 28 years.

21 Then we'll give you some information about
22 the balance of our review schedule and how you can
23 continue to participate in that process. And most
24 importantly, at the conclusion of our
25 presentation, we'll be happy to receive and

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1 questions and comments that you may have today.

2 But first let me provide some general
3 contacts of the license renewal program. The
4 Atomic Energy Act gives the Energy the authority
5 to operating licenses to commercial nuclear power
6 plants for a period of 40 years. Before becoming
7 a station, that operating license will expire in
8 2013. Our regulations also make provisions for
9 extending that operating license for an additional
10 20 years as part of our license renewal program,
11 and OPPD has requested license renewal for Fort
12 Calhoun. As part of NRC review of that
13 application, we sent a team of environmental
14 experts out here to review the site last summer.
15 We also held public meetings to get your input
16 early in that process. As we indicated at that
17 earlier scoping meeting, we've returned here now
18 today to provide you with preliminary results in
19 our environmental impact statement. And again,
20 the principal reason for the meeting here today is
21 to receive your questions and comments on that
22 draft.

23 And with that, I'd like to ask Butch Burton
24 to give us a brief overview of the safety portion
25 of license renewal.

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1 MR. BURTON: Thanks, John.

2 Good evening, everyone. As Chip and John
3 indicated, my name's John Burton. I'm the project
4 manager for the safety review for the license
5 renewal application for Fort Calhoun. Before I
6 talk about the license renewal process and the
7 staff's safety review, I'd like to talk a little
8 bit about the NRC, the Nuclear Regulatory
9 Commission. As was mentioned, the Atomic Energy
10 Act in 1954 authorizes the NRC to regulate the
11 civilian use of nuclear material. The NRC
12 commission is threefold to insure adequate
13 protection of public health and safety, to protect
14 the environment, and to provide for common defense
15 in security. The Atomic Energy Act provides for a
16 40-year license term for power reactors, but it
17 also allows for license renewal. That 40-year
18 term is based primarily on economic and anti-trust
19 considerations, rather than safety limitations.

20 As John indicated, the Omaha Public Power
21 District has applied for license renewal under
22 10 CFR PART 54 and request authorization to
23 operate Fort Calhoun for up to an additional 20
24 years. The current operating license, as John
25 mentioned, will expire in 2013.

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1 Now I'd like to talk a little about the
2 license renewal process, which is governed by the
3 requirements of PART 54, which we call the
4 "License Renewal Rule." This rule defines the
5 regulatory process by which a nuclear utility such
6 as OPPD applies for a renewed operating license.
7 The rule incorporates 10 CFR 51 of the
8 environmental rule by reference. Part 51 provides
9 for the preparation of an environmental impact
10 statement, or EIS. The license renewal process
11 defined in PART 54 is very similar to the original
12 licensing process, in that it involves the safety
13 review and environmental impact evaluation, plant
14 inspections, and review by the advisory committee
15 on reactor safeguards for the ACRS. The ACRS is a
16 group of scientists in nuclear industry experts
17 who serve as a consulting body to the commission.
18 The ACRS performs an independent review of the
19 license renewal application and the staff's safety
20 evaluation. And they report its findings and
21 recommendations directly to the commission.

22 The next slide illustrates two parallel
23 processes. The safety review process, which you
24 see at the top of the slide, and the environmental
25 review process at the bottom of the slide. These

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1 processes are used by the staff to evaluate two
2 separate areas of license renewal. The safety
3 review involves the staff's review of the
4 technical information and license renewal
5 application to verify with reasonable assurance
6 that the plant can continue to operate safely
7 during the period of extended operation.

8 The staff assesses how the applicant
9 proposes to monitor or manage aging of certain
10 components that are within the scope of license
11 renewal. The staff's review is documented in a
12 safety evaluation report, and the safety
13 evaluation report is provided to the ACRS for
14 review. The ACRS then generates a report of its
15 own to document their review of the staff's
16 evaluation.

17 The review process involves two or three
18 inspections which are documented in the NRC
19 inspection reports. These inspection reports are
20 considered with the safety evaluation report and
21 the ACRS report in the NRC's decision to renew the
22 nuclear unit's operating licenses.

23 If there is a petition to intervene and
24 sufficient standing can be demonstrated, then
25 hearings may also be involved in the renewal

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1 process. These hearings will play an important
2 role in the NRC's decision on the application as
3 well.

