

January 6, 2004

Mr. Mike Bartlett, Field Office Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New England Ecological Services Office
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, NH 03301-5087

SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR AN EARLY SITE PERMIT (ESP) FOR THE GRAND GULF
ESP SITE

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application by System Energy Resources, Inc. (SERI) for an early site permit (ESP) for the potential future construction of one or more new nuclear power plants. As part of the review of this application, the NRC is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS). The impact analysis in the EIS includes the potential impacts of the construction and operation of a new nuclear power plant at the preferred or alternate sites, including the potential impacts to fish and wildlife and threatened and endangered species.

SERI's preferred alternative for the location of the proposed new power plant(s) is within the site boundaries of the existing Grand Gulf Nuclear Power Station (GGNS), site near the town of Port Gibson in Claiborne County, Mississippi. Three alternate sites will also be evaluated in the EIS. They are River Bend in West Feliciana County, Louisiana; FitzPatrick in Oswego County, New York; and Pilgrim in Plymouth County, Massachusetts.

The application for an ESP was submitted by SERI on October 16, 2003, pursuant to NRC requirements at Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 52 (10 CFR 52). If approved, the ESP will document the NRC staff's determination regarding the suitability of the proposed site for the construction and operation of one or more new nuclear plants. The ESP would not authorize the applicant to begin construction of the unit(s). However, in its review the NRC staff will evaluate the environmental impacts of construction and operation and will also consider alternatives, including alternative sites.

To support the environmental impact statement preparation process and to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the NRC requests a list of endangered, threatened, candidate, and proposed species and critical habitat that are known to occur or could potentially occur in Plymouth County, Massachusetts. In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934.

M. Bartlett

2

If you have any questions concerning the ESP application, or other aspects of this project, please contact Ms. Cristina Guerrero, at (301) 415-2981 or by e-mail at CXG3@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

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

Docket Nos.: 52-009

cc: See next page

M. Bartlett

2

If you have any questions concerning the ESP application, or other aspects of this project, please contact Ms. Cristina Guerrero, at (301) 415-2981 or by e-mail at CXG3@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Pao-Tsin Kuo, Program Director
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Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
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Docket Nos.: 52-009

cc: See next page

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Grand Gulf Early Site Permit - Environmental Review

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