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Title: DSEIS Meeting for Grand Gulf Nuclear
Station, Unit 1: Afternoon Session

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Location: Port Gibson, Mississippi

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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PUBLIC MEETING ON DRAFT
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT FOR GRAND
GULF NUCLEAR STATION
AFTERNOON SESSION

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Hearing Room
Port Gibson Hall
1005 College Street
Port Gibson, Mississippi

The above-entitled hearing was conducted
at 2:00 p.m.

BEFORE: BOB HAGAR, Facilitator

NRC STAFF:

DAVID DRUCKER

BRIAN D. WITTICK

RICHARD SMITH

BLAKE RICE

VICTOR DRICKS

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MR. HAGAR: Again, my name is Bob Hagar,
3 and I'm facilitating this meeting, and my primary
4 role is to make sure that everybody who has -- who
5 wants to say something in this meeting has an
6 opportunity to say it.

7 But there's a few details I want to tell
8 you about this meeting, I want to make sure you
9 have about this meeting, so that you will
10 understand what is going on.

11 First, the meeting is going to be in
12 three parts. The first part, the NRC staff will
13 deliver a presentation to talk about the
14 preliminary results of the license renewal
15 environmental review for Grand Gulf Nuclear
16 Station. That will be part one.

17 Part two is when the public -- when you
18 have an opportunity to ask questions and get
19 answers about that material. And then part three
20 will be a time when you have the opportunity to say
21 whatever you want to say. This will be a time when
22 you can provide feedback, provide comments about
23 this, or comments about anything you want to
24 comment about.

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1 Now, we've got a schedule to meet. And
2 so I will be keeping track of the time. And after
3 we complete parts one and two, I'll see how much
4 time is left. I'll see how many people want to
5 speak. And speakers should have all filled out a
6 yellow feedback card -- a yellow speaker card.

7 And for this meeting, I didn't see any
8 yellow speaker cards, so I'm assuming no one is
9 going to want to speak. But that's what the third
10 part of the meeting is for. So that is one detail;
11 the meeting is going to be in three parts.

12 The second detail is that this meeting --
13 that the NRC has to produce a transcript of this
14 meeting. And to make that transcript possible,
15 we're recording the meeting.

16 And so that the recording is clear, we
17 have to set up some ground rules. One is that if
18 you are going to speak, you have got to speak into
19 a microphone. And so for when the time comes for
20 you to speak, if you will raise your hand, I'll
21 bring the microphone to you.

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1 And second is, the first time you speak,
2 we would like you to say your name so that the
3 court reporter will know who is speaking. And if
4 you have an unusual spelling of your name, you
5 might go ahead and spell it, and help that out. So
6 that is one thing, os speak into the microphone.

7 And the other is, only one person speaks
8 at a time, because if the recording picks up two
9 people speaking, we can't tell what either one of
10 them is saying.

11 And also we don't want any background
12 noise. So we can't have side conversations. And
13 please silence your personal electronics, so we
14 don't have phones ringing or text messages, noises,
15 and things like that. So any questions about the
16 ground rules we are going to follow?

17 (No verbal response.)

18 MR. HAGAR: All right. Then I am going
19 to turn the meeting over to David Drucker, who's
20 going to be the primary NRC speaker. And I will
21 come back at the end of part one to facilitate part
22 two.

23 So David, go ahead.

1 MR. DRUCKER: Thank you, Bob. And thank
2 you all for taking time to come out to this
3 meeting. My name is David Drucker. I am the
4 project manager for the environmental review of the
5 Grand Gulf Nuclear Station license renewal
6 application.

7 I hope the information we provide with
8 this presentation will help you understand what we
9 have done so far and the role you can play in
10 helping us make sure that the final Environmental
11 Impact Statement is accurate and complete.

12 I would like to emphasize that the
13 environmental review is not yet complete. I would
14 like to start off by briefly going over the agenda
15 and purpose for this presentation.

16 Today, I will discuss the NRC's
17 regulatory role, the preliminary findings of our
18 environmental review, which addresses the impacts
19 associated with extending the operating license of
20 the Grand Gulf Nuclear Station for an additional 20
21 years. And I will present the current schedule for
22 the remainder of the environmental review and how
23 you can submit comments outside this meeting.

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1 At the end of the presentation, there
2 will be time for question and answers on the
3 environmental review process and, most importantly,
4 time for you to present your comments on the Draft
5 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. And
6 the acronym that I will be using for that Draft
7 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is
8 SEIS.

9 The NRC was established to regulate the
10 civilian use of nuclear materials, including
11 facilities producing electric power. The NRC
12 conducts license renewal reviews for plants whose
13 owners wish to operate them beyond their initial
14 license period.

15 NRC license renewal reviews address
16 safety issues related to managing the effects of
17 aging and environmental issues related to an
18 additional 20 years of operation.