4 At the bottom of the slide is the other
5 parallel process, the environmental review, which
6 involves scoping activities, preparation of the
7 draft supplement to the generic environmental
8 impact statement, solicitation of public comments
9 on the draft supplement and then the issuance of a
10 final supplement to the generic environmental
11 impact statement. This document also factors into
12 the agency's decision on the application. During
13 the safety evaluation, the staff assesses the
14 effectiveness of the existing or proposed
15 inspection and maintenance activities to manage
16 aging effects applicable to a defined scope of
17 passive structures and components.

18 PART 54 requires the application to also
19 include the evaluation of time limited aging
20 analyses, which are those designed analyses that
21 specifically include assumptions about plant life,
22 usually 40 years.

23 Current regulations are adequate for
24 addressing active components, such as pumps and
25 valves, which are continuously challenged to

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1 reveal barriers and degradation, such that
2 corrective actions can be taken. Current
3 regulations also exist to address other aspects of
4 the original license such as security and
5 emergency planning. These current regulations
6 will also apply during the extended period of
7 operation.

8 At this time, if anyone has any questions
9 I'd be happy to take them.

10 MR. CAMERON: Any questions on the
11 overall review or the safety review for Butch?

12 MR. BURTON: All right. Thank
13 you, Chuck.

14 MR. CAMERON: Great. And I have
15 one clarification that I'd like to make. I guess
16 that I said it was the Oklahoma Public Power
17 District, and it isn't. As we know, it's Omaha.
18 And, Camie, if I say "Oklahoma" again, would you
19 just type in Omaha, 'cause that'll take care of
20 the problem. I'm likely to do that again.

21 And let's have Jack Cushing talk about the
22 environmental review.

23 MR. CUSHING: Thank you, Chip.
24 Well, welcome, everybody. I'm glad you could make
25 it tonight. My name is Jack Cushing, and I'm the

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1 environmental project manager for the Fort Calhoun
2 license renewal project. I'm responsible for
3 reporting any of the efforts of NRC contacts to
4 conduct the document the environmental review
5 associated with OPPD's application for license
6 renewal at Fort Calhoun Station. I'd like to
7 discuss NEPA, the National Environment Policy Act.
8 NEPA is one of the most significant pieces of
9 environmental legislation ever passed requiring
10 all federal agencies to use a systematic procedure
11 to consider environmental impacts during certain
12 decision-making procedure regarding major federal
13 actions. NEPA requires that we examine the
14 environmental impact as proposed and consider
15 mitigated measures, which are things that can be
16 done to decrease the environmental impact when the
17 impacts are severe. NEPA requires that we
18 consider alternatives to proposed action and that
19 the impacts of the alternatives are also
20 evaluated.

21 Finally, NEPA requires that we disclose all
22 this information and that we invite public
23 participation to evaluate it. The NRC is
24 determined that it will pay our environmental
25 impact statement associated with the license

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1 renewal for additional 20 years. Therefore,
2 following the process required by NEPA, we have
3 prepared a draft environmental impact statement
4 that describes the environmental impacts
5 associated with the operation of the Fort Calhoun
6 Station for an additional 20 years. That draft
7 environmental impact statement was issued last
8 month in a meeting today to receive comments on
9 it, which is a copy of draft environmental impact
10 statement. We do have copies of it available in
11 the lobby if you're interested.

12 This slide describes the objective of our
13 environmental review. Simply put, we are trying
14 to determine if the license renewal for Fort
15 Calhoun is acceptable from an environmental
16 standpoint, if license renewal is a viable option,
17 whether or not that option is exercised. Whether
18 or not the plan's actually to operate for an
19 additional 20 years will be determined by others,
20 such as OPPD and state regulatory agencies and
21 will depend on the results of the NRC's safety
22 review.

23 This slide shows in a little more detail
24 the environmental review process associated with
25 license renewal for Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1.

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1 We received the application last January. The
2 notice of intent was published in the Federal
3 Register in the May of 2002 to inform the public
4 that we are going to prepare an environmental
5 impact statement and invite the public to provide
6 comments in the scope of the review.

7 In June 2002, during the scoping period, we
8 held two public meetings here in Omaha to receive
9 public comment on the scope of the issues that
10 should be included in the environmental impact
11 statement for Fort Calhoun Station. Also in June,
12 we went to the Fort Calhoun Station site to
13 combine time of NIC staff and personnel from four
14 national laboratories with expertise in the
15 specific technical and scientific disciplines
16 required to perform this environmental review. We
17 familiarized ourselves with the site, met with
18 staff from OPPD to discuss the information
19 submitted in support of the license renewal
20 application, and reviewed the documentation
21 maintained at the plant, and we examined OPPD's
22 evaluation process.

