

October 15, 2009

Ms. Moni Belton
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
USFWS Ecological Services
17629 El Camino Real
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SUBJECT: INFORMATION REQUEST REGARDING THE COMBINED LICENSES
APPLICATION FOR SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 3 AND 4

Dear Ms. Belton:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff sent you a letter dated January 25, 2008 (attached), regarding the NRC's review of an application submitted by South Texas Project Nuclear Operating Company (STPNOC) for combined licenses (COLs) to construct and operate two new nuclear units (3 and 4) at the South Texas Project Electric Generating Station (STP) site in Matagorda County, Texas. STPNOC has recently submitted revised information that contains new alternative sites. As part of the review of the COL application, the NRC is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) as required by Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 51 (10 CFR Part 51), the NRC regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. The EIS will include an analysis of pertinent environmental issues including endangered or threatened species and impacts to fish and wildlife near the proposed and alternative sites. The NRC staff is requesting that you provide any information the NRC should consider in its review. Therefore, this letter is being submitted in accordance with the consultation provisions of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) of 1934, as amended.

The applicant's preferred location for the new units, if built, would be approximately 2,000 feet northwest of the existing STP units 1 and 2. The proposed units 3 and 4 would be located on approximately 12,200 acres in a rural area of Matagorda County, Texas.

STPNOC has also identified two new alternative sites, in addition to a previously identified alternative site that will be evaluated in the EIS. These sites include the Red 2 site and Trinity 2 site. The Red 2 site would be a greenfield site located in Fannin County, Texas, and would use the Red River as the cooling water source. The Trinity 2 site would be located in Freestone County, Texas, and would use the Trinity River as the cooling water source. The third alternative site, Allens Creek, a greenfield site in southwestern Austin County, Texas, still remains as an alternative site in STPNOC's revised analysis.

The NRC staff will evaluate the environmental impacts of construction and operation of the proposed nuclear units and will also consider alternatives to the proposed actions, including an evaluation of the alternative sites. To support the EIS preparation process and to ensure compliance with Section 7 of the ESA, the NRC requests a list of endangered, threatened, candidate, and proposed species, and designated and proposed critical habitats that may be in the vicinity of the proposed alternative sites. In addition, please provide any information you consider appropriate under the provisions of the FWCA for the project area and alternative sites. Please submit your comments by November 13, 2009, to Ms. Jessie M. Muir, Environmental Project Manager, Office of New Reactors, Mail Stop T7-E30, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

The current version, Revision 2, of the STP COL application is available through the web-based version of the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System which can be found at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Revision 2 of the Environmental Report (ER), as included in the COL application, is listed under accession number ML082831350. The revised alternative sites information was submitted after Revision 2 and can be located under accession number ML091830339. Revision 2 of the STP COL application and the new alternative site submittal are also available on the Internet at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/col/south-texas-project/documents.html>.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the Environmental Project Managers for the STP COL Project, Ms. Jessie Muir at (301) 415-0491 or via email at Jessie.Muir@nrc.gov, or Ms. Sarah Lopas at (301) 415-1147 or via email at Sarah.Lopas@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Ryan Whited, Chief
Environmental Projects Branch 2
Division of Site and Environmental Reviews
Office of New Reactors

Docket Nos. 52-012 and 52-013

Enclosures:
As stated

cc: see next page

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Sincerely,
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 Office of New Reactors

Docket Nos. 52-012 and 52-013

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ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML092580516

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