



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

January 27, 2010

Mr. Rick A. Muench
President and Chief Executive Officer
Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation
Post Office Box 411
Burlington, KS 66839

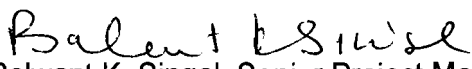
SUBJECT: WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (TAC NO. ME2939)

Dear Mr. Muench:

Enclosed is a copy of the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact related to your application for exemption dated December 15, 2009 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML100070503). Portions of the December 15, 2009, submittal contain security-related and safeguards information and, accordingly, is being withheld from the public. The redacted version of the December 15, 2009, letter was submitted by Wolf Creek Nuclear Generating Corporation on January 12, 2010 (ADAMS Accession No. ML100250025), and is available to the public. The proposed exemption would grant an extension from being in full compliance with certain new requirements contained in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Section 73.55 by the March 31, 2010, deadline.

The assessment is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,


Balwant K. Singal, Senior Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch IV
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-482

Enclosure
Environmental Assessment

cc w/encl: Distribution via Listserv

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WOLF CREEK NUCLEAR OPERATING CORPORATION
DOCKET NO. 50-482
WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering issuance of an exemption, pursuant to Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Section 73.5, "Specific exemptions," from the implementation date for certain new requirements of 10 CFR Part 73, "Physical protection of plants and materials," for Renewed Facility Operating License No. NPF-42, issued to Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (WCNOC, the licensee), for operation of the Wolf Creek Generating Station (WCGS), located in Coffey County, Kansas. In accordance with 10 CFR 51.21, the NRC prepared an environmental assessment documenting its finding. The NRC concluded that the proposed actions will have no significant environmental impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Identification of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action would exempt WCGS from the required implementation date of March 31, 2010, for several new requirements of 10 CFR Part 73. Specifically, WCGS would be granted an exemption from being in full compliance with certain new requirements contained in 10 CFR 73.55 by the March 31, 2010, deadline. WCNOC has proposed an alternate full compliance implementation date of December 31, 2010, approximately 9 months beyond the date required by 10 CFR Part 73. The proposed action, an extension of the schedule for

completion of certain actions required by the revised 10 CFR Part 73, does not involve any physical changes to the reactor, fuel, plant structures, support structures, water, or land at the WCGS site.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application dated December 15, 2009.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is needed to provide the licensee with additional time to perform the required upgrades to the WCGS security system due to long lead time for procuring the materials, unfavorable weather months affecting construction, and resource limitations due to concurrent project activity.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The NRC has completed its environmental assessment of the proposed exemption. The staff has concluded that the proposed action to extend the implementation deadline would not significantly affect plant safety and would not have a significant adverse effect on the probability of an accident occurring.

The proposed action would not result in an increased radiological hazard beyond those previously analyzed in the environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact made by the Commission in promulgating its revisions to 10 CFR Part 73 as discussed in a *Federal Register* notice dated March 27, 2009 (74 FR 13967). There will be no change to radioactive effluents that affect radiation exposures to plant workers and members of the public. Therefore, no changes or different types of radiological impacts are expected as a result of the proposed exemption.

The proposed action does not result in changes to land use or water use, or result in changes to the quality or quantity of non-radiological effluents. No changes to the National

Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit are needed. No effects on the aquatic or terrestrial habitat in the vicinity of the plant, or to threatened, endangered, or protected species under the Endangered Species Act, or impacts to essential fish habitat covered by the Magnuson-Steven's Act are expected. There are no impacts to the air or ambient air quality.

There are no impacts to historical and cultural resources. There would be no impact to socioeconomic resources. Therefore, no changes to or different types of non-radiological environmental impacts are expected as a result of the proposed exemption.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action. In addition, in promulgating its revisions to 10 CFR Part 73, the Commission prepared an environmental assessment and published a finding of no significant impact [Part 73, Power Reactor Security Requirements, 74 FR 13926, 13967 (March 27, 2009)].

Therefore, the extension of the implementation date of the new requirements of 10 CFR Part 73 to December 31, 2010, would not have any significant environmental impacts.

The NRC staff's safety evaluation will be provided in the exemption that will be issued as part of the letter to the licensee approving the exemption to the regulation, if granted.

Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

As an alternative to the proposed action, the NRC staff considered denial of the proposed action (i.e., the "no-action" alternative). Denial of the exemption request would result in no change in current environmental impacts. If the proposed action was denied, the licensee would have to comply with the March 31, 2010, implementation deadline. The environmental impacts of the proposed exemption and the "no-action" alternative are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources:

The action does not involve the use of any different resources than those considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the WCGS, NUREG-0878, dated June 1982, as supplemented through the "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants: Wolf Creek Generating Station - Final Report (NUREG-1437, Supplement 32)," dated May 2008.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

In accordance with its stated policy, on January 12, 2010, the NRC staff consulted with the Kansas State official, Mr. Tom Conley of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

On the basis of the environmental assessment, the NRC concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the NRC has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated December 15, 2009. Portions of the December 15, 2009, submittal contain security-related and safeguards information and, accordingly, is being withheld from the public. The redacted version of the December 15, 2009, letter was submitted by the licensee on January 12, 2010, and may be examined, and/or copied for a fee, at the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, Public File Area O-1F21, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland 20852. Publicly available records will be accessible electronically from the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Public Electronic Reading

Room on the Internet at the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>.

Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who encounter problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS should contact the NRC PDR Reference staff by telephone at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or send an e-mail to pdr.resource@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 27th day of January 2010.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Balwant K. Singal, Senior Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch IV
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

January 27, 2010

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/RA/

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ADAMS Accession No.: Cover Letter: ML100110086 EA: ML100110099

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