23 In addition, we contacted federal, state,
24 and local agencies, as well as local service
25 agencies to obtain information on the area and

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1 Fort Calhoun Station. At the close of the scoping
2 period, we gathered up and considered all the
3 comments that we received from the public, state,
4 and federal agencies. Many of them contributed
5 significantly to the talk that we are here today
6 to discuss.

7 In July of last year, we issued a request
8 for additional information to assure that any
9 information that we relied on and had not been
10 included in the original application was submitted
11 on the docket so that it would be publically
12 available. A month ago we issued the draft
13 environmental impact statement for public comment.
14 This is Supplement 12 to the generic environmental
15 impact statement. Because we rely on findings in
16 the generic environmental impact statement, we are
17 proud of our conclusions. The report is drafted
18 not because it's incomplete, but rather because we
19 are at an intermediate stage in the decision
20 making process. We're in the middle of a second
21 public comment period to allow you and other
22 members of the public to look at the results of
23 our review, provide any comments you may have on
24 the report. After we gather these comments on --
25 and evaluate them, you may decide to change

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1 portions of the environmental impact statement.
2 And the NRC will then issue a final environmental
3 impact statement related to license renewal for
4 Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1.

5 Are there any questions to do with the
6 process?

7 MR. CAMERON: Anybody? Okay.
8 Let's go on to the draft findings. Ken.

9 DR. ZAHN: Thank you, Chip.

10 I'd like to tell you a little bit about the
11 information-gathering process and the composition
12 of the team that undertook the analysis. Then I'm
13 going to speak briefly about the analysis process
14 itself, and then quickly step through the draft
15 results.

16 As Jack had mentioned earlier, to develop
17 the supplemental environmental impact statement,
18 we did review the information, OPPD's license, the
19 license renewal application, and then visited the
20 site. Besides reviewing on-site facilities and
21 documents, we also talked with representatives of
22 federal, state, and local agencies, including
23 permitting authorities and social service
24 agencies. Also discussed the cultural and
25 historic resources at the site and the issues

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1 related to them at the State Historic Preservation
2 office, the SHPA.

3 Following your submission of scoping
4 comments after the public meetings last summer in
5 June, the NRC staff and the National Laboratory
6 Team reviewed the comments and considered the
7 suggestions of the public. Responses to the
8 public's comments on the original scoping meetings
9 are included as Appendix A in the blue draft
10 environmental impact statement supplement.

11 As noted earlier, to conduct the
12 environmental review, we've established a team
13 made up of members of the NRC staff supplemented
14 by experts from four Department of Energy's
15 national laboratories: Pacific Northwest
16 Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, the
17 Argonne National Laboratory, and again, Livermore
18 National Laboratory -- the Lawrence Livermore
19 National Laboratory. This slide gives you an
20 indication and idea of the general areas that
21 these experts on the team took a look at. These
22 are more or less generic headings. They aren't
23 specifically what you may find exactly worded in
24 the document, but they're pretty close.

25 Just doing a brief background sketch on

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1 some of these, if you start in the lower -- lower
2 left, socioeconomic impacts, for example,
3 considered such things as public services,
4 tourism, recreation, public safety, housing
5 aesthetics and economics. Environmental justice
6 is actually a field or an issue which looks at the
7 low income and minority populations within about
8 50 miles of the site. The need to evaluate
9 environmental justice is derived from a fairly
10 recent federal executive order.

11 Above on the left you see "atmospheric
12 science" listed there. That's a term that we use
13 really to capture the requirement to look at air
14 quality. And for this we also look at the AQCR,
15 that's the Nebraska Intrastate Air Quality Control
16 Region involvement with the site.

17 On the right, "radiation protection." Here
18 we looked at the potential for radiation exposures
19 to both the public off site as well as to the work
20 force, that would be occupational exposures for
21 the workers.

22 On the lower right and in the center we see
23 two ecology-related topics: "Terrestrial
24 ecology" and "aquatic ecology." And here the
25 issue is both that related to the impacts to

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1 potentially sensitive species, those especially
2 that are federally threatened and endangered.
3 Those that live on land, terrestrial, and those
4 that live in water, aquatic. And again, we look
5 at nuclear safety issues and land use issues. And
6 the land use issues carry a number of different
7 topics with it to include looking at the on-site
8 transmission line impacts.

9 Discussions of the site background and the
10 potential impacts of these environmental-related
11 topics as well as of postulated topics are found
12 throughout Chapters 2 through 5 of the draft
13 report.

14 Next I'd like to discuss the analysis
15 approach used and preliminary results of the
16 review as reflected in the draft.

