

November 13, 2013

Mr. Steve Colvin, Unit Supervisor
Division of Ecological Resources
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED 40-YEAR LICENSE RENEWAL OF THE PRAIRIE ISLAND INDEPENDENT SPENT FUEL STORAGE INSTALLATION IN GOODHUE COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Dear Mr. Colvin:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application from the Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation (NSPM), to renew Materials License Number SNM-2506 for the Prairie Island (PI) Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI) located in Red Wing, Goodhue County, Minnesota. NSPM is requesting that the license be renewed for a 40-year period. In 1993, the NRC issued a 20-year license to NSPM to receive, possess, store, and transfer spent fuel generated at the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant (PINGP) in the PI ISFSI. License SNM-2506 currently allows NSPM to store up to 48 transnuclear-40 casks (TN-40), and TN-40 heat transfer high thermal (TN 40HT) casks. The proposed license renewal would not involve any new construction, disturbance of previously undisturbed land, or changes to routine ISFSI operations. Thus, approval of the proposed license renewal would not result in any construction activities, excavation or other land disturbance, or changes to the operations of the PI ISFSI.

As established in Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR 51) Part 51, "Environmental Protection Regulations for Domestic Licensing and Related Regulatory Functions," the NRC regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), the NRC staff has prepared a draft environmental assessment (EA) and draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The purpose of the draft EA is to assess the potential environmental impacts of the proposed license renewal and of reasonable alternatives. The draft EA includes an analysis of relevant environmental issues and documents the NRC staff's preliminary determinations regarding the environmental impacts from the proposed continued operation of the PI ISFSI.

As part of the review of the NSPM application, on April 25, 2012, the NRC staff requested input from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to facilitate the identification of local resource areas that may be affected by the proposed renewal of the PI ISFSI license. The information provided by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on July 3, 2012, was considered in the preparation of the draft EA.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.33, the NRC staff is making the draft EA and draft FONSI available for public review and comment. In doing so, the NRC staff determined that preparation of the draft EA and draft FONSI furthers the purposes of NEPA. The NRC staff is enclosing the draft EA for your review and comment. Please provide any information, comments, or concerns you may have on the draft EA during the comment period, which ends 30 days after the date of publication in the *Federal Register* notice. Comments should be submitted in writing either by mail to Ms. Cindy Bladey, Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mailstop: 3WFN 6A44, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001 (include Docket ID NRC-2013-0251 in the subject line), or under Docket ID NRC-2013-0251 at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Based on the comments received, the NRC staff may determine that a final FONSI is appropriate or instead find that preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is warranted should significant impacts resulting from the proposed action be identified. The NRC staff's final determination will be noticed in the *Federal Register*.

The draft EA is publicly available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. The ADAMS accession number for the draft EA is ML13205A120.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ms. Jean Trefethen, Project Manager, by telephone at 301-415-0867 or by e-mail at Jean.Trefethen@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Kevin Hsueh, Chief
Environmental Review Branch
Environmental Protection
and Performance Assessment Directorate
Division of Waste Management
and Environmental Protection
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs

Docket No.: 72-10
License No.: SNM-2506

Enclosure: Draft EA
(1 Hard copy and 1 CD)

cc: Jamie Schrenzel, Principal Planner, DNR

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Sincerely,

Kevin Hsueh, Chief
 Environmental Review Branch
 Environmental Protection
 and Performance Assessment Directorate
 Division of Waste Management
 and Environmental Protection
 Office of Federal and State Materials
 and Environmental Management Programs

Docket No.: 72-10
 License No.: SNM-2506

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cc: Jamie Schrenzel, Principal Planner, DNR

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