

EVALUATION OF REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF THE CONSTRUCTION PERMIT

COMPLETION DATE FOR THE DIABLO CANYON NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, UNIT 1

Introduction

On May 24, 1979, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) filed a request for extension of the completion date of the construction permit for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 1. The extension request was from June 30, 1979 to October 31, 1979 for Unit 1. In the request for extension, PG&E stated that the additional time for Unit 1 was needed to conclude the licensing process and delays that may result from the investigation of the March 28, 1979 incident at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 2.

Discussion

The construction permit for Unit 1, CPPR-39, was issued on April 23, 1968, and was last modified by the Commission's Order dated April 13, 1979, which extended the latest completion date to June 30, 1979.

On November 15, 1978, the Commission's staff published Supplement No. 8 to the Safety Evaluation Report for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. This supplement documented the need to make certain modifications for Units 1 and 2. Additional time contingencies will be required to allow for satisfactory completion of the modifications and to apply new requirements arising from the Commission's staff investigation of the incident at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 2 to the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plants, Units 1 and 2, to the extent that they are applicable. Based on PG&E's work schedules, the modifications are currently expected to be completed in the third quarter of 1979 for Unit 1.

Conclusion

The Commission's staff has reviewed the information provided in the applicant's submittal, and we conclude that the factors discussed above are reasonable and constitute good cause for delay; and the extension of construction of Unit 1 for 4 months is justifiable. In order to accommodate a reasonable schedule needed to complete the safety evaluation and the subsequent licensing actions related to the new safety requirements arising from the incident at Three Mile Island, Unit 2, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff concludes that the requested extension date of October 31, 1979 should be extended to December 31, 1979.

As a result of the staff's review of the Final Safety Analysis Report to date, and considering the nature of the delays, we have identified no area of significant safety considerations in connection with the extension of the construction permit completion date for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 1.

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The assessment of potential environmental impacts associated with site preparation and the construction of Units 1 and 2 of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant were addressed in the Final Environmental Statement (FES) issued in May 1973. Since the construction of Unit No. 1 is essentially complete except for installation of certain modifications and other requirements that may arise from the staff's above cited investigation and construction of Unit 2 is approximately 96% complete, essentially all construction impacts have occurred. The staff has determined that the extension of time for completion of work shown in Construction Permit No. CPPR-39 from June 30, 1979 to December 31, 1979, is an administrative action since it does not alter impacts described in the FES or create new impacts not previously addressed in the statement. Having made this determination, the Commission has concluded, pursuant to 10 CFR Part 51.5(d)(4), that an environmental statement, negative declaration or environmental impact appraisal need not be prepared in connection with the issuance of this extension of time.

The staff finds that this action does not involve a significant hazards consideration, that good cause exists for the issuance of an Order extending the completion date, and that an environmental statement negative declaration or environmental impact appraisal need not be prepared in connection with the issuance of such Order.

Accordingly, issuance of an Order extending the latest completion date for construction of Diablo Canyon Unit 1, as set forth in CPPR-39, to December 31, 1979, is reasonable and should be authorized.

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