17 The generic environmental impact statement
18 for license renewal under -- which is new reg,
19 1437, identifies 92 environmental issues that are
20 evaluated for license renewal. Sixty-nine of
21 these are considered generic or Category 1, which
22 means that the impacts are common to all reactors
23 or common to all reactors with certain features,
24 such as plants that have cooling towers.

25 You'll notice the Category 1 designation on

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1 the upper left of that -- the left side of that
2 upper box. Flowing down from that is the chain
3 for considering Category 1 issues. But for 23
4 other issues, those are referred to as Category 2.
5 The Nuclear Regulatory Commission found that the
6 impacts were not the same at all sites.
7 Therefore, a project-specific or site-specific
8 analysis was needed. And you'll notice Category 2
9 in this upper box on the right hand side.

10 Only certain issues addressed in the
11 generic environmental impact statement are
12 applicable to Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1 because
13 of the design and location of the plant. For
14 those generic issues that are applicable to Fort
15 Calhoun we assessed if there were any new
16 information. If there was any new information
17 related to the issue that might change the
18 conclusion of the generic environmental impact
19 statement. And you'll notice a box there that
20 says "New and Significant" on the slide.

21 If there were no elements of new
22 information, then the conclusions of the generic
23 environmental impact statement are adopted. If
24 new information is identified and determined to be
25 significant, then a site-specific analysis would

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1 be performed. For the site-specific issues that
2 are related to Fort Calhoun, a site-specific
3 analysis was performed.

4 Finally, during the scoping period, the
5 public was invited to provide information on
6 potential new issues. And also the team -- during
7 its review -- looked for new issues to see if
8 there were other such new issues that needed
9 evaluation. For each issue identified in the
10 generic environmental impact statement, an impact
11 level is assigned. These levels are described in
12 Chapter 1 of the draft report. And these levels
13 are consistent with the definitions and guidelines
14 in the federal executive branches,
15 environmental -- federal executive branches
16 counsel on environmental quality guidelines.

17 For a small impact, the effect is not
18 detectable or too small to destabilize or
19 noticeably alter any important attribute of the
20 particular resource being looked at. For example,
21 if a plant may cause some loss of adult or
22 juvenile fish of the intake structure, and if the
23 proportion of fish loss is so small that it can't
24 be detected in relation to the total population in
25 the river, for example, the impact would be

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1 characterized as small.

2 For a moderate impact, the effect is
3 sufficient to alter noticeably, but not
4 destabilize, important attributes of the resource.
5 Using the fish example again, if losses at the
6 intake would cause the population to decline and
7 then stabilize at a lower level, the impact would
8 be characterized as moderate.

9 And finally, for an impact to be considered
10 as large, the effects must clearly be noticeable
11 and sufficient to destabilize important attributes
12 of the resource. Soft losses of the intake cause
13 the fish population to decline to a point where it
14 cannot be stabilized and it continually declines,
15 the impact could be considered large.

16 Let me briefly address what is covered in
17 several of the environmentally important chapters
18 of the draft, especially Chapters 2 and 4.

19 In Chapter 2 we describe that the power
20 plant's systems generally, and discuss the general
21 environmental setting around the plant, the
22 environmental baseline conditions, if you will.

23 In Chapter 3 you'll note that the licensee
24 had not identified any plant refurbishment
25 activities that were necessary prior to the period

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1 of extended operation. So no analysis of
2 potential environmental impacts of refurbishment
3 needed to be conducted.

4 In Chapter 4 we looked at the potential
5 environmental impacts of an additional 20 years of
6 operation at the Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1
7 plant. The site-specific issues the team
8 discussed in detail in Chapter 4 include:
9 potential impacts of operating the cooling system
10 and transmission lines, land use impacts and
11 radiological impacts of normal operations, impacts
12 related to water use and water quality and
13 potential impacts to sensitive, aquatic and
14 terrestrial natural species, such as federally and
15 threatened and endangered species.

16 I'll take just a few minutes to identify
17 some of the highlights of our review, and if you
18 have additional questions on our draft results,
19 I'd be glad to try to answer them or to refer them
20 to one of the members of our team who may be with
21 us this evening.

22 One of the topics we looked at closely in
23 discussing some depth in Chapter 4 is the
24 potential -- is the potential impact of operating
25 the cooling system for Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1

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1 reactor. Fort Calhoun Station has a once-through
2 heat dissipation system which uses water from the
3 Missouri River to condense the steam used to
4 produce electricity, then releases the cooling
5 water back to the river. We didn't identify any
6 new and significant information for any of the
7 Category 1 issues related to the cooling system,
8 either through the scoping process or by the
9 applicants or by the staff during its visit as
10 well as our information reviews to include review
11 of OPPD's National Pollution Discharge and the
12 Elimination System Permit issued by the state on
13 the Clean Water Act.

