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Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

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NRC RENEWS POINT BEACH NUCLEAR PLANT OPERATING LICENSES FOR AN ADDITIONAL 20 YEARS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has renewed the operating licenses of the Point Beach Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2, for an additional 20 years.

The Point Beach plant is located in Two Rivers, Wis. The licensee, Nuclear Management Co. LLC, submitted its license renewal application Feb. 25, 2004. With the renewal, the license for Unit 1 is extended to Oct. 5, 2030, and the license for Unit 2 is extended to March 8, 2033.

The NRC's environmental review for this license renewal is described in a site-specific supplement to the NRC's "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Power Plants" (NUREG-1437, Supplement 23), issued in August. The review concluded there were no environmental impacts that would preclude renewal of the licenses for environmental reasons. Public meetings to discuss the environmental review were held near the plant on June 15, 2004, and March 3, 2005.

After carefully reviewing the plant's safety systems and specifications, the staff concluded that there were no safety concerns that would preclude license renewal, because the licensee had demonstrated the capability to manage the effects of plant aging. The "Safety Evaluation Report Related to the License Renewal of the Point Beach Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2" (NUREG-1839) was published in December. In addition, NRC conducted inspections of the plants to verify information submitted by the licensee. The reports relating to the Point Beach renewal are available on the NRC Web site at this address:

<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/point-beach.html>.

On Nov. 18, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards – an independent body of technical experts which advises the Commission – issued its recommendation that the operating licenses for Point Beach be renewed. That recommendation is contained in "Report on the Safety Aspects of the License Renewal Application for the Point Beach Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2." This document is available on the NRC Web site at this address:

<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/acrs/letters/2005/>.

The Point Beach renewals bring the total number of renewals to 39 reactor units. A complete listing of renewal applications can be found on the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications.html>.

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