



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

January 13, 2009

Chief, Rules, Directives and Editing Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop T6-D59
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

12/22/08
73 FR 78397
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2009 JAN 29 AM 9:37

RULES AND DIRECTIVES
BRANCH
USNRC

RE: EPA Review and Comments
Final Generic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FGSEIS)
Vogtle Electric Generating Plant Site
Supplement 34, NUREG-1437
CEQ No. 20080522

Dear Sir:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reviewed the subject Final Generic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FGSEIS) pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the results of our review:

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. (SNC) submitted an application to renew the Operating Licenses (OLs) for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 1 and 2 for an additional 20 years. The proposed action (license renewal) would provide for continued operation and maintenance of existing facilities and transmission lines. The facility uses water from the Savannah River for plant cooling, and discharges wastewater into the Savannah River via a discharge structure 500 feet downstream from the intake.

VEGP has a NPDES permit issued by the GA EPD. The NPDES Permit limits specific pollutant discharges from the plant, requires monitoring of discharges, and regulates the flow and thermal impacts of discharges. The NPDES permittee has operated and is operating in compliance with the NPDES permit requirements.

We appreciate your responses to our DGSEIS comments, which were included in Appendix A of the FGSEIS. Based on EPA's review of the FGSEIS, some environmental concerns remain. Specifically, protecting the environment involves the continuing need for appropriate storage and ultimate disposition of radioactive wastes generated on-site, as well as continuing measures to reduce entrainment of eggs and larvae due to surface water withdrawals. We note that in the Waste Confidence Rule (10 CFR 51.23), the Commission generically determined that the spent fuel generated by any reactor can be safely stored onsite for at least 30 years beyond the licensed operating life of the reactor. Ultimately, long-term radioactive waste disposition will require transportation of wastes to a permitted repository site.

SUNSI Review Complete
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Add = S. Hernandez (SHG)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this FGSEIS. Please contact Ramona McConney of my staff at (404) 562-9615 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heinz Mueller", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
NEPA Program Office