14 With respect to those Category 2
15 environmental issues related to the cooling
16 system, the staff found that the potential impacts
17 of heat shock, impingement or entrainment of a
18 fish or shellfish on a cooling water intake screen
19 are small.

20 Radiological impacts are Category 1 issues
21 in the generic EIS, but because it's often a
22 matter of concern to the public, I wanted to take
23 just a minute to briefly discuss it here.

24 During the site visit, we looked at the
25 effluent release and monitoring program

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1 documentation. We looked at how the gaseous and
2 liquid effluents are treated and released, as well
3 as how the solid wastes are treated, packaged and
4 shipped. This information is outlined in Chapter
5 2 of the draft EIS. We also looked at how the
6 applicant determines and demonstrates that they're
7 in compliance for the release of radiological
8 effluence. This slide shows you the near-site and
9 on-site locations that the applicant has monitored
10 for airborne releases and direct radiation. There
11 are other monitoring stations beyond the site
12 boundary, including locations where water, fish,
13 milk and food products are sampled. Releases from
14 the plant and resulting off-site potential doses
15 are not expected to increase on a year-to-year
16 basis during a 20-year license renewal term.

17 No new and significant information was
18 identified during the staff's review of public
19 input during the scoping process or the evaluation
20 of other available information.

21 Last issue I'd like to discuss among those
22 evaluated in Chapter 4 is that of federally
23 threatened and endangered species. A description
24 of the terrestrial and aquatic ecology of the area
25 and the potential for endangered and threatened

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1 species at the site is given in Chapter two.

2 Although the bald eagle is originally
3 listed as federally endangered, it's status was
4 lowered to threatened in 1995 and is being
5 considered by the Fish and Wildlife Service for
6 the complete delisting due to the level of its --
7 the high level of its recovery in the U.S. There
8 are no known bald eagle nesting sites at Fort
9 Calhoun Station, although the birds use areas near
10 the site for foraging, most commonly along the
11 Missouri River.

12 Other federally threatened or endangered
13 terrestrial species that were considered included
14 least tern and piping plover, both bird species,
15 and the western prairie fringed orchid, a flower
16 species. These species have not been found at
17 Fort Calhoun Station, and the potential for impact
18 to them from license renewal is, again, considered
19 small.

20 Based on the information available to the
21 staff, it was concluded that the continued
22 operation of the station may affect, but is
23 unlikely to adversely affect the bald eagle, and
24 would have no affect on the other three threatened
25 or endangered terrestrial species that I just

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1 mentioned. There is one federally endangered
2 aquatic species, pallid sturgeon, which is also
3 discussed in the report. Occurrences of the
4 sturgeon have been reported in the Missouri River,
5 both upstream and downstream at Fort Calhoun
6 Station. And extensive habitat restoration
7 projects have been implemented in Missouri by the
8 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ever since the mid
9 1970s.

10 Based on information available to the
11 staff, it was concluded that the continued
12 operation of the station, again, may affect, but
13 is not likely to adversely affect the pallid
14 sturgeon. The NRC is currently in consultation
15 with the Fishing and Wildlife Service under
16 Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act as it
17 relates to these species.

18 For all of the Fort Calhoun Station
19 environmentally-related issues that the team
20 reviewed, we found that there was no new and
21 significant information that was identified, again
22 either scope process, by the licensee during the
23 development of environmental review documentation,
24 or by the staff during our visit or analysis.

25 We also looked at issues for the uranium

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1 fuel cycle and solid waste management systems, as
2 well for decommissioning. These two issues are
3 discussed in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively in that
4 report.

5 They are both Category 1 issues and were
6 evaluated generically, again, in the 1988 generic
7 environmental impact statement. We also found
8 that there were no new and significant information
9 that was identified for either of these issues.

10 In Chapter 8 of the draft report we
11 evaluated the potential environmental impacts
12 associated with the alternatives to continuing
13 operation of the Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1. The
14 continuing operation be considered the proposed
15 alternative. Discussed in Chapter 8 are the
16 potential environmental impacts associated with
17 Fort Calhoun Station not operating. This is the
18 "no action alternative." And it's a scenario in
19 which the NRC would not renew the operating
20 license for the Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1
21 reactor. And when the plant ceases operation,
22 OPPD would decommission the facility.

