

May 5, 2006

Ms. Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
Northeast Regional Office
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 09130-2298

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR LIST OF PROTECTED SPECIES AND ESSENTIAL FISH
HABITAT WITHIN THE AREA UNDER EVALUATION FOR THE VERMONT
YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER STATION LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION
REVIEW

Dear Ms. Kurkul:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is reviewing an application submitted by Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc. (Entergy) for the renewal of the operating license for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station (VYNPS). VYNPS is located in the town of Vernon, Vermont, in Windham County on the west shore of the Connecticut River. As part of the review of the license renewal application (LRA), the NRC is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) under the provisions of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 51 (10 CFR Part 51), the NRC regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The SEIS includes an analysis of pertinent environmental issues, including endangered or threatened species and impacts to marine resources and habitat. This letter is being submitted under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934, as amended, and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

The proposed action would include the use and continued maintenance of existing plant facilities and transmission lines. VYNPS stated that no major refurbishment activities have been identified as necessary to support the continued operation of VYNPS beyond the end of the existing operating license term. VYNPS is situated on approximately 125 acres of land on the west shore of the Connecticut River 0.75 miles upstream of the Vernon Hydroelectric Station. This section of the river is known as Vernon Pool. The areas adjacent to the station are primarily farm and pasture lands. The area within a five mile radius is predominantly rural with the exception of a portion of the town of Brattleboro, Vermont, and the town of Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Between 75 percent and 80 percent of the area within five miles of the station is wooded. The remainder is occupied by farms and small industries. Enclosure 1 shows the layout of the general area near the VYNPS site and Enclosure 2 presents an overview of the site location.

The VYNPS utilizes a once-through cooling system and mechanical draft cooling towers to remove waste heat from the condensers. The three circulating water pumps are located in the enclosed intake structure at the river bank. Water from the main condensers is returned to the discharge structure where it is either discharged through an aerating structure to the river or is diverted to the cooling towers. Water circulated through the towers may be either discharged through the aerating structure to the river or recirculated in a closed loop path to the intake structure, or a combination of both, known as hybrid cycle mode. The discharge path is manually selected by the operator and is contingent upon seasonal variation in environmental parameters.

The only transmission lines considered to be in scope for the review are located inside the 125 acre plant site. These transmission lines were constructed to connect VYNPS to the New England transmission grid. The transmission lines exiting the switchyards are part of the New England transmission grid that was constructed to supply purchased power to the State of Vermont. The New England transmission grid is not considered to be in scope of the license renewal review.

To support the SEIS preparation process and to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the NRC requests information on Federally listed, proposed and candidate species, and critical habitat under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service that may be in the vicinity of the VYNPS site.

In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. Also in support of the SEIS preparation and to ensure compliance with Section 305 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the NRC requests a list of essential fish habitat that has been designated in the vicinity of the VYNPS site.

From May 23-25, 2006, the NRC staff plans to conduct a site audit at the VYNPS. On June 7, 2006, the NRC staff plans to hold two public NEPA scoping meetings at the Latchis Theatre, 50 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301. 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. In addition to the environmental scoping meeting described above, the NRC will hold an informal open house at the Quality Inn & Suites, 1380 Putney Road, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301, on Tuesday, June 6, 2006, from 2:00-8:00 p.m., as necessary. You and your staff are invited to attend both the site audit and the public meetings. Your office will receive a copy of the draft SEIS along with a request for comments. The anticipated publication date for the draft SEIS is December 2006.

P. Kurkul

- 3 -

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff review of this LRA, please contact Mr. Richard L. Emch Jr., Senior Environmental Project Manager at 301-415-1590 or RLE@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Rani Franovich, Branch Chief
Environmental Branch B
Division of License Renewal
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-271

Enclosures:

1. Layout of General Area near VYNPS Site
2. Overview of the Site Location

cc w/encls.: See next page

P. Kurkul

- 3 -

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff review of this LRA, please contact Mr. Richard L. Emch Jr., Senior Environmental Project Manager at 301-415-1590 or RLE@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Rani Franovich, Branch Chief
Environmental Branch B
Division of License Renewal
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-271

Enclosures:

