

June 22, 2009

Mr. Christopher O'Keefe, Director
New Hanover County Planning Department
New Hanover County Government Center
230 Government Center Dr., Suite 105
Wilmington, NC 28403

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION REGARDING LAND USE IN THE VICINITY OF
THE PROPOSED GENERAL ELECTRIC-HITACHI GLOBAL LASER
ENRICHMENT FACILITY

Dear Mr. O'Keefe:

It was a pleasure to meet with you on May 18, 2009, to discuss the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) licensing process for General Electric-Hitachi's (GEH's) proposed Global Laser Enrichment (GLE) facility. As we discussed during that meeting, GEH has proposed to build a commercial uranium enrichment facility on the existing General Electric/Global Nuclear Fuels-Americas site, approximately 9.6 kilometers (6 miles) north of the city of Wilmington in New Hanover County, North Carolina. If licensed, the facility would use a laser-based technology to enrich the isotope uranium-235 in uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) up to 8 percent by weight.

On January 30, 2009, GEH submitted an Environmental Report (ER) to NRC as one part of an application for a license to construct, operate, and decommission the proposed facility. We have enclosed additional information about the proposed action as it appears in the Executive Summary of the applicant's ER (Enclosure 1). The applicant's ER is publicly available in the NRC Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> using accession number ML090910573.

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and NRC's implementing regulations at Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 51 (10 CFR 51), NRC is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to document the impacts associated with the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the proposed facility. To support the development of the EIS, the NRC staff is requesting that the New Hanover County Planning Department provide information about reasonably foreseeable future local activities that may add, cumulatively, to the impacts to resources affected by the proposed facility.

In addition, the NRC staff is requesting specific information regarding the implications of land designations relevant to North Carolina's Coastal Area Management Act of 1974. As depicted in Figure 3.1-7 of the applicant's ER (Enclosure 2), the *Wilmington-New Hanover County Joint Coastal Area Management Plan 2006 Update*, developed by New Hanover County in conjunction with the City of Wilmington, designates portions of the Wilmington Site as an Aquifer Resource Protection Area and portions as a Wetland Resource Protection Area. The NRC staff is requesting information about whether these designations would impose any limitations on the proposed development on the Wilmington site.

C. O'Keefe

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We appreciate any information you can provide on these topics. After analyzing the information you provide, with information provided by other agencies and public comments, NRC will prepare a draft EIS and publish it for public comment.

If you have any questions or comments, or need any additional information, please contact Christianne Ridge of my staff at 301-415-5673.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Andrea Kock, Chief
Environmental Review Branch
Environmental Protection and
Performance Assessment Directorate
Division of Waste Management
and Environmental Protection
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs

Docket No.: 70-7016

Enclosures:

1. Executive Summary of the Environmental Report for the GLE Commercial Facility (GE-Hitachi Global Laser Enrichment LLC, 2008)
2. Figure 3.1-7 of the Environmental Report for the GLE Commercial Facility (GE-Hitachi Global Laser Enrichment LLC, 2008)

cc w/o enclosures:

See next page

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Sincerely,

Andrea Kock, Chief
Environmental Review Branch
Environmental Protection and
Performance Assessment Directorate
Division of Waste Management
and Environmental Protection
Office of Federal and State Materials
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cc w/o enclosures:
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cc without enclosures:

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