May 10, 2006

The Honorable April St. Francis-Rushlow, Chief
Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi, St. Francis/Sokoki Band
PO Box 276, 100 Grand Avenue
Swanton, VT 05488-0276

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR COMMENTS CONCERNING THE VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER STATION LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION REVIEW

Dear Chief St. Francis-Rushlow:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is seeking input for its environmental review of an application from Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc. (Entergy) for the renewal of the operating license for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station (VYNPS), located in the town of Vernon, Vermont, in Windham County on the west shore of the Connecticut River. VYNPS is in close proximity to lands that may be of interest to the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi, St. Francis/Sokoki Band. As described below, the NRC's 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 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 51.28(b) (10 CFR 51.28(b)), the NRC invites the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi, St. Francis/Sokoki Band 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 VYNPS will expire in March 21, 2012. Entergy submitted its application for renewal of the VYNPS operating license in a letter dated January 25, 2006, as supplemented by letter dated March 15, 2006.

The NRC is gathering information for a VYNPS 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 VYNPS 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. Provided for your information is the layout of the general area near the VYNPS site (Enclosure 1) and an overview of the site location (Enclosure 2).

The NRC will hold two public scoping meetings for the VYNPS license renewal supplement to the GEIS on June 7, 2006, at the Latchis Theatre, 50 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301. 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.

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 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., as necessary. At the open house, NRC staff will be available to provide information about the environmental review process for license renewal of nuclear plants. During the open house, members of the public will have the opportunity to provide formal comments on the proposed scope of the supplement to the GEIS either verbally or in writing to a transcriptionist. Comments provided to the transcriptionist will be considered in the same manner as comments provided during the scoping meetings described above. No formal comments on the proposed scope of the supplement to the GEIS will be accepted at the open house during informal discussions with the staff.

The license renewal application (LRA) is publicly available at the NRC Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, 20852, or from the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS). The ADAMS Public Electronic Reading Room is accessible at http://adamswebsearch.nrc.gov/dologin.html. The Accession Number for the LRA is ML060300086. Persons who do not have access to ADAMS, or who encounter problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, should contact the NRC's PDR Reference staff by telephone at 1-800-397-4209, or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at pdr@nrc.gov.

The VYNPS license renewal application is also available on the Internet at www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/vermont-yankee.html. In addition, the LRA is available for public inspection near the VYNPS site at the following four public libraries: Vernon Free Library, 567 Governor Hunt Road, Vernon, VT 05354; Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301; Hinsdale Public Library, 122 Brattleboro Road, Hinsdale, NH, 03451; and Dickinson Memorial Library, 115 Main Street, Northfield, MA 01360.

The GEIS, which assesses the scope and impact of environmental effects that would be associated with license renewal at any nuclear power plant site, also can be found on the NRC's website or at the NRC's PDR.

Please submit any comments that the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi, St. Francis/Sokoki Band may have to offer on the scope of the environmental review by June 23, 2006. Written 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, DC 20555-0001. Electronic comments may be submitted to the NRC by e-mail at VermontYankeeEIS@nrc.gov. At the conclusion of the scoping process, the NRC staff will prepare a summary of the significant issues identified and the conclusions reached, and mail a copy to you.

The staff expects to publish the draft supplement to the GEIS in December 2006. The NRC will hold another set of public meetings in the site vicinity to solicit comments on the draft. A copy of the draft supplemental environmental impact statement (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 VYNPS is planned for August 2007. If you need additional information regarding the environmental review process, please contact Mr. Richard L. Emch, Jr., Senior Environmental Project Manager, at 301-415-1590 or by e-mail at RLE@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Rani L. 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

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Sincerely,

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

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2. Overview of the Site Location

