

March 11, 2003

Mr. Rick Nelson
Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4469 48th Avenue Court
Rock Island, IL 61201

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR COMMENTS CONCERNING DRESDEN NUCLEAR POWER
STATION APPLICATION FOR OPERATING LICENSE RENEWAL

Dear Mr. Nelson:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is reviewing an application for the renewal of the operating license for the Dresden Nuclear Power Station, Units 2 and 3 (DNPS), located on the south shoreline of the Illinois River, at the confluence of the Des Plaines and Kankakee Rivers at river mile 272.4. As part of the review of the license renewal application, the NRC is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) under the provision of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which includes analyses of pertinent environmental issues, including endangered or threatened species and impacts to fish and wildlife. This letter is being submitted under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

The proposed action would include the use and continued maintenance of existing facilities and transmission lines and would not result in any new construction or disturbance. DNPS is located in Grundy County, Illinois. In total, for the specific purpose of connecting DNPS to the regional transmission system, there are approximately 200 miles of corridor that occupy approximately 5,500 acres of land. As shown in the enclosed transmission line maps, two 1.1-mile lines, located on Station property, connect DNPS to an existing line between the Pontiac and Electric Junction substations. The Electric Junction lines runs east and then turns north, crossing the Illinois River. The lines run for 31.1-miles. The two Goodings Grove lines cross the Kankakee River south of DNPS and then run northeast and terminate at the Elwood Substation. The Goodings Grove corridor is 12.4-miles long. Pontiac Mid-Point is a 43.3-mile line that runs in a southwesterly direction and terminates south of Pontiac, Illinois. Powerton is a 104.5-mile line that crosses the Kankakee River twice before heading southwest and terminating near the Illinois River. The last line connecting DNPS to the regional system is the Collins Station line that extends 11.8-miles with a 150-foot right-of-way. This line crosses the Illinois River along the Electric Junction corridor and then runs west for approximately 4-miles before crossing back over the Illinois River to the Collins Station.

DNPS operates in the indirect open-cycle mode from June 15 through September 30. After circulating through the condensers, water is discharged into a 2-mile-long cooling canal to remove waste heat from the facility. As water travels through the hot canal, it may be withdrawn and circulated through a series of 36 mechanical draft cooling towers as needed to maintain water temperatures, and is returned to the canal at a cooler temperature. The water is then discharged to the Illinois River. The Illinois River in the vicinity of the plant is considered part of the aquatic environment of interest.

The other mode of plant operation is closed-cycle. DNPS can operate in closed-cycle at any time, but normally operates in this mode from October 1 through June 14, when the mechanical draft towers are typically not utilized. In this mode, water is circulated through the condensers for Units 2 and 3, passed through the hot canal, and then routed back to the intake structure via the flow regulating station gates. As cooling water system schematic diagram is enclosed.

To support the environmental impact statement preparation process and to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the NRC requests a list of species and information on protected, proposed, and candidate species and critical habitat that may be in the vicinity of DNPS and its associated transmission lines. In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

We plan to hold a public NEPA scoping meeting on April 10, 2003, at the Jennifer's Garden Banquet and Convention Center, 555 West Gore Road, Morris, Illinois. You and your staff are invited to attend. Your office will receive a copy of the draft SEIS along with a request for comments. The anticipated publication date for the draft SEIS is December 2003.

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff review of the license renewal application, please contact Mr. Louis Wheeler, Senior Project Manager, at (301) 415-1444 or by email at DXW@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RAI

Pao-Tsin Kuo, Program Director
License Renewal and Environmental Impacts
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos.: 50-237 and 50-249

Enclosures: DNPS Transmission Line Maps (2)
DNPS Cooling Water System Schematic Diagram

cc w/encls.: See next page

R. Nelson

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Accession No.:

1. Letter to R. Nelson: **ML030710619**
2. Enclosures (2): **ML030720185**
DNPS Transmission Line Map
DNPS Cooling Water System Schematic Diagram
3. Pkg.: **ML030710635**

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