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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
for the
LICENSE RENEWAL of WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION
PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Coffey County Library
Burlington Branch
410 Juanita Street
Burlington, Kansas 66839

The above-entitled public hearing was conducted
at 1:30 p.m.

BEFORE:

- RANI FRANOVICH
- CHRISTIAN JACOBS
- TAM TRAN

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MS. FRANOVICH: I'm Rani Franovich, and I'm the
3 chief of the Reactor Projects Branch in headquarters in
4 Rockville, Maryland. My staff prepared the environmental
5 impact statement for Wolf Creek license renewal. We're
6 here today to get some preliminary results of our
7 environmental review for Wolf Creek license renewal.

8 What we're going to do is start out with a very
9 brief presentation. Chris Jacobs here, he's the project
10 manager for the environmental review. He's going to talk
11 for a few minutes about what we actually looked at for our
12 environmental review and some of the preliminary findings
13 of that review.

14 Then we're going to have a very brief question
15 and answer period, if anyone has any questions about what
16 Chris has talked about. I'll go out to the audience and
17 let you ask your questions and we'll do what we can to
18 answer them. And then after that we'll open it up for the
19 public to come and make comments on the environmental
20 impact statement that we've recently published.

21 And so with that, let me go on and turn things
22 over to Chris to give his brief presentation. Chris.

23 MR. JACOBS: Thank you for taking the time to
24 come to this meeting. I hope the information we provide
25 will help you to understand the process we're going

1 through, what we've done so far and the role you can play
2 in helping us make sure that the final environmental
3 impact statement, or EIS, is accurate.

4 I'd like to start off by briefly going over the
5 agenda and the purposes of today's meeting. We're going
6 to present the preliminary findings of our environmental
7 review which assesses the impacts associated with renewing
8 the operating license for Wolf Creek Generating Station.
9 Then we'll give you some information about the schedule
10 for the remainder of our review and how you can submit
11 comments in the future. And then finally, really the most
12 important part of today's meeting, is where we receive any
13 comments that you may have.

14 The Atomic Energy Act gives the NRC the
15 authority to issue operating licenses to commercial
16 nuclear power plants for a period of up to 40 years. For
17 Wolf Creek, that license will expire in 2025. Our
18 regulations make provisions for extending plant operation
19 for an additional 20 years. Wolf Creek Generating
20 Station -- from here on I'll just refer to it as Wolf
21 Creek -- operated by Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating
22 Corporation, has requested license renewal.

23 As part of the NRC's review of that license
24 renewal application, we perform an environmental review to
25 look at the impacts of an additional 20 years of operation

1 on the environment. We held a meeting right here in
2 December 2006 to seek your input regarding issues we need
3 to evaluate. Now we are here to present the preliminary
4 results in the draft supplemental EIS. Afterwards, we
5 will open the floor for comments on the draft supplemental
6 EIS.

7 This slide illustrates the environmental review
8 process. This review which is the subject of today's
9 meeting evaluates the impacts of license renewal. It
10 involves scoping activities and the development of a
11 document called a supplement to the generic EIS for
12 license renewal. The draft supplemental EIS provides the
13 staff's preliminary assessment of environmental impacts
14 during the period of extended operation. The draft
15 supplemental EIS for Wolf Creek was published for comment
16 in September.

17 Next, I would like to give information on the
18 statute that governs the environmental review. That
19 statute is the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969,
20 commonly referred to as NEPA.

21 NEPA requires that all federal agencies follow
22 a systematic approach in evaluating potential
23 environmental impacts associated with certain actions. We
24 at the NRC are required to consider the impacts of the
25 proposed action which is license renewal and also any

1 mitigation for those impacts. We are also required to
2 consider alternatives to the proposed action.

3 The NRC has determined that an EIS will be
4 prepared for any proposed license renewal of a nuclear
5 plant.

6 NEPA and our EIS are disclosure tools. They
7 are specifically structured to involve public
8 participation and obtain public comment. This meeting
9 facilitates the public participation in our environmental
10 review.

11 In the 1990s, the NRC staff developed a generic
12 EIS that addresses a number of issues common to all
13 nuclear plants. As a result of that analysis, the NRC was
14 able to determine that a number of environmental issues
15 were common to or similar for all nuclear power plants.
16 The staff is supplementing that generic EIS with this
17 site-specific EIS that addresses issues specific to Wolf
18 Creek. Together, the generic EIS and the supplemental EIS
19 document the staff's analysis of the impacts of license
20 renewal for the Wolf Creek site.

