

June 17, 2010
Lee new nuclear reactor meeting
Gaffney, South Carolina

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We strongly oppose the proposed reactors for many reasons. First, the water evaporation from the Broad River due to cooling operations would be unacceptable. The Broad River already receives hot discharges and loses water from THREE other existing or planned nuclear reactors in SC and a coal plant in NC. In addition to the 47 million gallons of water per day the facility would withdraw, returning only a quarter of this amount, our calculations based on the reactor specifications indicate that the facility could cause evaporation of up to five and a half BILLION gallons per year in "forced evaporation" downstream due to hot discharges. This reduced flow is harmful to wildlife and reduces the amount of water available to downstream communities, such as Union and Columbia, who use the Broad as a drinking source. Construction of cooling pond C would not improve the state of the Broad River, as London Creek is tributary to the river, and thus any evaporation from the pond will impact overall river flows. The mean monthly discharge of many NC rivers and streams has been generally decreasing in the past decade, due to two extended periods of drought. Especially with these drought conditions and the possibility of interstate water conflicts, a closer examination of the allocation implications of permitting these reactors is imperative.

Secondly, we urge you to consider the many disadvantages of nuclear energy in your environmental impact assessment. Nuclear power is expensive, produces hazardous and long-lasting waste, can contribute to proliferation of nuclear weapons, and cannot be built fast enough to be an effective climate solution in the short term. Cheaper, safer, more just alternatives – such as energy efficiency and conservation, solar, and wind – are a wiser investment.

Finally, as a citizen of Western North Carolina, I do not support Duke's proposition to supply my region with new nuclear power. In Western NC we have plentiful opportunities for energy efficiency and conservation, wind, and solar power. There is no need for such an unstable, expensive and water-intensive project. I urge you to investigate all the viable possibilities and not to permit these new reactors. Thank you very much for your time.