1 In all aspects of the NRC's regulation,
2 our mission is threefold: to ensure adequate
3 protection of public health and safety, to promote
4 the common defense and security, and to protect the
5 environment. We are here to discuss the
6 potential site-specific impacts to license renewal
7 for Grand Gulf. The Generic Environmental Impact
8 Statement, or GEIS, examines the possible
9 environmental impacts that could occur as a result
10 of renewing licenses of individual nuclear plants.
11 The GEIS establishes and bounds the significance of
12 potential impacts.

13 The analysis in the GEIS pertains to
14 operating power plants. For each type of
15 environmental impact, the GEIS establishes general
16 findings covering as many plants as possible.

17 For some environmental issues, the GEIS
18 found that a generic evaluation was not sufficient
19 and that a plant specific analysis was required.
20 The site-specific findings for Grand Gulf are
21 contained in the Draft Supplemental Environmental
22 Impact Statement, or Draft SEIS, published in
23 November 2013. And there's a table outside that
24 has copies of these; hard copies and CD copies if
25 you would like them.

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1 This document contains analyses of all
2 applicable site-specific issues as well as a review
3 of issues covered by the GEIS to determine whether
4 the conclusions in the GEIS are valid for Grand
5 Gulf. In this process, the NRC staff also reviews
6 the environmental impacts of potential power
7 generation alternatives to license renewal.

8 For each environmental issue identified,
9 an impact level was assigned. The NRC established
10 three levels of significance for potential impacts:
11 small, moderate and large, as defined on the slide.

12 For a small impact, the effects are not
13 detectable or are so minor that they will neither
14 destabilize nor noticeably alter any important
15 attribute of the resource.

16 For a moderate impact, the effects are
17 sufficient to alter noticeably but not to
18 destabilize important attributes of the resource.
19 And for a large impact, the effects are clearly
20 noticeable and are sufficient to destabilize
21 important attributes of the resource.

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1 As a side note, for the protected species
2 habitats and habitats resource, the impact
3 significance -- we don't use small, moderate or
4 large. We use the language that is specific to the
5 authorizing language for this resource, which is
6 the Endangered Species Act.

7 This slide lists the site-specific issues
8 that NRC staff reviewed for the continued operation
9 of Grand Gulf during the proposed license renewal
10 period. Overall, the impacts for license renewal
11 on all these issues were found to be small, which
12 means the effects are not detectable or are so
13 minor, they will not destabilize nor noticeably
14 alter any important attribute of the resource.

15 And out in the right-hand column, you see
16 DSEIS section, and those section numbers correlate,
17 you know, with the section number here in the DSEIS
18 that I am holding at the table.

19 This slide provides a summary of our
20 findings with respect to cumulative impacts
21 associated with Grand Gulf. Cumulative impacts
22 include the effects on the environment from other
23 past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future
24 human actions.

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1 These effects not only include the
2 operation of Grand Gulf but also impacts from
3 activities unrelated to Grand Gulf, such as
4 urbanization -- future urbanization or energy
5 producing facilities in the area. This analysis
6 considers potential impacts through the end of the
7 current license term as well as the 20-year renewal
8 license term.

9 While the level of direct and indirect
10 impacts on Grand Gulf, on aquatic and terrestrial
11 resources are small, the cumulative impacts when
12 combined with other sources would be moderate for
13 both aquatic and terrestrial. This is primarily
14 due to the historical Mississippi River
15 modifications that have been made. And in all
16 other areas considered, the staff preliminarily
17 concluded that cumulative impacts are small.

18 The National Environmental Policy Act
19 mandates each Environmental Impact Statement
20 consider alternatives to any proposed major federal
21 action. A major step in determining whether
22 license renewal is reasonable or not is comparing
23 the likely impacts of continued operation of a
24 nuclear plant with the likely impacts of
25 alternative means of power generation.

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1 Alternatives must provide an option that
2 allows for power generation capability beyond the
3 term of the current nuclear power plant operating
4 license to meet future system generating needs.

5 In the Draft SEIS, NRC staff initially
6 considered 16 different alternatives. And then the
7 staff chose the most likely of those alternatives
8 and analyzed those in further depth.

9 Finally, the NRC staff considered what
10 would happen if no action is taken and Grand Gulf
11 shuts down at the end of its current license
12 without a specific replacement alternative. This
13 alternative would not provide power generation
14 capacity nor would it meet the needs currently met
15 by Grand Gulf.

1 The NRC's preliminary conclusion is that
2 the environmental impacts of renewal of the
3 operating license for Grand Gulf would be smaller
4 than those feasible and commercially viable
5 alternatives. The no-action alternative would have
6 small environmental impacts in most areas, with the
7 exception of socioeconomic impacts, which would be
8 small to large. Continued operation would
9 have small environmental impacts in all areas, and
10 the staff preliminarily concluded that continued
11 operation of the existing Grand Gulf Nuclear
12 Station is the environmentally preferable
13 alternative.

