



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

September 2, 2009

Mary E. Jennings  
Field Supervisor  
Tennessee Field Office  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
446 Neal Street  
Cookeville, TN 38501

**SUBJECT: WATTS BAR NUCLEAR PLANT, UNIT 2 - REQUEST FOR LIST OF PROTECTED SPECIES WITHIN THE AREA UNDER EVALUATION FOR THE OPERATING LICENSE APPLICATION ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Dear Ms. Jennings:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or the staff) is reviewing an application submitted by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) for an operating license for Watts Bar Nuclear Plant, Unit 2 (WBN2), located in Rhea County, Tennessee at the northern end of the Chickamauga Reservoir, Tennessee River Mile 528. As part of the review of the operating license application, the NRC is preparing a Supplement to the Final Environmental Statement (FES) published in 1978. The Supplement to the FES will be prepared under Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 51, the NRC's regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The FES includes an analysis of pertinent environmental issues, including endangered or threatened species and impacts to fish and wildlife. This letter is being submitted under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934, as amended.

The proposed action in response to the application is the issuance of an operating license that would authorize TVA to possess, use, and operate a second lightwater nuclear reactor (the facility), Watts Bar Nuclear Plant (WBN) Unit 2, located on the applicant's site in Rhea County, Tennessee. Major buildings at the plant were completed prior to 1985 so the existing footprint of Unit 2 remains as almost originally planned.

Steam generator make-up water, plant service water, and condensor cooling water are to be obtained from Tennessee River intakes located upstream of the plant. Existing Watts Bar Unit 1 and the planned WBN2 will both use a modified closed cycle cooling system with cooling towers. Discharge from the plant will also go to the Tennessee River.

Included in the NRC evaluation will be identification of new and significant information developed after the 1978 FES and a previous Supplement to the FES published by the NRC in 1995. This evaluation will include a review of the power plant site and transmission line corridors for terrestrial and aquatic ecologic effects, water resources impacts, and related issues.

To support the Supplemental FES for the WBN2 operating license and to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the NRC requests information on federally listed, proposed and candidate species, and critical habitat that may be in the vicinity of WBN2 and its

M. Jennings

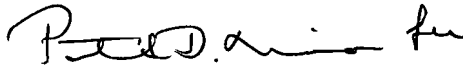
- 2 -

associated transmission line rights-of-way. In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

The NRC staff plans to hold a public environmental scoping meeting on or around Tuesday, October 6, 2009. In addition, during the week of October 5, 2009, the NRC plans to conduct an environmental site visit to obtain information needed for the Supplemental FES. You and your staff are invited to attend the public meeting and the site visit. Your office will receive a copy of the draft Supplemental FES along with a request for comments. The anticipated publication date for the draft Supplemental FES is April 2010.

If you have any questions concerning the NRC's review of this operating license application, please contact me at 301-415-6606 or by e-mail at [Joel.Wiebe@nrc.gov](mailto:Joel.Wiebe@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel Wiebe".

Joel Wiebe, Senior Project Manager  
Watts Bar Special Project Branch  
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-391

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associated transmission line rights-of-way. In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

You are invited to participate in the scoping process. The NRC staff plans to hold a public environmental scoping meeting on Tuesday, October 6, 2009. The scoping meeting will be held at the Magnuson Hotel at 1421 Murrays Chapel Road in Sweetwater, Tennessee, on Tuesday, October 6, 2009. There will be two sessions to accommodate interested parties. The first session will be at 1:30 p.m. and the second at 6:30 p.m. Your office will also receive a copy of the draft supplemental FES along with a request for comments. The anticipated publication date for the draft supplemental FES is April 2010.

If you have any questions concerning the NRC's review of this operating license application, please contact me at 301-415-6606 or by e-mail at [Joel.Wiebe@nrc.gov](mailto:Joel.Wiebe@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Joel Wiebe, Senior Project Manager  
 Watts Bar Special Projects Branch  
 Division of Operating Reactor Licensing  
 Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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