21 Also, during the review, the NRC staff looks
22 for and evaluates any new and significant information that
23 might call into question the conclusions that were
24 previously reached in the generic EIS. In addition, the
25 staff may identify new issues not addressed in the generic

1 EIS.

2 This slide shows our decision standard for the
3 environmental review. Simply put: Is license renewal
4 acceptable from an environmental standpoint.

5 We used information in the environmental report
6 submitted as part of Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating
7 Corporation's license renewal application. We conducted
8 an environmental audit in March 2007 where we toured the
9 facility, observed plant systems, and evaluated the
10 interaction of plant operations with the environment. We
11 talked to plant personnel and reviewed specific
12 documentation of plant operations. We also spoke to
13 federal, state and local officials, permitting authorities
14 and social services. We considered the comments received
15 during the public scoping period. In total, we received
16 comments from the U.S. EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
17 Service, and one comment from the general public.

18 All of this information forms the basis of our
19 preliminary conclusions presented in the draft
20 supplemental EIS.

21 The overall team expertise for the Wolf Creek
22 environmental review includes various disciplines, as
23 represented on this slide.

24 In the mid 1990s, NRC evaluated the impacts of
25 all operating nuclear power plants across the U.S. NRC

1 looked at 92 separate impact areas and found that for 69
2 of these areas, the impacts were the same for all plants
3 with similar features. The NRC called these Category 1
4 issues and they were able to make generic conclusions that
5 all the impacts on the environment for Category 1 issues
6 would be small. The NRC published these conclusions in
7 the generic EIS in 1996.

8 The NRC was unable to make similar
9 determinations for the remaining 23 issues. As a
10 consequence, NRC decided that we would prepare
11 supplemental EISs for each plant to address the remaining
12 23 issues. This slide lists some of the areas that were
13 addressed during the Wolf Creek environmental review.

14 This slide outlines how impacts are quantified.
15 The generic EIS defined three impact levels as shown on
16 the screen: small, moderate, and large.

17 Now I'm going to use the fishery in Coffey
18 County Lake to illustrate how we use these three terms.
19 The operation of Wolf Creek plant may cause loss of fish
20 within the lake. If the loss of fish or species of fish
21 is so small that it cannot be detected in relation to the
22 total population in Coffey County Lake, the impact would
23 be small. If losses cause the population to decline and
24 then stabilize at a lower level, the impact would be
25 moderate. If the losses to the fish population declined

1 to the point where it cannot be stabilized and it
2 continually declines, then the impact would be large.

3 Through staff's environmental review, we have
4 concluded that the potential environmental impacts for all
5 Category 2 issues are of small or small to moderate
6 significance. In the next few slides I will discuss some
7 of the key issues related to the Wolf Creek environmental
8 review.

9 The first set of issues I'm going to talk about
10 relate to the make-up water for the cooling pond at Wolf
11 Creek. Water use conflicts have been a concern at nuclear
12 power plants with cooling ponds such as Wolf Creek where
13 make-up water is taken from a small river with low flow,
14 such as the Neosho River. The issue of water use
15 conflicts is considered a Category 2 issue. The staff's
16 analysis of the water use by the facility indicates that
17 although physical and administrative controls on water
18 withdrawal rates exist, water withdrawals can still occur
19 and have occurred during times when the natural low flow
20 rate in the Neosho River is already below the minimum
21 desirable stream flow established to be protective of end
22 stream and riparian communities. Although Wolf Creek has
23 been in compliance with the NRC regulations, state issued
24 permits and water rights agreements, there is the
25 potential for a water use conflict to occur during the re-

1 licensing period.

2 There may be water use conflicts associated
3 with the long term availability of the current water
4 supply, John Redmond Reservoir, during the relicensing
5 period. The proposed action described in the applicant's
6 environmental report assumes that the John Redmond
7 Reservoir would continue to be the primary source of make-
8 up water but does not address the likelihood that the
9 availability of this source is being reduced through
10 sedimentation. If no actions are taken, the volume of
11 water available within the conservation pool would
12 continue to decrease and the supply of water to Wolf Creek
13 would begin to compete with the volumes of water available
14 to maintain adequate streamflow.

15 Therefore, the staff's preliminary
16 determination is that the impacts caused by water use
17 conflicts would be small to moderate.

18 Impingement, also considered a Category 2
19 issues, refers to juvenile or adult fish being pulled into
20 the cooling intake or the make-up water screen house and
21 getting pinned on the debris screens. Available data
22 suggests that impingement has had little or no effect on
23 fish populations in Coffey County Lake.

