



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON NORTH ANNA EARLY SITE PERMIT APPLICATION; MEETING TO BE HELD JAN. 19

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on its preliminary conclusion that environmental impacts would not prevent issuing an Early Site Permit (ESP) for the North Anna site in Louisa County, Va., about 40 miles northwest of Richmond.

The preliminary conclusion is contained in NUREG-1811, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for an Early Site Permit at the North Anna ESP Site." The draft EIS is open for public comment until March 1, 2005, and will also be the subject of a public meeting Jan. 19, 2005, in Mineral, Va.

The ESP process allows an applicant to address site-related issues, such as environmental impacts, for possible future construction and operation of a nuclear power plant at the site. The North Anna application was filed Sep. 25, 2003, by Dominion Nuclear North Anna, LLC. If approved, the permit would give Dominion up to 20 years to decide whether to build one or more nuclear plants on the site and to file an application with the NRC for approval to begin construction.

The NRC staff's preliminary recommendation is that a permit should be issued. The staff's conclusion is based on its independent review of a report submitted by Dominion, taking into account consultations with federal, state, tribal and local agencies and consideration of comments received during the public scoping process. The staff's preliminary conclusions include a finding that there are no environmentally preferable or obviously superior sites, and that any adverse environmental impacts from possible site preparation and preliminary construction activities at North Anna could be redressed.

On Wednesday, Jan. 19, the NRC staff will hold a meeting to obtain comments on the draft EIS at the Louisa County Middle School, 1009 Davis Highway, Mineral, VA. The meeting, which will be transcribed, begins at 7:00 p.m. and will conclude no later than 10:00 p.m. In addition, the NRC staff will host an informal discussion one hour prior to the meeting. NRC staff members will answer questions and explain the ESP process during this informal session, but no official comments on the EIS will be accepted then.

For planning purposes, anyone interested in attending or presenting oral comments at the Jan. 19 meeting is encouraged to pre-register no later than Jan. 14, by contacting Alicia Williamson of the NRC by telephone at (800) 368-5642, extension 1878, or by e-mail at NorthAnna_ESP@nrc.gov.

Interested persons may also register to speak within 15 minutes of the start of the meeting. Time for individual comments at the meetings may be limited to accommodate all speakers.

Written comments on the draft EIS will also be considered by NRC staff. Comments should be submitted either by mail (postmarked by March 1, 2005) to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mailstop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by e-mail (sent no later than March 1, 2005) to NorthAnna_ESP@nrc.gov.

The draft EIS and related documents are available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md. It will also be available on the NRC's Web site at two locations:

<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/docs4comment.html> and <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-licensing/esp/north-anna.html>. In addition, the Louisa County Library, 881 Davis Highway in Mineral, has agreed to make the draft EIS available for public inspection.

At the conclusion of the public comment period on March 1, 2005, the NRC staff will consider and address the comments provided, then issue a final EIS on the environmental acceptability of an ESP at North Anna later in 2005.

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