May 27, 2005

The Honorable David Merrill
Chairman
St. Croix Chippewa of Wisconsin
St. Croix Council
24663 Angeline Ave.
Webster, WI 54893-9246

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR COMMENTS CONCERNING THE MONTICELLO NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT APPLICATION FOR OPERATING LICENSE RENEWAL (TAC NO. MC6441)

Dear Chairman Merrill:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is seeking input for its environmental review of an application from Nuclear Management Company, LLC (NMC) to renew the operating license for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant (Monticello), located in the city of Monticello, Wright County, Minnesota. Monticello is in close proximity to lands that may be of interest to the St. Croix Chippewa of Wisconsin. As described below, the NRC process includes an opportunity for public and inter-governmental participation in the environmental review. We want to ensure that you are aware of our efforts and, pursuant to Title 10 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 51.28(b) (10 CFR 51.28(b)), the NRC invites the St. Croix Chippewa of Wisconsin Nation to provide input to the scoping process relating to the NRC's environmental review of the application. In addition, as outlined in 36 CFR 800.8, the NRC plans to coordinate compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 through the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant is issued for up to 40 years. The license may be renewed for up to an additional 20 years if NRC requirements are met. The current operating license for Monticello will expire on September 8, 2010. NMC submitted its application for renewal of the Monticello operating license on March 24, 2005.

The NRC is gathering information for a Monticello site-specific supplement to its "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants" (GEIS), NUREG-1437. The supplement will contain the results of the review of the environmental impacts on the area surrounding the Monticello site that are related to terrestrial ecology, aquatic ecology, hydrology, cultural resources, and socioeconomic issues (among others) and will contain a recommendation regarding the environmental acceptability of the license renewal action.

The NRC will hold two public scoping meetings for the Monticello license renewal supplement to the GEIS on June 30, 2005, at the Monticello Community Center, 505 Walnut Street, Monticello, Minnesota 55362. There will be two sessions to accommodate interested parties. The first session will convene at 1:30 p.m. and will continue until 4:30 p.m., as necessary. The second session will convene at 7:00 p.m., with a repeat of the overview portions of the meeting, and will continue until 10:00 p.m., as necessary. Additionally, the NRC staff will host informal discussions one hour before the start of each session. To be considered, comments must be provided either at the transcribed public meetings or in writing. No formal comments on the proposed scope of the supplement to the GEIS will be accepted during informal discussions.

The application is electronically available for inspection from the Publicly Available Records component of NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under Accession Number ML050880245. ADAMS is accessible at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html which provides access through the NRC's Public Electronic Reading Room link. If you do not have access to ADAMS or if there are problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) Reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 1-301-415-4737, or by e-mail at pdr@nrc.gov. In addition, the application can be viewed on the Internet at http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/monticello.html.

A paper copy of the application can be viewed at the NRC's PDR, located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland, 20852-2738 and the Monticello Public Library, 220 West 6th Street, Monticello, Minnesota, 55362. The GEIS, which assesses the scope and impact of environmental effects that would be associated with license renewal at any nuclear power plant site, can also be found on the NRC's website or at the NRC's PDR.

Please submit any written comments that the St. Croix Chippewa of Wisconsin Nation may have to offer on the scope of the environmental review by August 2, 2005. Comments should be submitted by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Mail Stop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington D.C. 20555-0001. At the conclusion of the scoping process, the NRC staff will prepare a summary of the significant issues identified and the conclusions reached and will mail a copy to you.

The NRC will issue the draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) for public comment (anticipated publication date February 2006), and will hold another set of public meetings in the site vicinity to solicit comments on the draft. A copy of the draft SEIS will be sent to you for your review and comment. After consideration of public comments received on the draft, the NRC will prepare a final SEIS. The issuance of a final SEIS for Monticello is planned for September 2006. If you need additional information regarding the environmental review process, please contact Ms. Jennifer Davis, Environmental Project Manager, at 301-415-3835 or by e-mail at jxd10@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,
/RA/

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

Docket No.: 50-263

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DISTRIBUTION: Honorable David Merrill, Chairman, St. Croix Chippewa of Wisconsin, St. Croix Council. Re: Monticello, Dated: May 27, 2005

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