24 The staff also evaluated impingement due to
25 make-up water pumping from the Neosho River at the make-up

1 water screen house. During times of water use conflicts
2 when the make-up water screen house is withdrawing water
3 from the Neosho River and the water levels are low,
4 impingement impacts to fish populations may increase. The
5 reduced volume of area and habitat in the Neosho River
6 would cause the density of fish susceptible to impingement
7 to be higher and could result in increased impingement
8 rates. Reduced area and volume of habitat could cause
9 fish to seek new habitat and refuges, and reduced flow
10 would make their upstream migration to the make-up water
11 screen house area from the downstream easier. Together,
12 these changes could increase impingement impact.

13 Therefore, if water use conflicts occur, the
14 staff's preliminary determination is that associated
15 impacts in the Neosho River due to impingement would be
16 small to moderate.

17 Threatened or endangered species is another
18 Category 2 issue which is related to the water use
19 conflicts mentioned previously. We prepared a detailed
20 biological assessment to analyze the effects of continued
21 operation of Wolf Creek on the federally listed threatened
22 or endangered species identified by the U.S. Fish and
23 Wildlife Service.

24 One of the three species identified, the
25 American bald eagle, has since been de-listed. The second

1 identified threatened or endangered species, Mead's
2 milkweed, is a perennial herb of the tall-grass prairie,
3 and it is not adversely affected by continued operations
4 at the plant. The only threatened or endangered species
5 that could be affected by license renewal at Wolf Creek is
6 a small catfish called the Neosho madtom, located
7 downstream of Wolf Creek's make-up water screen house.

8 The staff's preliminary determination is that
9 if no water use conflicts exist, the impacts on federally
10 listed threatened or endangered species from an additional
11 20 years of Wolf Creek operation would be small. However,
12 during low flow events or drought conditions, there could
13 be a reduction in the habitat available in the river to
14 the Neosho madtom.

15 Therefore, if small to moderate impacts occur
16 resulting from water use conflicts, the staff's
17 preliminary determination is that under these conditions,
18 impacts to the Neosho madtom could be small to moderate.

19 During the environmental review, we found no
20 information that was both new and significant in regard to
21 the Category 1 issues. Therefore, we have preliminarily
22 adopted the generic EIS conclusion that impacts associated
23 with those issues would continue to be small.

24 In the Wolf Creek supplemental EIS, we analyzed
25 all the Category 2 issues and determined that the

1 environmental impacts resulting from these issues were
2 small in all categories with the exception of the issues I
3 have just discussed. Water use conflicts, impingement,
4 and threatened or endangered species were found to be
5 small to moderate in some cases.

6 Also, during our analysis, we found that the
7 environmental impacts of alternatives in at least some
8 impact areas would reach moderate or large levels of
9 significance.

10 Based on the conclusions described in the
11 previous slide, the NRC staff's preliminary recommendation
12 is that the environmental impacts of license renewal are
13 not so great that license renewal would be unreasonable.

14 Listed are important milestone dates for the
15 Wolf Creek environmental review. In September, the Wolf
16 Creek draft supplemental EIS was issued. We are currently
17 accepting public comments on the draft until December 26,
18 2007. The final supplemental EIS is scheduled to be
19 published in May of next year.

20 This slide identifies Mr. Tam Tran as your new
21 primary point of contact with the NRC for the safety and
22 environmental reviews ongoing at Wolf Creek. I'm still
23 working at the NRC, however, I've moved on to another part
24 of the agency. Any future correspondence can be directed
25 to Mr. Tran with respect to completing the environmental

1 review.

2 This slide also identifies where documents can
3 be found relating to the Wolf Creek review. They're right
4 here at the Coffey County Library, Burlington Branch.
5 Also, at the bottom of the slide is the internet address
6 where you can directly access the Wolf Creek supplemental
7 EIS. We also have plenty of hard copies available right
8 here on the table. Please, anybody that wants one, take
9 it home with you.

10 There are several ways you can provide your
11 comments on the Wolf Creek draft supplemental EIS. You
12 can provide comments today during the comment period of
13 this meeting. If you're not ready to provide a comment
14 today, you can send us your comments by e-mail to
15 WolfCreekEIS@nrc.gov. You can also send your comments in
16 via U.S. mail or hand deliver them to the NRC headquarters
17 in Maryland.