23 We also looked at other alternatives: New
24 electrical power generation from coal-fired or
25 gas-fired plants or a new nuclear plant, a

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1 purchased power alternative. And the application
2 of alternative technology such as wind, solar and
3 hydro power, and finally, a combination of these
4 alternatives.

5 For each alternative, we looked, again, at
6 each of the same issues -- those same
7 environmental issues, those such as land use,
8 ecology, and socioeconomics, et cetera, that whole
9 list. And that we -- same issues that we looked
10 at for the proposed action, that is Fort Calhoun
11 Station's 20-year license renewal option. We also
12 looked at delayed retirement of other existing
13 facilities, as well as utility-sponsored
14 conservation, and then looked at a combination of
15 these alternatives. For each alternative, we
16 looked at whether the technologies -- I'm sorry --
17 and for each alternative we looked at whether the
18 technologies could replace the generating capacity
19 at Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1, and we looked at
20 whether or not it could be a feasible alternative
21 to renewal of the current plant's license.

22 The preliminary conclusions were that the
23 alternatives, including the "no action
24 alternative" in which the license would not be
25 renewed, may have environmental effects. And in

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1 at least some of the categories, they may range
2 all the way from small to large. On the other
3 hand, you'll recall that our conclusion was that
4 the impacts for the proposed action were small on
5 all of these environmental issues.

6 This concludes my presentation, and I'll be
7 glad to entertain any questions.

8 MR. CAMERON: Great. Thank you,
9 Ken.

10 Are there questions on the -- the findings
11 in the draft environmental impact statement?

12 Okay.

13 Let's go to the final part of the draft
14 environmental impact statement and this is the
15 Severe Accident Mitigation Alternatives. Jack.

16 MR. CUSHING: Thank you, Chip.

17 Chapter 5 of the report is entitled "The
18 Environmental Impacts of Postulated Accidents."
19 There are two classes of accidents: Design-basis
20 accidents and severe accidents. Design-basis
21 accidents are those accidents that both the
22 licensee and the NRC staff evaluated to ensure
23 that the plant can withstand without undue risk to
24 the public. The environmental impacts
25 design-basis actions are evaluated during the

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1 initial licensing process. And the ability of
2 these plans to withstand these accidents has to be
3 demonstrated before the plant is granted a
4 license.

5 Most importantly, a licensee is required to
6 maintain an acceptable design and performance
7 capability throughout the life of the plant,
8 including any extended-life operation. Since the
9 licensee has to demonstrate acceptable plan
10 performance for design-basis accidents throughout
11 the life of the plant, the commission in the
12 generic environmental impact station determined
13 that the environmental impact of design-basis
14 accidents are of small significance because the
15 plant was designed to successfully withstand these
16 accidents. These are -- the licensee nor the NRC
17 is aware of any new and significant information on
18 the capability of a plant to withstand
19 design-basis accidents associated with the renewal
20 of the Fort Calhoun Station Unit 1 license.

21 Therefore, the staff concludes that there
22 are there no impacts related to the design-basis
23 accidents beyond those discussed in the generic
24 environmental impact statement.

25 The second category of accidents evaluated

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1 in the generic environmental impact statement are
2 severe accidents. Severe accidents are, by
3 definition, accidents that are more severe than
4 design-basis accidents because they could result
5 in substantial damage to their active core.

6 The commission found in the generic
7 environmental impact statement that the
8 consequences of a severe accident are small for
9 all plants. Nevertheless, the commission
10 determined that the alternative to mitigate severe
11 accidents must be considered for all plants that
12 have not done so. We refer to these alternatives
13 as "severe accident mitigation alternatives," or
14 SAMAs for short. The SAMAs review for the Fort
15 Calhoun Station is contained in Section 52 of the
16 environmental impact statement.

17 The purpose of doing a SAMAs evaluation is
18 to ensure that plant changes with the potential
19 for improving severe accidents safety performance
20 are identified and evaluated. The scope of the
21 potential improvements that were considered
22 include hardware modification, procedure changes,
23 training program improvements -- basically a full
24 spectrum of potential changes.

25 The scope included SAMAs that would prevent

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1 core damage, as well as SAMAs that would include
2 containment performance. For the SAMAs analysis,
3 we first quantify overall plant risk. Second,
4 identify potential improvement, and then quantify
5 the risk reduction potential and the
6 implementation cost for each improvement; and
7 finally, determine if implementation is justified.