14 Now, on the slide, you see the four
15 alternatives that were analyzed in depth: new
16 nuclear; natural gas, coal, and a combination
17 alternative that included gas, natural gas and
18 biomass.

1 Based on the review of likely
2 environmental impacts from license renewal as well
3 as potential environmental impacts of alternatives
4 to license renewal, the staff's preliminary
5 recommendation in the Draft SEIS is that the
6 adverse environmental impacts of license renewal
7 for Grand Gulf are not great enough to deny the
8 option of license renewal for energy-planning
9 decision makers.

10 For the term beyond the 20-year period of
11 extended operation, the NRC addresses the
12 management of spent nuclear fuel in a waste
13 confidence decision and rule. Previous license
14 renewal Supplemental Environmental Impact
15 Statements noted that the environmental impacts of
16 temporary storage of nuclear fuel for the period
17 following the reactor operating license term were
18 addressed by this rule.

19 This Draft Supplemental Environmental
20 Impact Statement does not discuss potential
21 environmental impacts of storing spent fuel for an
22 extended period after the plant shuts down. That
23 issue will be addressed in the NRC's waste
24 confidence Environmental Impact Statement and rule.

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1 The draft rule and EIS were issued in the
2 fall of 2013, and the public had an opportunity to
3 provide comments. The final EIS and rule is
4 expected to be issued in the fall of 2014.
5 Additional information on the waste confidence
6 rulemaking and EIS can be found on NRC public
7 website at the link listed on the slide.

8 In August 2012, the Commission decided
9 that the Agency will not issue licenses dependent
10 upon a waste confidence decision until the waste
11 confidence rule is completed. However, the
12 Commission directed the staff to proceed with
13 licensing reviews and proceedings.

14 And that is what we have done here with
15 the Grand Gulf Draft Supplemental Environmental
16 Impact Statement. We have kept working on it in
17 light of activity with waste confidence.

18 I would like to emphasize that the
19 environmental review is not yet complete. Your
20 comments today and all written comments received by
21 the end of the comment period on February 11 will
22 be considered by the NRC staff as we develop the
23 final SEIS, which we currently plan to issue in
24 September 2014.

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1 Those comments that are within the scope
2 of the environmental review and provide new and
3 significant information can help to change the
4 staff's findings. The final SEIS will contain the
5 staff's final recommendation on the acceptability
6 of license renewal based on the work we have
7 already performed and any new and significant
8 information we receive in the form of comments
9 during this comment period.

10 As you know, I am the primary contact for
11 the environmental review, and John Daily is the
12 primary contact for the safety review. Copies of
13 the Draft SEIS, both hard copy and on CD are
14 available out in the entry way.

15 And in addition, the Henrietta Person
16 Memorial Library has a copy available for review,
17 and then you can also find electric copies of the
18 Draft SEIS, along with other information about the
19 Grand Gulf license renewal review, online as shown.

1 The NRC staff will address written
2 comments in the same way we address spoken comments
3 received today. You can submit written comments
4 either online or via conventional mail. To submit
5 written comments online, visit the website
6 regulations.gov and search for Docket ID NRC-2011-
7 0262.

8 And if you have written comments today,
9 you may give them to any NRC staff member. I would
10 appreciate getting them. This concludes my
11 presentation, so I would like to turn it back over
12 to Bob.

13 MR. HAGAR: All right, David. Thank you.

14 Okay. Now we enter part two of the
15 meeting. Does anyone have any questions about the
16 material that has just been covered? And if so,
17 you raise your hand, and I'll bring you a
18 microphone.

19 (No response.)

20 MR. HAGAR: All right. I'm seeing no
21 hands, so I am concluding that no one has a
22 question about the material that was just covered.

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1 So with that, we move into now phase
2 three of the meeting. This is an opportunity for
3 you to provide the feedback that David requested or
4 to make any other comments you want to make about
5 anything.

6 Does anyone have anything to say in part
7 three of the meeting?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. HAGAR: All right. No one has
10 anything to say.

11 So, David, do you have any words to close
12 the meeting?

13 MR. DRUCKER: I thank you all for coming
14 out. We'll be doing this again. Open house starts
15 at 6:00 p.m., same location, and the meeting will
16 start at 7:00 p.m.

17 I haven't spoken to the mayor, but on a
18 side note, if the weather were to turn foul or
19 something were to happen in the building --
20 absolutely the mayor will make that call, whether
21 or not we have the building to use. And we would
22 get out word best we could that the meeting wasn't
23 going to happen.

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1 But I have every indication that it is
2 going to happen this evening, so the open house
3 starts at 6:00, and the meeting starts at 7:00.

4 MR. HAGAR: Thank you all for being here.
5 This meeting is concluded.

6 (Whereupon, 2:30 p.m., the meeting was
7 concluded.)

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