18 This concludes my presentation. Thank you
19 again for attending today.

20 MS. FRANOVICH: Thank you, Chris.

21 Before we go to the comment period of today's
22 meeting, are there any questions about what Chris just
23 presented?

24 (No response.)

25 MS. FRANOVICH: Okay. With that, we're into

1 the comment portion of today's meeting. I have a
2 registered speaker, Mr. Bob Saueressing. Would you like
3 to make a comment now?

4 MR. SAUERESSING: No. Just keeping my options
5 open.

6 MS. FRANOVICH: No problem.

7 Is there any other member of the audience who
8 would like to provide comments to the NRC staff. Dorothy,
9 would you like to make comments at this time? Dorothy
10 Shoup.

11 MS. SHOUP: I have several copies of this so if
12 anyone would like it, this is four questions that I had
13 asked. They are not exactly on what you hear about but
14 it's parallel, so I have them for the representatives of
15 the NRC. How many of those would there be?

16 MR. JACOBS: Just three of us.

17 MS. SHOUP: I'll give you three copies there,
18 and if you'd like to look at them now, they might have
19 some comments here.

20 How about how many local citizens do we have
21 here, folks that are just here as I am, just as a citizen?
22 Is that most of us? How about anybody from the press?

23 Well, I had just a little bit of
24 misinformation. I had been working on this to kind of see
25 where I would go. I was here 20 years ago, or a little

1 over, when they had the hearing before they first licensed
2 Wolf Creek, and at that time I had two questions. One of
3 them was how would we deal with the hazardous waste, and I
4 am not here pro or con, I'll just read what I wrote.

5 Today I do not take a pro or con stand but I do
6 seek information. So what I'm going to tell you is not
7 pro or con of the plant. I think they've done a pretty
8 good job of running the plant. But these questions I
9 still have because the government -- we have not re-
10 addressed this hazardous waste problem, the toxic waste.
11 We're storing it, it seems to be all right right now.
12 Kansas didn't want the dump site, Nebraska didn't want the
13 dump site, nobody wants the dump site, and I understand.

14 So we have that to face, and as citizens, these
15 people are not able to address directly, but I notice they
16 handed out this wonderful book here, and while I was
17 scanning right now, in Section 4 it talks about the fish
18 and the rivers -- I'll depend on you hunters and fishermen
19 to look at that -- and then Section 5 environmental
20 impacts of postulated accidents. I'll address that in
21 just a second. And then one more, 7 environmental impacts
22 of alternatives to license renewal.

23 One of my questions was, when I got this,
24 apparently they're applying now for 2025 is the expiration
25 date now. That's quite a ways away, isn't it? And I

1 don't know what the reason is for applying so soon but
2 there must be a good reason. Application requests
3 authorization to operate Wolf Creek Generating Station for
4 an additional 20 years. Now, if that wouldn't take place
5 until 2025, then it would be in 40-some, I'll be dead and
6 gone long since. But I'm just interested in that; that
7 was something that came up today.

8 Now, if you'll let me, I'll just read these and
9 if anybody wants a copy, you may have it. Four questions,
10 please: two I asked 20 years ago when this facility was
11 originally licensed, and two more which have currently
12 come from other concerned citizens.

13 Number one, care and disposal of the hazardous
14 waste, including current status of waste storage here in
15 Coffey County, Kansas. France was and is a big user of
16 nuclear power, and I was told at that original hearing
17 that hazardous waste, spent fuel and so forth, was being
18 shipped to France, from France to Japan. What now and
19 here? I'm just asking for information; somebody may know
20 this, I do not know.

21 France, I think, has as much as 40 percent of
22 their energy coming from nuclear and you know what
23 problems we have. Ethanol costs about as much to make as
24 it does and it's a good temporary thing but it's not the
25 answer. Coal is dirty. We try to scrub it, that takes

1 energy. And the sun doesn't store very well, we've got to
2 get better batteries. So I think there are people who can
3 address these things but we need on it.

4 Two, de-commissioning plan, and that is
5 mentioned in here. After 20-plus years, is that
6 feasibly sufficient and enforceable? Please briefly
7 outline it for us. Now, I'm not asking for these people
8 to give me answers but I'm hoping that we can get some
9 answers. Maybe a newspaper article or something
10 eventually can address some of these things.

11 Number three -- now, these came to me as I was
12 calling about this meeting -- expansion or additions, and
13 I got a little bit of misinformation. Somebody said it's
14 already a done deal, someone else said it is not.

