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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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Docket ID NRC-2009-0552

Comments on Pacific Gas & Electric proposal to re-license the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant

I very strongly oppose the proposal to renew the Pacific Gas & Electric license for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. Given the fact that PG&E was unaware of the extent of earthquake faults under or adjacent to the site ("13 intersecting earthquake faults in a tsunami zone on California's coast north of Santa Barbara" <http://nonukesca.net/?p=616>) when the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant was designed, sited, and built, that alone should be cause to dismiss the application for an extension of the aging plant. Japan's experience of the Fukushima disaster demonstrates why the NRC should undertake immediately the closure of the Diablo Canyon plant, similarly located on the coast of the Pacific Ocean adjacent to earthquake faults. Even if the plant had been sited in a less dangerous location, by now its age alone warrants its closure. The NRC itself lists the Diablo Canyon Unit 1 as one of the five worst embrittled pressurized water reactors in the U.S.

In addition, its archaic cooling system does not meet California's 2010 policy mandate that coastal power plants put in place less destructive cooling systems. It takes an estimated 2.5 billion gallons of ocean water per day, returning it to the ocean 20 degrees hotter, killing untold numbers of fish and adding to the huge problem of warming oceans.

It is time for the NRC to respect the 1976 California law to prohibit further investment in nuclear energy until such time as a permanent, secure storage of radioactive waste is devised. Since the US is further than ever from a permanent, reliably safe solution for storing radioactive waste, it would be grossly irresponsible for the NRC to renew the license for this aged-out power plant.

The discovery of how 13 earthquake faults intersect at or near the site, not known when the plant was designed, and the absence of a permanent storage of the radioactive waste the plant continues to produce provide more than sufficient reason to reject the renewal proposal and to close this aged plant now. The potential horrific consequences to the people and the state of California if the plant's license were renewed can now be readily envisioned as we see the extent of ongoing damage wrought by the Fukushima disaster.

Sincerely,

Charlene M. Woodcock
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