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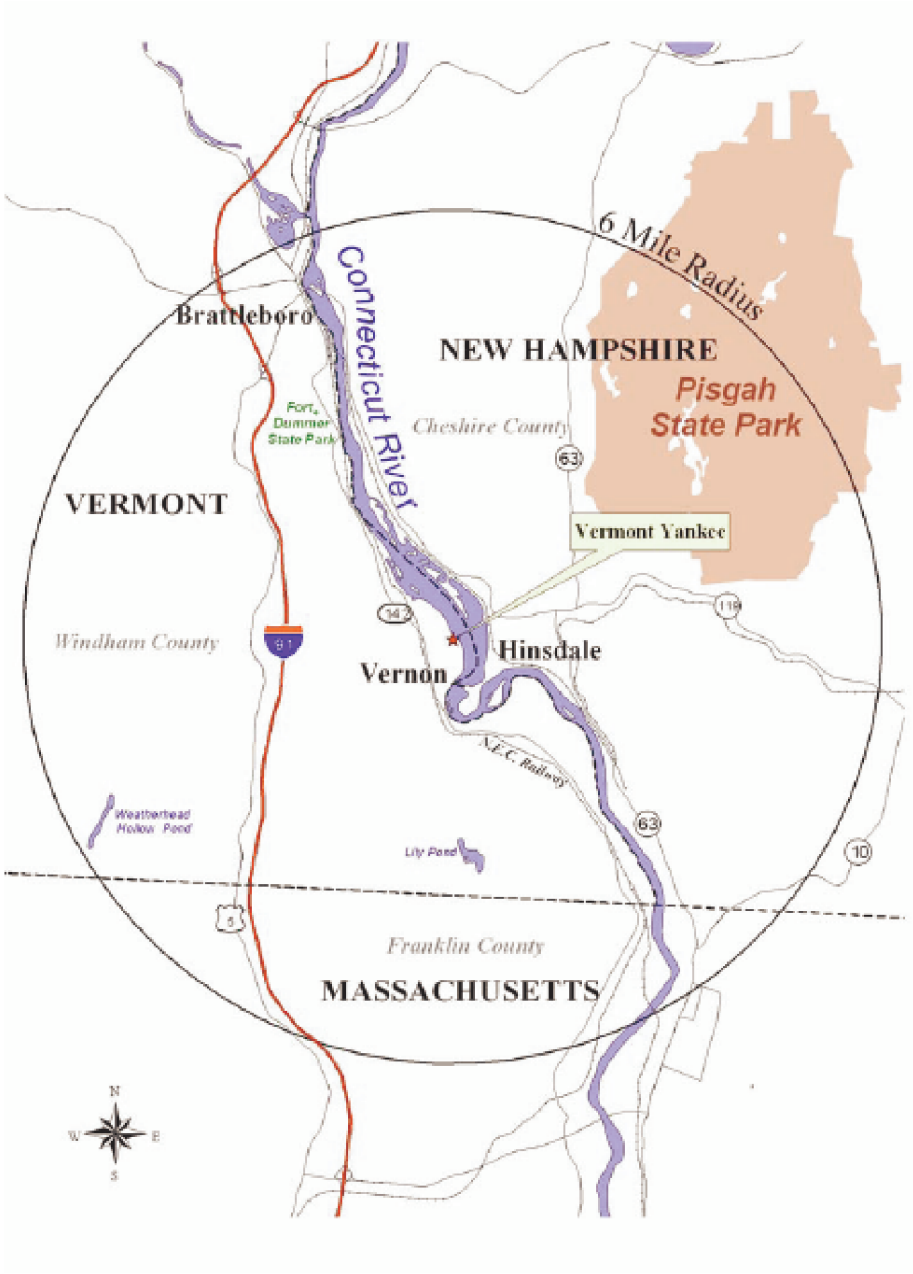
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NEW HAMPSHIRE
Pisgah
State Park
Fort Dummer State Park
Cheshire County
VERMONT
Vermont Yankee
Windham County
Hinsdale
Vernon
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Weatherhead Hollow Pond
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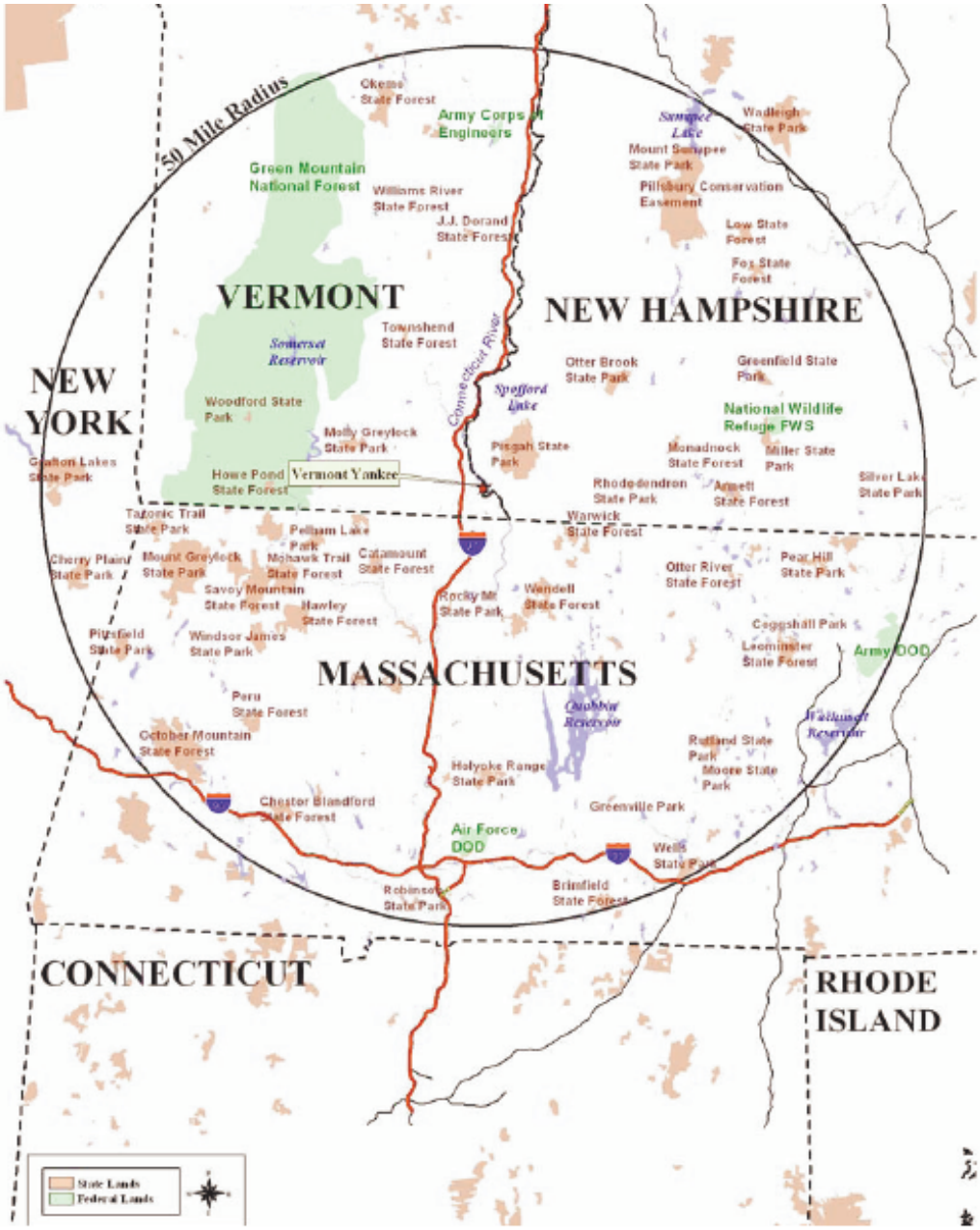
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VERMONT
NEW HAMPSHIRE
NEW YORK
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CONNECTICUT
RHODE ISLAND
Vermont Yankee
Connecticut River
Okemo State Forest
Army Corps of Engineers
Green Mountain National Forest
Williams River State Forest
J.J. Dorand State Forest
Sunapee Lake
Wadleigh State Park
Mount Sunapee State Park
Pillsbury Conservation Easement
Low State Forest
Fox State Forest
Townshend State Forest
Somerset Reservoir
Otter Brook State Park
Greenfield State Park
Spofford Lake
National Wildlife Refuge FWS
Woodford State Park
Molly Greylock State Park
Pisgah State Park
Monadnock State Forest
Miller State Park
Grafton Lakes State Park
Howe Pond State Forest
Rhododendron State Park
Annett State Forest
Silver Lake State Park
Tatonic Trail State Park
Warwick State Forest
Pellum Lake Park
Cherry Plain State Park
Mount Greylock State Park
Mohawk Trail State Forest
Catamount State Forest
Otter River State Forest
Pear Hill State Park
Savoy Mountain State Forest
Hawley State Forest
Rocky Mt State Park
Wendell State Forest
Cogshall Park
Pittsfield State Park
Windsor James State Park
Leominster State Forest
Army DOD
Peru State Forest
Quabbin Reservoir
Wachusett Reservoir
October Mountain State Forest
Rutland State Park
Moore State Park
Holyoke Range State Park
Chester Blandford State Forest
Greenville Park
Air Force DOD
Wells State Park
Robinson State Park
Brimfield State Forest
State Lands
Federal Lands

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station

cc:

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