



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

February 17, 1994

Mr. Lou Welcker
830 Sanders Road, BSL
Southport, North Carolina 28461

Dear Mr. Welcker:

I am replying to the letter that you sent to President Clinton on November 14, 1993, in which you raised concerns regarding the possible detrimental impact from a limestone quarry being proposed by Martin Marietta Aggregates on the nearby Brunswick Steam Electric Plant, Units 1 and 2 (Brunswick plant) that is operated by Carolina Power & Light Company (CP&L). Further, in an attachment to your letter, you noted a concern that the Brunswick plant has a poor operations and safety record in comparison to the other nuclear facilities in the United States. As stated in her letter to you of January 11, 1994, Ms. Marsha Scott, Deputy Assistant to the President, forwarded your concerns to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for our review.

As part of its application for a construction permit and operating license for the Brunswick plant, CP&L was required to analyze the effects of the environment on the plant, including environmental effects from the nearby industrial, transportation, and military facilities. Additionally, CP&L must continue to ensure that its bases and conclusions as presented in the Brunswick Plant Final Safety Analysis Report, that forms part of the basis for the operating license, remain valid. In a letter of November 2, 1993, the NRC staff asked CP&L to advise the NRC of any change to the external hazards that were reviewed when granting the original operating license so that a determination can be made that there is no impact on the safe operation of the plant. The NRC also asked CP&L to prepare an evaluation, including supporting studies and analyses, of the impact of the quarry operations on the plant and on licensed activities. On December 22, 1993, CP&L informed the NRC staff that, after reviewing the information submitted by Martin Marietta Aggregates in support of its permit application, CP&L had intervened in the matter of this permit application with the State of North Carolina. They are taking this action because they believe that the proposed mining operation could pose a risk of harm to their industrial facilities, as defined under the North Carolina General Statutes. Should the permit application be approved by the State of North Carolina, CP&L will submit the requested evaluation to the NRC for review with respect to the license bases for the Brunswick plant.

The NRC has observed notable progress in the Brunswick plant performance, overall plant condition, and equipment maintenance. These improvements were, in part, due to the increased management oversight by CP&L, the effective system readiness reviews by the CP&L system engineers and operators, and the new work control process at the Brunswick plant. Furthermore, the NRC continues to monitor the completion of other CP&L improvement initiatives designed to improve the overall performance and reliability of the Brunswick plant. After the year-long shutdown to correct design and maintenance deficiencies, CP&L was given permission to restart Brunswick Unit 2, on April 29, 1993.

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Mr. L. Welcker

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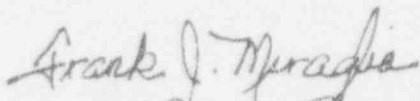
The NRC closely monitored the manner in which CP&L conducted the Unit 2 restart, and being satisfied with the performance, authorized CP&L to resume normal unit operation on June 3, 1993. The restart of the unit proceeded without difficulty, and the unit continues to operate well. On February 1, 1994, CP&L restarted Brunswick Plant Unit 1. The NRC is continuing its oversight of the Unit 1 restart activities, and continuing its oversight of the operation of Unit 2. As it did during the Unit 2 restart and power ascension, the NRC is providing augmented inspection coverage during the Unit 1 restart period.

On December 6, 1993, the NRC issued its Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) Report for the period from November 1, 1992, to November 6, 1993. As indicated in the SALP Report, the NRC has observed positive signs of improvement during the period, especially in plant operations. The NRC assessed the Brunswick plant with category 1 (superior) ratings in both operations and plant support and category 2 (good) ratings in maintenance/surveillance and engineering. A copy of the SALP Report has been enclosed to give you further details.

The NRC is unable to address your concerns regarding the environmental impact of the proposed quarry. The jurisdiction for assessing these aspects rests with the State of North Carolina Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources. Therefore, by copies of this letter and your November 14, 1993, letter, the NRC is forwarding your concerns in this area to this State agency.

I hope that this information helps to answer your concerns about the operation of the Brunswick plant.

Sincerely,


for Thomas E. Murley, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
SALP Report

cc: See next page

Mr. Lou Welcker

Brunswick Steam Electric Plant
Units 1 and 2

cc (w/o enclosure):

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February 17, 1994

Mr. L. Welcker

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I hope that this information helps to answer your concerns about the operation of the Brunswick plant.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Murley
Thomas E. Murley

Thomas E. Murley, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
SALP Report

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