

September 2, 2009

The Honorable Raymond Halbritter, Nation Representative
Oneida Indian Nation
5218 Patrick Road
Verona, NY 13478

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF
THE BELL BEND NUCLEAR POWER PLANT COMBINED LICENSE
APPLICATION

Dear Representative Halbritter:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application submitted by PPL Bell Bend, LLC for a combined license (COL) for the construction and operation of one new nuclear power plant at its Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant (BBNPP) site near Berwick, Pennsylvania. As part of the review of this COL application, the NRC is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 51, the NRC's regulations that implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. The NRC staff is currently seeking information from consulting parties and other individuals and organizations likely to have knowledge of, or concerns with, historic properties in the area, to identify issues relating to the proposed undertaking's potential effects on historic properties. The area of potential effect for this COL review is the area at the BBNPP site and its immediate environs, which may be impacted by land-disturbing activities associated with the construction and operation of the new unit.

In addition, as outlined in 36 CFR 800.8(c), the NRC plans to coordinate compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 through the requirements of the NEPA. In accordance with 36 CFR 800.8(c), the NRC staff is using the process required by NEPA for the preparation of the EIS to comply with Section 106 of the NHPA in lieu of the procedures set forth in 36 CFR 800.3 through 800.6.

PPL Bell Bend, LLC submitted its application for a COL on October 10, 2008 pursuant to NRC requirements in 10 CFR Part 52. The BBNPP site consists of approximately 882 acres in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, approximately five miles northeast of Berwick, Pennsylvania on the Susquehanna River. The BBNPP site is located west of the existing Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (SSES), which has two operating boiling water reactors. PPL Bell Bend, LLC plans to construct one new nuclear unit adjacent to the existing SSES Units 1 and 2.

During the week of April 27, 2009, the NRC staff conducted an environmental site audit. The staff visited the Council Cup site, a bluff overlooking the Bell Bend portion of the Susquehanna River. This site is within the visual area of potential effect (APE) for the BBNPP site. According to local residents, this site was once a Native American meeting place. The NRC is in the process of gathering information to be included in the EIS and as of today no information has been collected to confirm the statements made by local residents.

R. Halbritter

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If you happen to have information about the Council Cup site or any site in the APE that may be of concern or interest, please forward it to Ms. Stacey Imboden, NRC Environmental Project Manager for the BBNPP COL review, at 301-415-2462 or by e-mail at Stacey.Imboden@nrc.gov. In her absence, please contact Ms. Tomeka Terry at 301-415-1488 or by email at Tomeka.Terry@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA Stacey Imboden for/

Robert G. Schaaf, Chief
Environmental Projects Branch 3
Division of Site and Environmental Reviews
Office of New Reactors

Docket No.: 52-039

cc: See next page

R. Halbritter

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