

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONWASHINGTON PUBLIC POWER SUPPLY SYSTEMWPPSS NUCLEAR PROJECT NO. 2DOCKET NO. 50-397ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ANDFINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuing a license amendment in response to a Washington Public Power Supply System (the licensee) request for the WNP-2 nuclear plant, located in Benton County, Washington.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of Proposed Action

The proposed action would change the license to permit upgrading the analog main steam line (MSL) radiation monitors to digital monitors. The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's November 30, 1993, amendment request.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The utility needs the MSL analog to digital radiation monitor upgrade because General Electric no longer manufactures the analog monitor currently installed at the plant. Thus, the utility is not sure replacement parts will be available in the future. The monitors are also becoming obsolete. The proposed change represents an unreviewed safety question, as defined in 10 CFR Part 59. The digital monitors use a microcomputer, and have electronic circuits that could be susceptible to common-mode failures. Failure mechanisms include software, electrostatic discharge, and electromagnetic and

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radio frequency interference. Thus, the licensee needs prior NRC approval and a license amendment to make the change.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The proposed exemption would not adversely affect radiation monitor function since the licensee determined the replacement monitor is an exact replacement for the analog monitor. The MSL radiation monitors detect fuel element failures, and trip the main condenser mechanical vacuum pump and associated discharge valve. The new digital monitors will continue to do these functions. The digital monitor has present day state of the art technology and features, including improved drift rate, instrument accuracy and resolution, and reliability. The existing analog monitors have problems with signal drift, spiking, inaccuracy, and channel drawer failures. The new installation will use the existing ion chamber detectors and associated in-plant cabling.

Issuing this exemption will not increase accident probability or result in any environmental impacts beyond those evaluated in the WNP-2 Final Environmental Statement. Therefore, the proposed changes do not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released offsite, and there is no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that this proposed action would result in no significant radiological environmental impact.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed exemption does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental

impact. Therefore, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

The Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendment to Facility Operating License and Opportunity for a Hearing in connection with this action was published in the Federal Register on March 10, 1994 (59 FR 11334). No request for hearing or petition for leave to intervene was filed following this notice.

Alternative to the Proposed Action Any alternative with equal or greater environmental impact does not need to be evaluated since the Commission has concluded that the environmental effects of the proposed action are not significant.

The principal alternative would be to deny the license amendment request. This would not reduce the facility's environmental impact, and would result in a larger expenditure of licensee resources to maintain, calibrate, and test the MSL radiation monitors.

Alternative Use of Resources This action does not use resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement related to operation of the Washington Nuclear Project, Unit No. 2 dated December 1981.

Agencies and Persons Consulted The Commission's staff reviewed the licensee's request and consulted the Washington State official. The state official had no comments.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the



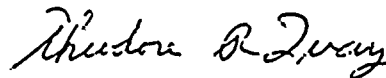
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quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

For further details with respect to this action, see the November 30, 1994, request for license amendment which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC 20555.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 25th day of May 1994.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



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