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NRC Revises Review Schedule for Waste Confidence Environmental Study and Final Rule

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is revising its review schedule for the final versions of its Waste Confidence Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) and final rule on the extended storage of spent nuclear fuel at the nation's commercial nuclear power plants.

When the Commission directed the staff to develop the environmental study and regulation, it gave a deadline of September 2014. The new schedule envisions publication of the rule and GEIS no later than Oct. 3. The delay reflects time lost during the government shutdown and lapse of appropriations last October. The shutdown led the agency to reschedule several public meetings and extend the public comment period on the draft versions of the GEIS and rule by nearly a month.

"Waste confidence remains a high agency priority," NRC Chairman Allison Macfarlane said. "Our staff will continue to work aggressively to meet its schedule milestones and come as close as possible to meeting the original deadline. However, it's important for the public and our licensees to know now that, due to unanticipated events, the staff may need some extra time to give the array of public comments the attention they deserve."

During the 98-day public comment period, the NRC held 13 public meetings nationwide to collect public comments on the draft environmental statement and rule. The agency also received more than 33,000 written comments.