1. Layout of General Area near VYNPS Site
2. Overview of the Site Location

cc w/encls.: See next page

DISTRIBUTION:

F. Gillespie / P.T. Kuo (RidsNrrDlr)
R. Franovich (RidsNrrDlrRebb)
R. Emch
S. Hernandez
R. Schaaf
D. Miller (david.s.miller@anl.gov)
J. Eads
J. Shea
C. Anderson, RI
D. Pelton, RI
N. Sheehan, RI
RidsOGCMailRoom
DLR/REBB

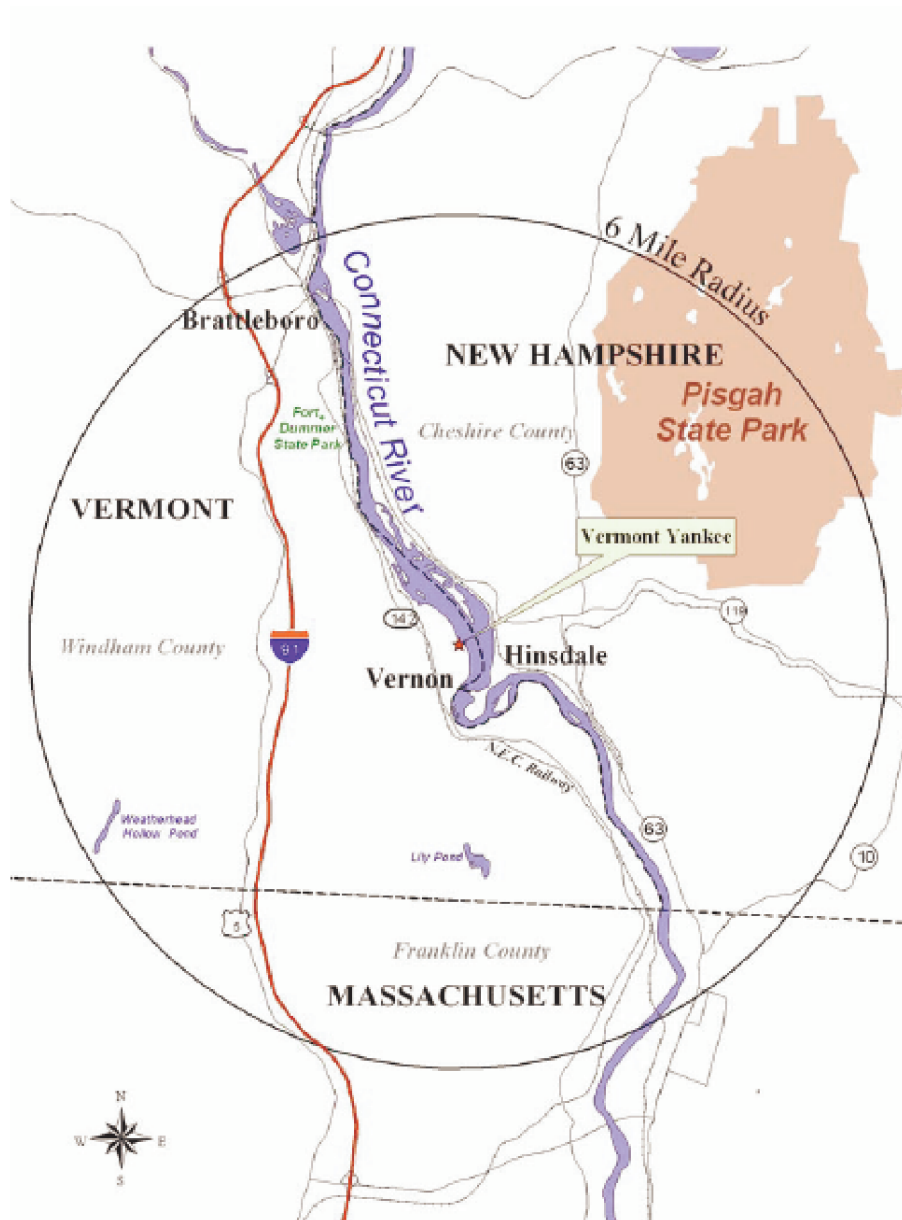
Adams Accession No.

