



IN REPLY REFER TO:

# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Natchez Trace Parkway  
2680 Natchez Trace Parkway  
Tupelo, Mississippi 38804



L7617(NATR)  
xL3027, N36, D30-3Q

JUN 11 2008

Richard P. Raione, Branch Chief  
Environmental Projects Branch 2  
Division of Site and Environmental Reviews  
Office of New Reactors  
Mail Stop T-6D59  
U.S Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington D. C. 20555-0001

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RULES AND DIRECTIVES  
BRANCH  
EIS/ISO

Dear Mr. Raione:

*[Faint, illegible text]*

This is in reference to your letter dated May 29, 2008, concerning an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a proposed new nuclear station at Grand Gulf in Claiborne County, Mississippi. The new nuclear station will result in the need for additional power line crossings of the Natchez Trace Parkway south of Jackson, Mississippi near Parkway milepost 77.6.

We respectfully submit our request to be a cooperating agency on the EIS for the proposed Grand Gulf expansion. A detailed section in the proposed EIS which describes the impacts to the Natchez Trace Parkway including mapping is requested so that it will suffice for National Park Service (NPS) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance for the proposed crossing of the Parkway. A Statement of Findings will also be required if the proposed construction impacts any wetlands on Parkway land. Archeological clearance and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act compliance process will also be required regardless of which alternative you propose on Park lands.

The Natchez Trace Parkway was authorized by Congress May 18, 1938. The Parkway is an elongated park of 51,150 acres covering a distance of 444 miles in Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee between Natchez, Mississippi, and Nashville, Tennessee. The purpose, as set forth by Congress, of the Parkway is to provide and maintain a scenic and recreational motor road commemorating the historic Old Natchez Trace and to provide access to significant natural and cultural resources. The Natchez Trace Parkway is characterized by numerous prehistoric Indian mounds and Chickasaw village sites, a military road associated with General Jackson's famous victory over the British at New Orleans, and historic sites associated with the westward expansion of the British Colonies and the United States from 1763-1898. As one of the four nationally recognized rural parkways, the Natchez Trace Parkway, in its entirety, is eligible for

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the National Register of Historic Places as a designed cultural landscape and as a tribute to landscape architectural design and road way engineering partnerships at their best.

The site you are presently considering has a deed reserved 200 foot easement across the Parkway near milepost 77.6. Any deviation to the existing easement, as you are proposing, will require a new right-of-way from the National Park Service. In general, rights-of-way and easements represent tools for managing and controlling access to, use of, and interest in National Park Service land in order to preserve limited park resources. It is the responsibility of the park Superintendent to see that these interests are granted or acquired in a way that will not cause the derogation of values and purposes for which the park was established. It is important to note that although park resource management professionals serve as key support to the Superintendent in evaluating right-of-way proposals, only the Southeast Regional Director of the National Park Service has approval authority for granting rights-of-ways for the Parkway. Right-of-ways are not given freely and are scrutinized very closely by the National Park Service. Moreover, the NPS has a Congressional mandate to manage NPS lands in a manner that will not result in derogation of the values and purposes for which the park was established.

Development such as you are proposing to cross the Parkway is restricted by Mississippi Code of 1972, Section 55-13-35, which states that no structure over 35 feet in height can be constructed within 1000 feet of the boundary Natchez Trace Parkway. The height of new electrical distribution towers fall within this restriction. The protection of the scenic integrity of the Parkway's viewshed is one of the management objectives established by the public for preserving the Parkway to benefit future generations. We feel that enlarging the existing easement by 200 feet will severely impact the viewshed of the Natchez Trace Parkway and extensive mitigation may be required if the new power line crossing right-of-way is issued.

We hope the information we have provided is sufficient to answer your concerns regarding the proposed development affecting the Parkway. Should you require additional information, please feel free to contact D. Craig Stubblefield, Chief of Resource Management, at (662) 680-4055.

Sincerely,

  
Stennis R. Young  
Acting Superintendent