



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

September 21, 2016

Mr. Kenneth Westlake  
NEPA Implementation Section  
US EPA – Region 5  
77 W Jackson Blvd Mail Code: E-19J  
Chicago, IL 60604

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE FINAL PLANT-SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENT 56  
TO THE GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR LICENSE  
RENEWAL OF NUCLEAR PLANTS REGARDING FERMI 2 NUCLEAR POWER  
PLANT (TAC. NO. MF4064)

Dear Mr. Westlake,

Enclosed are two bound copies and two CDs of the final plant-specific Supplement 56 to NUREG-1437, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants (GEIS)," regarding the renewal of operating licenses NPF-43 for an additional 20 years of operation for Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant.

The final Supplement 56 to the GEIS was submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) via e-NEPA on September 23, 2016, and copies were mailed or e-mailed to interested Federal and State agencies, industry organizations, interested groups, and members of the public. A copy of this document has also been placed in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Public Document Room, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852, and in the NRC Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible on the NRC's website at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. The ADAMS accession number for final Supplement 56 to the GEIS is ML16259A103 for Volume 1 and ML16259A109 for Volume 2.

Additionally, enclosed are NRC's responses to EPA's recommendations that were provided by letter dated December 21, 2015, during the public comment period on the draft Supplement 56 to the GEIS. These responses can also be found in Appendix A of Supplement 56.

K. Westlake

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If further information is required, please contact the NRC environmental project manager, Ms. Elaine Keegan, at 301-415-8517 or by e-mail at [Elaine.Keegan@nrc.gov](mailto:Elaine.Keegan@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

Kevin T. Folk, Acting Chief  
Environmental Review and Projects Branch  
Division of License Renewal  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-341

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc w/encl: See next page

K. Westlake

- 2 -

If further information is required, please contact the NRC environmental project manager, Ms. Elaine Keegan, at 301-415-8517 or by e-mail at [Elaine.Keegan@nrc.gov](mailto:Elaine.Keegan@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

Kevin T. Folk, Acting Chief  
Environmental Review and Projects Branch  
Division of License Renewal  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-341

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc w/encl: See next page

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ADAMS Accession Nos:

1. Package: (ML16263A175)
2. Letter: (ML16256A168)
3. "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants, Supplement 56": (ML16259A103 – Volume 1 and ML16259A109 – Volume 2)

<b>OFFICE</b>	LA:RPB1:DLR:*	PM:RERP:DLR	BC:RERP:DLR:
<b>NAME</b>	IBetts	EKeegan	KFolk
<b>DATE</b>	09/ 15 /16	09/ 20 /16	09/ 21 /16

**OFFICIAL RECORD COPY**

Letter to K. Westlake from K. Folk dated September 21, 2016.

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RENEWAL OF NUCLEAR PLANTS REGARDING FERMI 2 NUCLEAR POWER  
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## **NRC's Responses to EPA Recommendations on the Supplement 56 to the GEIS**

**63-1:** These comments are related to the temperature of the discharge water released back into Lake Erie. These comments also question why the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit has no thermal limit for the cooling water discharged into Lake Erie and call on the NRC to impose thermal limits.

**Response:** *These comments suggest that the temperature of the cooling water being discharged into Lake Erie is adversely impacting the lake and that the NRC staff should impose a thermal limit for the discharge water. The comments are correct that the NPDES permit does not impose any temperature limits for the water being discharged back into Lake Erie. As stated in Section 5.5.1.3 of the SEIS, NRC licensees must comply with the Clean Water Act (CWA), including all associated requirements imposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or the state as part of the NPDES permitting system under Section 402 of the CWA and state water quality certification requirements under Section 401 of the CWA. Nuclear power plants cannot operate without a valid NPDES permit and current Section 401 Water Quality Certification. However, the NPDES permit is outside the scope of NRC's regulatory authority. EPA is the Federal agency with oversight of the CWA and the NPDES permits.*