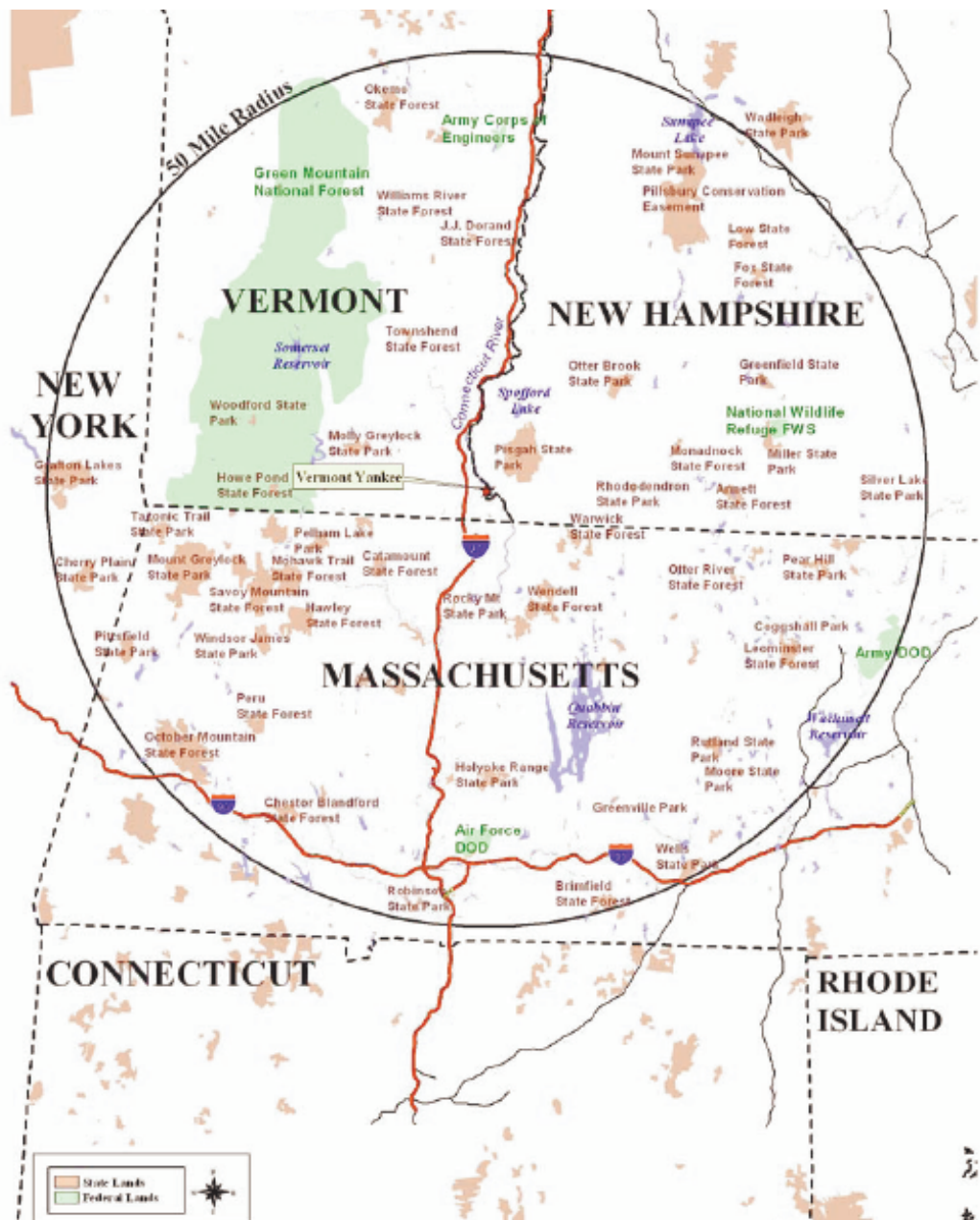
1. Ltr. to P. Kurkul w/Encls. 1, 2 and Service List: **ML061280184**