8 In determining whether or not
9 implementation is justified, the NRC staff looks
10 at three factors: First is whether the
11 improvement is cost beneficial. In other words,
12 is the estimated benefit greater than the
13 estimated implementation cost of the SAMAs.

14 The second factor is whether the
15 improvement provides a significant reduction in
16 total risk.

17 The third factor is whether the risk
18 reductions are associated with the aging effect
19 during the period of extended operation. If it
20 was, we would be looking at implementation as part
21 of the license renewal process.

22 This slide summarizes the preliminary
23 results for Fort Calhoun's Station SAMAs
24 evaluation. The end result of the evaluation was
25 that seven SAMAs were found to be cost beneficial.

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1 The cost beneficial SAMAs include procedural and
2 training enhancement and use of commercially
3 available equipment during potential transients.
4 The seven cost beneficial SAMAs are not required
5 to be implemented at Fort Calhoun Station as part
6 of license renewal because they do not relate to
7 managing the effects of aging.

8 However, OPPD currently plans to implement
9 the seven cost beneficial SAMAs.

10 Turning now to our overall conclusions, we
11 found that the impact to license renewal are small
12 in all impact areas. We also concluded that the
13 alternatives, including the "no action
14 alternatives," may have environmental effects, at
15 least some impact categories, that reach moderate
16 or large significance. Based on these results,
17 our preliminary recommendation is that adverse
18 environmental impacts of license renewal for Fort
19 Calhoun are not so great that preserving the
20 option of license renewal for energy planning
21 decisionmakers would be unreasonable.

22 Quick recap of our current status; we
23 issued the draft environmental impact statement
24 for the Fort Calhoun Station license renewal on
25 January 6th. We are currently in the middle of a

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1 public comment period that is scheduled to end on
2 April 10th. We expect to address the public's
3 comments, including any necessary revisions to the
4 draft environmental impact statement, and issue a
5 final environmental impact statement in August.

6 This slide provides information on how to
7 access the draft environmental impact statement
8 for Fort Calhoun. You can contact me directly at
9 the number provided. There are a number of copies
10 out in the lobby, and you can pick one up on your
11 way out. In addition, the Blair and the Clark
12 Public Libraries have copies for you to look at.
13 And the document is available on the Web at the
14 address given.

15 This last slide provides details on how to
16 submit comments on the draft. The comment period,
17 as I said before, goes until April 10th, 2003.
18 You can submit comments by writing directly to the
19 address given. You can send them to the e-mail
20 address here, Ft_Calhoun_EIS@nrc.gov, or you can
21 bring them in person to our headquarters in
22 Rockville.

23 Chip.

24 MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you,
25 Jack.

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1 How about questions on the ultimate
2 conclusion that was reached by the -- in the
3 draft. I want to emphasize "draft" because it
4 won't be final until, as Jack pointed out, all the
5 comments are evaluated. Any questions on that or
6 on the issue of the SAMAs, the mitigation --
7 "Severe Accident Mitigation Alternative"? Okay.

8 Thank you -- thank you very much, Jack.

9 And let's go to the formal comment part of
10 the meeting. And first of all, we're going to
11 hear from -- from the Omaha Public Power District.
12 We have Gary Gates with us who is the vice
13 president for Nuclear Operations there.

14 Gary.

15 MR. GATES: Thank you. My name's
16 Gary Gates. I'm the vice president of OPPD that's
17 responsible for the operation of Fort Calhoun
18 Station. I'd like to acknowledge at this time any
19 of the OPPD staff that's here tonight. They've
20 put in a lot of work and a lot of effort to get to
21 this point in the license renewal process. They
22 definitely have the appreciation of the district,
23 as well as myself. I'd like to also acknowledge
24 two individuals that are here: Mr. Chuck Elderd,
25 who's the chief financial officer at OPPD, who's,

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1 here representing the City Management Team, as
2 well as myself. And Director, Anne McGuire is
3 here. She's part of the OPPD board, and currently
4 serves as the chair of the Nuclear Oversight
5 Committee.

6 I spoke at your June meeting in Omaha
7 concerning the license renewal application, and I
8 welcome the opportunity to speak this evening in
9 support of the conclusion reached by the NRC, but
10 there are no environmental impacts that preclude
11 the renewal of the operating devices of the Fort
12 Calhoun nuclear plant.

13 OPPD provides electricity to more than
14 300,000 customers in a 13-county area in southeast
15 Nebraska. It must be noted that about 30 percent
16 of the power that's used by our customers on a
17 daily basis is generated by the Fort Calhoun
18 Station. Fort Calhoun is a single-unit plant
19 located between Blair and Fort Calhoun, Nebraska.
20 It was declared commercial in 1973, and has been
21 operating safely ever since. I am proud to have
22 been a part of Fort Calhoun since the initial
23 construction. We feel that over the last 30 years
24 we have demonstrated a high level of safety and
25 environmental stewardship in all our programs and

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1 operations.

