



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 4
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Rules Review and Directives Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop T6-D59
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

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**RE: EPA Review and Comments on
Final Generic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FGSEIS)
License Renewal of Nuclear Plants, Supplement 18
Regarding Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2
CEQ No. 20050125**

Dear Sir:

EPA Region 4 reviewed the Final Generic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FGSEIS) pursuant to Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and Section 102 (2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The purpose of this letter is to provide EPA's comments regarding potential impacts of the proposed renewal of the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2 Operating Licenses (OLs). The proposed action, (license renewals), would provide for continued operation and maintenance of existing facilities and transmission lines for an additional 20 years.

Based on EPA's review of the FGSEIS, environmental concerns exist regarding some aspects of the proposed project. Specifically, protecting the environment involves the continuing need for appropriate storage and ultimate disposition of radioactive wastes generated on-site. The OL renewals for the Farley Station will require continuing radiological monitoring of all plant effluents. Appropriate storage of spent fuel assemblies and radioactive wastes on-site is required, in order to prevent impacts.

In the Waste Confidence Rule (10 CFR 51.23), the Commission generically determined that the spent fuel generated by any reactor can be safely stored onsite for at least 30 years beyond the licensed operating life of the reactor. Ultimately, long-term radioactive waste disposition will require transportation of wastes to a permitted repository site. We are aware of ongoing efforts to license a geological repository for long-term disposition within the first quarter of the twenty-first century.

In addition, Farley Nuclear Plant has an NPDES permit for discharges to the Chattahoochee River, and uses the river as a source of water for some plant operations. The FGSEIS notes that future water withdrawals from the river may be affected by any agreements by the States.

SISP Review Complete
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Add J. Cushing (JXC9)

The FGSEIS concludes that the operating license renewals would result in fewer environmental impacts than the feasible alternatives for generating power, and the NRC considers impacts of operating license renewals to be small. Overall, the impacts as defined in the FGSEIS appear to be within acceptable limits.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document. If we can be of further assistance, please contact Ramona McConney of my staff at (404) 562-9615.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heinz Mueller", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
Office of Environmental Assessment