

September 2, 2009

The Honorable Michell A. Hicks, Principal Chief  
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians  
P.O.Box 455  
Cherokee, NC 28719

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION REGARDING TRIBAL HISTORIC AND  
CULTURAL RESOURCES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED  
GENERAL ELECTRIC-HITACHI GLOBAL LASER ENRICHMENT FACILITY  
NEAR WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA

Dear Chief Hicks:

Thank you for the information Mr. Tyler Howe, Tribal Historic Preservation Specialist, provided to Ms. Christianne Ridge of my staff on September 1, 2009, regarding sites of religious or cultural significance to the Eastern Band of Cherokee located near Wilmington, North Carolina. As Ms. Ridge discussed with Mr. Howe, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is gathering information about potential sites of religious or cultural significance as part of its environmental review of a uranium enrichment facility that General Electric-Hitachi (GEH) has proposed to build near Wilmington, North Carolina (Wilmington site). Based on the conversation with Mr. Howe, our understanding is that he is not aware of any sites of religious or cultural significance to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians located near the proposed facility. Thus this letter is provided as a courtesy for your information. As Mr. Howe suggested, the NRC staff also will contact the Catawba Nation to request information about potential sites of religious or cultural significance near the proposed facility.

On June 26, 2009, GEH submitted an application to the NRC for a license to authorize construction and operation of a uranium enrichment facility. The facility, if licensed, would use a laser-based technology to enrich the isotope uranium-235 in uranium hexafluoride (UF<sub>6</sub>) up to 8 percent by weight. GEH proposes to locate the facility on the existing General Electric/Global Nuclear Fuel-Americas site near Wilmington, in New Hanover County, North Carolina.

As established in Title 10 Code of Federal Regulations Part 51 (10 CFR 51), the NRC regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the NRC is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed action. The EIS will address the impacts associated with the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the proposed facility. The EIS also will address potential effects to any sites of religious or cultural significance that may be affected by the proposed action in accordance with 10 CFR 51 and 36 CFR 800, the implementing regulation for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

To support the license application, GEH submitted an Environmental Report (ER) that identifies 107 hectares (265 acres) of the 656 hectare (1621 acre) Wilmington site as the area for the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the proposed facility. The ER is publicly available in the NRC Public Document Room located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852, or from the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS). The ADAMS Public Electronic Reading Room is

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accessible at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. The accession number for the ER is ML090910573. For your convenience, we have enclosed the applicant's executive summary, as it appears in the ER, to provide you with background information.

If you have any questions or comments about the NRC environmental review of this proposed action, or need any additional information, please contact Ms. Christianne Ridge of my staff by telephone at 301-415-5673 or email at [christianne.ridge@nrc.gov](mailto:christianne.ridge@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Patrice M. Bubar, Deputy Director  
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

Enclosure: GLE Environmental Report  
Executive Summary

cc with enclosure:

Mr. Russ Townsend, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer  
Eastern Band of Cherokee  
P.O. Box 455  
Cherokee, NC 28719

Mr. Tyler Howe, Tribal Historic Preservation Specialist  
Eastern Band of Cherokee  
P.O. Box 455  
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Patrice M. Bubar, Deputy Director  
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Executive Summary

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