



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

May 9, 2011

Katie A. Nekola
General Counsel
Clean Wisconsin
634 W. Main Street, Suite 300
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Ms. Nekola:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter dated April 20, 2011, regarding the extended power uprate (EPU) application for the Point Beach Nuclear Plant (PBNP), Units 1 and 2. You specifically requested that the NRC postpone any decision for approving the PBNP EPU license amendment until the NRC task force has completed its short- and long-term findings related to lessons learned from the Fukushima-Daiichi event in Japan. You emphasized that there would be substantial benefit if approval of the power uprate were delayed in order to determine the applicability of the findings from the NRC task force.

The NRC continues to closely monitor the activities in Japan and is reviewing all available information. All U.S. nuclear plants are built to withstand external environmental hazards, including earthquakes and tsunamis. Even those nuclear plants that are located within areas with low and moderate seismic activity are designed for safety in the event of such a natural disaster. The NRC requires that safety-significant structures, systems, and components be designed to take into account even rare and extreme seismic and tsunami events. In addition to the design of the plants, significant effort goes into emergency response planning and accident management. This approach is called defense-in-depth. These factors, among others, provide assurance to the NRC that U.S. plants continue to operate safely.

The NRC continues to process existing applications for power uprates, in addition to new licenses and license renewals, in accordance with schedules that had been previously established. The NRC regulatory framework and requirements provide for a rigorous and comprehensive safety review of the effect from the power uprate on system design and operation. The recommendations from the NRC's task force associated with lessons learned from the events in Japan will certainly be taken into account during the review of future applications, as appropriate. The NRC also has the necessary regulatory tools to require any changes to all nuclear facilities should the agency determine that changes are necessary.

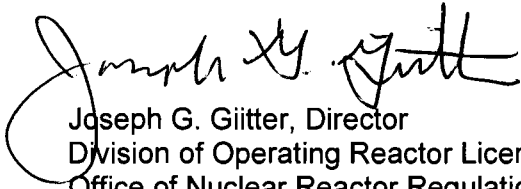
K. Nekola

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This includes any changes to the PBNP licensing basis, if applicable.

Thank you for your interest in these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph G. Gitter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Joseph G. Gitter, Director
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-266 and 50-301

cc: Listserv

K. Nekola

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This includes any changes to the PBNP licensing basis, if applicable.

Thank you for your interest in these matters.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Joseph G. Giitter, Director
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-266 and 50-301

cc: Listserv

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