2 In fact, the continued safety operation of
3 Fort Calhoun Station remains the number one
4 priority of OPPD. OPPD maintains its facilities
5 and conducts its operations based on a strong
6 commitment to the environment and monitoring and
7 the management of those policies. Our policy is
8 to conduct operations, not just in compliance with
9 all applicable government laws and regulations,
10 but over and beyond minimum requirements of those
11 regulations. This ensures our ability to protect
12 the environment and to serve in the best interest
13 of our employees, our customers and the
14 surrounding communities. We feel the NRC staff
15 recommendation, which is the subject of today's
16 meeting, is a testament to the effectiveness of
17 our approach.

18 OPPD will continue, what we believe, is a
19 comprehensive, environmental monitoring program,
20 hopefully for an additional 20 years, beyond 2013.

21 Furthermore, we will continue to develop
22 and implement ways to enhance the operation of
23 Fort Calhoun Station. In other words, we are
24 committed to conducting our operations in an
25 environmentally responsible manner as we have done

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1 in the last 30 years.

2 Let me take a few minutes to say something
3 about the employees that work at Fort Calhoun
4 Nuclear Station.

5 These men and woman take pride in being
6 able to safely operate a clean source of
7 dependable power. They do so not only as workers,
8 but as residents of the area we serve. Besides
9 having homes and families in the area, they are
10 valued members of the community, often serving as
11 volunteers and social leaders in the area. They
12 also know that the effective operation of Fort
13 Calhoun Station for another 20 years will
14 contribute economic benefits to that area. That
15 includes jobs for not only plant employees, but
16 for many of the area businesses with whom we work.

17 The point is that we all have a stake in
18 continuing to operate the plant in a safe and
19 strong commitment to the environment.

20 One other note, OPPD's concern for the
21 environment goes beyond Fort Calhoun Station. We
22 have invested in other green power sources, such
23 as wind and biomass.

24 In closing, let me thank you for this
25 opportunity to speak on a very important issue and

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1 in support of the staff's recommendation. Thanks
2 for your time.

3 MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you
4 very much, Gary.

5 Our next speaker is Mr. Rob Hall. And Mr.
6 Hall is with the Omaha, Nebraska, and Southwest
7 Iowa Building Trades.

8 Do you want to come up here or -- wherever
9 you feel comfortable.

10 MR. HALL: I'm fine right here.

11 MR. CAMERON: Okay. Good. Go
12 ahead.

13 MR. HALL: My name is Rob Hall,
14 and I represent the Omaha -- Greater Omaha,
15 Nebraska, and Southwest Iowa Building and Trade.
16 We're the construction unions that support the
17 inside construction/maintenance at Fort Calhoun
18 facility. My tenure in the industry goes back 28
19 years. I worked 18 months for OPPD, most of that
20 time was at Fort Calhoun. And when I think
21 back -- of course I was a little bit younger
22 then -- but I realized now that was probably one
23 of the premiere atmospheres that I've ever worked
24 in.

25 Today we are working hand in hand with OPPD

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1 to come up with some new innovative ways to -- for
2 labor to help them and for them to help labor in
3 the community. It's a great tribute to the
4 leadership and management at this facility. And
5 that goes from the managers to the planners to the
6 training department. It's unbelievable the ground
7 we've covered and the issues we discussed.

8 One of them, of course, is safety. And
9 we're working on several issues there. I can
10 speak from my trade union, which is the Asbestos
11 Workers and the Piping Slayers, and we've dealt
12 with asbestos within the OPPD system for years.
13 And we've never ever had any problems, any
14 complaints. They're a group that is so well
15 organized and so well planned, we've never had any
16 problems with any type of removal project. It's a
17 great place to work. It truly is. And again,
18 that's attributed to the leadership and
19 management. So without repeating myself, I thank
20 you for the opportunity to address the NRC. And
21 again, OPPD is an important part of our industry.

22 MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you,
23 Rob.

24 Is there anyone else who wants to make a
25 comment or ask a question about any issue

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1 connected with license renewal or NRC's oversight?

2 Okay. Great. Thank you all for coming out

3 tonight and thanks to Camie for the stenography,

4 and I think we're adjourned.

5 (The hearing was concluded at the

6 hour of 8:03 p.m.)

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