



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4
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July 30, 2013

Stephen J. Campbell, Chief
Watts Bar Special Projects Branch
Division of Operating Reactor
Licensing Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Subject: EPA's Comments on the
Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS)
Operation of Watts Bar Nuclear Plant, Unit 2, Supplement 2
NUREG-0498, May 2013
CEQ No. 20130169

Dear Mr. Campbell:

Pursuant to Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA) and Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 4 reviewed the Final Environmental Statement, Related to the Operation of Watts Bar Nuclear Plant, Unit 2, Supplement 2 (FSEIS).

This FSEIS is the result of The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) submitting to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) On March 4, 2009, a request to reactivate its application for a license to operate a second light-water nuclear reactor (Unit 2) at the Watts Bar Nuclear (WBN) Plant in Rhea County, Tennessee. The proposed action is NRC issuance of a 40-year facility operating license for WBN Unit 2, a pressurized-water reactor that could produce up to 3,425 megawatts thermal. This reactor-generated heat would be used to produce steam to drive steam turbines, by providing 1,160 megawatts electric of net electrical power capacity to the region.

EPA appreciates the responses to our comments regarding the Draft SEIS, which are included in Appendix E of this FSEIS. Based on the information in the FSEIS, there are some environmental concerns which should be addressed as the project proceeds:

Section 2.6, Radiological Environment: The NRC should clarify when tritium monitoring began at WBN, and the frequency of data collection and review prior to the tritium leak detected in 2002 at WBN Unit 1. The FSEIS is not clear about whether the TVA has definitive documentation that shows there was no leak prior to 2002. Additional tritium baseline data should be reviewed by the NRC. We note that tritium is an ongoing concern at nuclear power plants, and that operation will require ongoing tritium monitoring.

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Section 4.10.1, Radiological Waste: The status of the disposition of Class A low-level waste from WBN should be updated as further information becomes available. It is not clear in the FSEIS whether TVA plans to store waste onsite, apply for disposal at the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Facility in Andrews County, or ship it to Sequoyah Nuclear Plant. In addition, the TVA needs to clarify plans for the disposition of Classes B and C wastes.

In conclusion, the FSEIS is clearly written, includes responses to agency comments about the project, and provides useful information for assessment of the proposal to finish and operate Watts Bar Unit 2. We appreciate your coordination with us. If you have any questions, please contact Ramona McConney of my staff at 404-562- 9615 (McConney.Ramona@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mueller", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
NEPA Program Office
Office of Environmental Accountability