15 An Osage County acquaintance told me that this
16 is being requested. Specifically, briefly what is being
17 requested? Has it been granted? And apparently it has
18 not.

19 MR. JACOBS: There's been no request, ma'am,
20 for expansion of Wolf Creek beyond the current nuclear
21 plan. And one other thing, Dorothy, the reason that they
22 come in when they do, they have an opportunity 5 to 20
23 years before the current license expires. So that's part
24 of the regulations, and if they were not to get a license
25 renewal, they'd need some time to figure out what else

1 they were going to be doing, so that's why they come in
2 when they do.

3 MS. SHOUP: I think that should be brought out
4 in a newspaper article so people can review it, because I
5 think people are interested but they're very, very busy.

6 And the last one -- this probably doesn't apply
7 to very many of you -- we in Osage County, we usually have
8 winds from the southwest. Therefore, we are in the normal
9 path of a toxic plume, if there ever were one at the Wolf
10 Creek Power Plant. Yet when I ask our county FEMA
11 representative -- everybody has one now, you know -- about
12 this aspect of a nuclear plant operations, I was told, A,
13 she does not recall information received or on hand.
14 Apparently, she's not being notified and it probably
15 wouldn't hurt to get along with our neighbors to do this
16 for the plant.

17 And Mr. Guevel, G-U-E-V-E-L, is he here
18 somewhere? I'm probably saying it wrong. Anyway, he is
19 with the plant. Now maybe they could do something about
20 that.

21 And letter B, permission to attend emergency
22 preparedness exercises has been requested by this person
23 in Osage County but refused. One was just concluded, I
24 understand. Comments, please, on this. Why would it not
25 be a good thing to have that FEMA representative, because

1 as we know, when 9/11 came, all these aviation places were
2 teaching these guys how to fly and they told people but
3 the locals were not heard.

4 So what we're facing is tough, and I'm not
5 here, as I said, pro or con, but we need to face these
6 things, and as citizens give our input and our comment.

7 So that's all I had and I thank you for your
8 attention. If anybody wants a copy of this, you may have
9 it because I've got plenty of them. And I'm going to
10 study the book a little more. Thank you.

11 MS. FRANOVICH: Thank you, Ms. Shoup.

12 Just wanted to clarify one of the things that
13 Ms. Shoup brought up, the expansion of Wolf Creek. We
14 could interpret that in two different ways: one is
15 renewing the license and expanding the time the plant
16 operates, and that is the action before the NRC at this
17 time; the other is expansion of the power block itself
18 with the addition of new reactors. The license renewal
19 staff is not aware of any such plan.

20 So I just wanted to make a distinction between
21 those two interpretations of expansion.

22 MS. SHOUP: Are you saying there was a request
23 to expand the nuclear reactor part?

24 MS. FRANOVICH: No. The license renewal staff
25 is not aware of any pursuit of new reactors at Wolf Creek

1 site at this time.

2 MS. SHOUP: The reason I asked you about this
3 is a member of the state legislature said something on
4 this that I've got to go back and check with them to see
5 what they understood.

6 MS. FRANOVICH: I understand.

7 Any other members of the public interested in
8 making a comment on our draft environmental impact
9 statement?

10 (No response.)

11 MS. FRANOVICH: Okay. That concludes the
12 meeting. Before I close things down, just wanted to thank
13 everybody for coming. There is an opportunity to provide
14 comments on the environmental impact statement until
15 December 26, so Ms. Shoup and others, if you think of any
16 other comments you'd like to provide to the NRC staff,
17 there is another month plus, six weeks or so, to provide
18 your comments.

19 Also, if there's a way we can improve our NRC
20 public meetings, any suggestions you have for things we
21 could do different, things we're doing well, there is a
22 feedback form at the registration table that you could
23 pick up and fill out for us. You can hand it to an NRC
24 staff member today or you can fold it up and mail it to
25 us -- postage is prepaid.

1 And with that, thank you again for coming. The
2 meeting is concluded. Thank you.

3 (Whereupon, at 1:56 p.m., the meeting was
4 concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceedings before the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission in the matter of:

Name of Proceeding: Draft EIS Wolf Creek

Public Meeting

Docket Number: (Not Applicable)

Location: Burlington, Kansas

were held as herein appears, and that this is the original transcript thereof for the file of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission taken by me and, thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under the direction of the court reporting company, and that the transcript is a true and accurate record of the foregoing proceedings.



Peggy Brown
Official Reporter
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