*The CWA allows EPA to delegate authority of the NPDES permits to states. In Michigan, EPA has delegated the authority for issuing NPDES permits to the State of Michigan, Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). MDEQ issues NPDES permits on a 5-year cycle. In Michigan, all NPDES permits proposed for issuance will have a 30-day public notice period for the public to review the proposed discharge permit and provide comments to MDEQ. Information on MDEQ's NPDES permitting system and laws and regulations can be found at: [http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313\\_71618\\_3682\\_3713---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313_71618_3682_3713---,00.html).*

*These comments provide no new information. The SEIS has not been revised as a result of these comments.*

**Comment 63-2:** This comment states that it is unclear from the draft SEIS whether the cumulative impacts analysis included Fermi 3 and that Fermi 3 was not included in Table E-1, "Actions and Projects Considered in Cumulative Analysis."

**Response:** *The Fermi 3 project is included in Table E-1, on page E-4 under "Fermi Projects." Additionally, discussion of Fermi 3 is included throughout SEIS Chapter 3, "Affected Environment." Section 4.16 of the SEIS, includes contributions from the cumulative impacts of Fermi 3 during the proposed license renewal period. This comment provides no new information. The SEIS has not been revised as a result of this comment.*

**Comment 63-3:** This comment recommends clearer distinctions between NRC-assigned categories of SMALL, MODERATE, or LARGE

**Response:** *This comment recommends providing a better explanation of thresholds or metrics at which an impact will increase from SMALL to MODERATE and MODERATE to LARGE and to indicate whether mitigation is a factor in assigning a lower impact level. Impacts to resources affected by license renewal and the various alternatives are defined in the GEIS. The GEIS established a standard of significance for each license renewal environmental impact issue based on the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) terminology for "significantly" (see 40 CFR 1508.27). Since the significance and severity of an impact can vary with the setting of the proposed action, both "context" and "intensity," as defined in CEQ regulations in 40 CFR 1508.27, were considered. Context is the geographic, biophysical, and social context in which the effects will occur. In the case of license renewal, the context is the environment surrounding the nuclear power plant and intensity refers to the severity of the impact in*

*whatever context it occurs. Based on this, the NRC established three levels of significance for potential impacts:*

*SMALL—environmental effects are not detectable or are so minor that they will neither destabilize nor noticeably alter any important attribute of the resource. For the purposes of assessing radiological impacts, the Commission has concluded that those impacts that do not exceed permissible levels in the Commission’s regulations are considered SMALL.*

*MODERATE—environmental effects are sufficient to alter noticeably, but not to destabilize, important attributes of the resource.*

*LARGE—environmental effects are clearly noticeable and are sufficient to destabilize important attributes of the resource.*

*These definitions are reiterated in Section 1.4 of this SEIS, “Generic Environmental Impact Statement.” Section 1.4 includes definitions for the three key words:*

- Significance indicates the importance of likely environmental impacts and is determined by considering two variables: context and intensity.*
- Context is the geographic, biophysical, and social context in which the effects will occur.*
- Intensity refers to the severity of the impact, in whatever context it occurs.*

*As explained in Section 1.5 of the GEIS and Section 1.4 of this SEIS, the NRC staff uses the above definitions in its evaluations of the impacts associated with the various alternatives. Ranges are provided when there are multiple options and multiple unknowns associated with the alternatives. For example, the potential impact on the land use resource as a result of the integrated gasification combined-cycle (IGCC) will vary greatly depending upon the location selected for the new IGCC facility. As explained in Chapter 4, the impacts on Land Use during construction of a new IGCC facility would range from MODERATE to LARGE based on such factors as: the location chosen, the historical use of the location, and the amount of previously undisturbed land impacted by the construction and operation of the new facility. There are too many unknowns to better describe the range and transition from MODERATE to LARGE.*

*In summary, the NRC staff has defined the thresholds for environmental impacts on resource areas in the GEIS and reiterates these thresholds in Chapter 1 of this SEIS. More specifics regarding the range of impacts associated with many of the alternatives cannot be better defined unless more specifics are available for the each alternative.*

*The NRC staff did not make changes to the SEIS text as a result of this comment.*