

Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Testimony on the Environmental Impact of  
Grand Gulf Nuclear Station, Unit 3  
Port Gibson, MS

By

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Alcorn State University was created by an act of the Mississippi State Legislature on May 13, 1871. The institution was created as a “seminary of learning” and was originally named Alcorn University of Mississippi in honor of Governor James L. Alcorn who was then governor of the State of Mississippi.

Alcorn State University is the oldest land-grant university in Mississippi and the oldest historically black land-grant institution in the United States. It was established in 1871 with funds provided through the First Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862. The university is committed to the posture and practice of equal opportunity, access to all qualified students, excellence in all programs and services, and to the success of its students. It strives to maintain a community of learners. The institution perceives itself as an academically strong institution that is community-oriented and that conducts basic and applied research and public service to meet the needs of students and other clients, especially residents of southwest Mississippi.

Alcorn State University is proud of its tradition as the preeminent four-year institution of higher learning in southwest Mississippi providing access to higher educational opportunities to residents of Mississippi, northeast Louisiana, the nation, and the global community. Alcorn is also pleased to be in Entergy’s service area and to a collaborative partner and neighbor of the Grand Gulf Nuclear Power Plant.

Contrary to the comments written in the June 12, 2008 issue of the *Port Gibson Reveille*, we at Alcorn State University, of necessity see ourselves as a “fit into the Grand Gulf situation.” Our commitment is to have our mutual staff involved and engaged in education, training, research and economic ventures that will support the nuclear industry and the university’s mission. It is our sincere hope that the statement attributed to Mr. James Randy Douet, Vice President of Operations, suggesting that “there was no mandate including ASU” is incorrect and/or taken out of context.

We have had a long collaborative and mutually beneficial relationship with Grand Gulf Nuclear Power Plant through the placement of faculty and students in internships and joint research initiatives. With the growth potential of the nuclear industry, and the likelihood of building a new high temperature gas-cooled reactor adjacent to the existing Grand Gulf Nuclear Power Plant, it is imperative that Alcorn State University strengthen its partnership with Entergy Nuclear by assisting in the recruitment and training of the human capital and serving as a pipeline for trained technical subject area experts to contribute to the production, research, and development of the next generation of nuclear power.

There are about 104 commercial nuclear generating units in operation in the United States contributing 20 percent of the total electricity produced. The nuclear industry has a demonstrated record of reliability and safety. There has not been one death that has been attributed to commercial nuclear generators. Therefore, the State of Mississippi and Claiborne County are glad to host nuclear generating stations.

When GGNS was first proposed for Claiborne County, the community was promised a great deal of prosperity and economic development. After over 25 years of operation and being in the community, the Nuclear Station remains a high tech oasis within a socioeconomically disadvantaged community, with a limited number of tangible benefits accruing to the community. Entergy is capable of making its presence more pronounced than it has been so far in the surrounding communities.

Geographically, Alcorn State University is located 12 miles south west of the Grand Gulf Nuclear site. Given the national sense of urgency in emergency preparedness following 9/11, having one of the largest nuclear power facilities as a neighbor, demands that we not only consider safeguarding our community from the remote potential of an accidental nuclear related event, but also threats of terrorist attacks, which is a homeland security issue. In August, 2005, Hurricane Katrina demonstrated the devastating impact of a natural disaster in Gulf Coastal communities. Thus, we feel a responsibility, at Alcorn, to have in place the appropriate facilities, trained personnel and mass notification systems to secure and protect our on and off campus constituencies if an emergency occurs.

While we at Alcorn, and the community at-large, recognize and appreciate the "good neighbor" relationship we have with Entergy Nuclear, we are not without concerns as to the long term economic, educational and health benefits, and risks of the proposed facility. However, it is our position as the regional, public university, located in southwest Mississippi, to be engaged in the research and development, planning and implementation of culturally sensitive and community-focused solutions to actual and perceived problems. Thus, we propose that Alcorn State University will seek assistance from Entergy Nuclear to build its infrastructures, expand its

educational and training opportunities, and strengthen its services and outreach capacities. To accomplish these goals, the University will need financial resources to:

1. Develop and initiate degree programs
  - BS Nuclear Engineering Technology
  - BS Radiation Science and Technology
  - BS and MS degree in Emergency Management
2. Establish and manage a GGNS 3 near site Nuclear Training/Research Center
3. Create two Endowed Professorships in the School of Arts and Sciences
  - Chemistry
  - Physics
4. Develop and operate a Workforce Development Training Facility on the ASU Campus
5. Build and manage a Local Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security Center
  - Emergency Shelter in Place
  - State of the Art Emergency Management Training
  - Mass Notification Systems
  - Transportation
6. Create a Regional Economic Development Partnership
7. Perform an in-depth data-based study of the factors that affect socioeconomic and housing decisions of residents in relocating and living in communities surrounding Grand Gulf.

The anticipated costs of implementing these goals and associated strategies will be approximately \$200 million over a three-year period. This figure represents a request of funding to meet the educational, research, emergency preparedness, community and economic development needs of the university and the southwest Mississippi region. Funding to the university will be leveraged with resources from state, federal, and private sources for greater impact and sustained development in the region.