Document Name: E:\Filenet\ML061280184.wpd

OFFICE	LA:DLR	GE:DLR:REBB	PM:DLR:REBB	BC:DLR:REBB
NAME	Y. Edmonds	S. Hernandez	R.Emch /RA S. Hernandez For/	R.Franovich
DATE	5/4/06	5/5/06	5/5/06	5/5/06

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY





Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station

cc:

Regional Administrator, Region I
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
475 Allendale Road
King of Prussia, PA 19406-1415

Mr. David R. Lewis
Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, Pittman, LLP
2300 N Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20037-1128

Mr. David O'Brien, Commissioner
Vermont Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601

Mr. James Volz, Chairman
Public Service Board
State of Vermont
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2701

Operating Experience Coordinator
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station
320 Governor Hunt Road
Vernon, VT 05354

Mr. G. Dana Bisbee, Esq.
Deputy Attorney General
33 Capitol Street
Concord, NH 03301-6937

Chief, Safety Unit
Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place, 19th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Ms. Deborah B. Katz
Box 83
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

Ms. Carla A. White, RRPT, CHP
Radiological Health
Vermont Department of Health
P.O. Box 70, Drawer #43
108 Cherry Street
Burlington, VT 05402-0070

Mr. James M. DeVincentis
Manager, Licensing
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station
P.O. Box 0500
185 Old Ferry Road
Brattleboro, VT 05302-0500

Resident Inspector
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
P.O. Box 176
Vernon, VT 05354

Director, Massachusetts Emergency
Management Agency
ATTN: James Muckerheide
400 Worcester Rd.
Framingham, MA 01702-5399

Mr. Jonathan M. Block, Esq.
Main Street
P.O. Box 566
Putney, VT 05346-0566

Mr. John F. McCann
Director, Licensing
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
440 Hamilton Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601

Mr. Gary J. Taylor
Chief Executive Officer
Entergy Operations
1340 Echelon Parkway
Jackson, MS 39213

Mr. John T. Herron
Sr. VP and Chief Operating Officer
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
440 Hamilton Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601

cc:

Mr. Oscar Limpias
Vice President, Engineering
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
440 Hamilton Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601

Mr. Christopher Schwartz
Vice President, Operations Support
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
440 Hamilton Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601

Mr. Michael J. Colomb
Director of Oversight
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
440 Hamilton Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601

Mr. Travis C. McCullough
Assistant General Counsel
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
440 Hamilton Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601

Mr. Jay K. Thayer
Site Vice President
Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station
P.O. Box 0500
185 Old Ferry Road
Brattleboro, VT 05302-0500

Mr. James H. Sniezek
5486 Nithsdale Drive
Salisbury, MD 21801

Ms. Stacey M. Lousteau
Treasury Department
Entergy Services, Inc.
639 Loyola Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70113

Mr. Raymond Shadis
New England Coalition
Post Office Box 98
Edgecomb, ME 04556

Mr. James P. Matteau
Executive Director
Windham Regional Commission
139 Main Street, Suite 505
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Mr. William K. Sherman
Vermont Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Drawer 20
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601

Mr. Michael D. Lyster
5931 Barclay Lane
Naples, FL 34110-7306

Ms. Charlene D. Faison
Manager, Licensing
440 Hamilton Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601

Mr. James Ross
Nuclear Energy Institute
1776 I Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006-3708

Mr. Peter Deyo
Chairman, Vernon Select Board
567 Governor Hunt Road
Vernon, VT 05354

Mr. Jerry Remillard
Brattleboro Town Manager
230 Main Street, Suite 208
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Mr. Steven A. Steidle
Chair, Brattleboro Select Board
108 Meetinghouse Lane
Brattleboro, VT 05301-8985

Sen. Roderick M. Gander
Senator, Windham District
43 Tyler Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301

cc:

Sen. Jeanette K. White
Senator, Windham District
35A Old Depot Road
Putney, VT 05346

Mr. Ed Anthes
Vermont Nuclear Free by 2012
PO Box 6325
Brattleboro, VT 05302

Mr. John D. Smith
Chairman Board of Selectmen
PO Box 13
Hinsdale, NH 03451

Ms. Diana Sidebotham
The New England Coalition
PO Box 545
Brattleboro, VT 05302