

Rulemaking1CEm Resource

From: RulemakingComments Resource
Sent: Monday, October 07, 2013 12:45 PM
To: Rulemaking1CEm Resource
Subject: FW: Let's protect our communities from radioactive waste!

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TITLE: Waste Confidence—Continued Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel
COMMENT#: 00035

-----Original Message-----

From: Sierra Club [<mailto:information@sierraclub.org>] On Behalf Of Nick Littlejohn
Sent: Monday, September 23, 2013 12:26 AM
To: RulemakingComments Resource
Subject: Let's protect our communities from radioactive waste!

Sep 22, 2013

Allison McFarlane

Dear McFarlane,

Take action to protect our communities from nuclear waste!

Leslie March and her mother in 1955

I first learned about "atomic waste" in my high chair; I grew up in the fifties in Washington State and my grandfather frequently had business at the Hanford Reservation (now the most contaminated nuclear waste site in North America). I remember my mother arguing with him about the dangers of nuclear waste: she was concerned about the health of the Columbia River; he trusted that the plant would be safe.

But my mother was right: the tanks containing highly radioactive waste are leaking, and the Columbia River is at risk.¹

We now have the opportunity to protect communities across the nation from radioactive waste. Please take action today!

The reactors at Hanford are now closed. But when I discovered that another nuclear reactor (the same kind used at Fukushima) now operates within miles of the Columbia River, I was motivated to take action to protect the river, and began organizing in my community. I was dismayed when the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) recently relicensed the Columbia Generating Station for another 20 years -- even though they don't have a solid plan for storing the waste safely.

Fortunately the courts are now requiring the NRC to have a moratorium on licensing until they do an environmental impact statement on the radioactive waste. Now we have a chance to protect the river by demanding that the waste be stored safely.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is now developing new rules for the long-term storage of highly radioactive waste from the nation's nuclear reactors. These rules will determine whether or not your state becomes a transportation route for thousands of shipments of highly radioactive waste on super-trucks, or a storage site for some or all of the 70,000+ tons of radioactive waste.

The federal government is now taking public comments on these rules:
please tell the NRC to enact strong rules to protect our communities and environment.

We have a very unique opportunity to have a say in how our country handles radioactive waste from nuclear reactors in the future. If we don't step up and comment, we will have lost our ability to protect our grandchildren, and many generations to come, from the deadly dangers of radiation.

Let the NRC know that we are not confident with the current way they have regulated radioactive waste they need to do more.

Thank you for everything you do for the environment,

Leslie March
Sierra Club Nuclear Program Volunteer Lead

P.S. After you've taken action, please forward a copy of this message to five of your friends and family. Or spread the word on your social networks with the share buttons below.

[1] "Hanford Nuclear Reservation Tanks Leaking Radioactive Waste Underground, Governor Inslee Says," AP/Huffington Post, February 22, 2013.

I am writing you because I am concerned about how we store our most hazardous waste, the radioactive fuel rods from nuclear reactors. We should not license or re-license any reactor until it has been proven that we can successfully isolate this waste.

While we are working on the solution, I am also concerned that many of our nuclear reactors have overcrowded fuel pools on site. These present safety threats to the communities and industries that surround the plants. The NRC should take immediate action to reduce the number of fuel assemblies in the water-filled pools. Before transferring the fuel rods to cask storage, the cask storage needs to be examined and reinforced to be able to safely store the fuel rods particularly those that qualify as high burn up fuel. Hardened on-site storage of the casks should become the choice for storage.

I am also concerned about the sustainability of nuclear power. The EIS needs to evaluate the true costs of nuclear power after the subsidies are stripped away. The long-term costs of decommissioning need to be considered as well. The ongoing costs to US taxpayers should be transparent in this EIS.

Finally, the EIS should consider the option of not making any nuclear waste at all in the future by comparing the environmental footprint of nuclear from mining to long term waste disposal to that of renewables and energy efficiency.

Sincerely,

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