

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSIONWOLF CREEK NUCLEAR OPERATING CORPORATIONDOCKET NO. 50-482NOTICE OF ISSUANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Section III.D.1(a) to Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation, (the licensee), for operation of the Wolf Creek Generating Station, Unit 1, located in Coffey County, Kansas.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTIdentification of Proposed Action:

Section III.D.1(a) of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50 requires the performance of three Type A tests, overall integrated leakage rate tests (ILRTs), at approximately equal intervals during each 10-year service period with the third test of each set being conducted when the plant is shutdown for the 10-year plant inservice inspections. Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation performed the first two ILRTs for the first 10-year service period in October 1988 and September 1991. The licensee proposes to perform the third test during the eighth refueling outage which coincides with the 10-year plant inservice inspections. However, the current schedule for the eighth

refueling outage would result in the test being performed approximately six months beyond the 10-year service period.

Section 50.12(a)(2)(ii) of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations provides an example of a special circumstance for which the NRC will consider granting exemptions that involve cases for which application of the regulation is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule. The licensee completed ILRTs in October 1988 and September 1991. Strict application of Appendix J would require performance of another ILRT during the seventh refueling outage in order to achieve three tests within the 10-year service period and a subsequent test during the eighth refueling outage in order to perform an ILRT during the 10-year plant inservice inspections. In order to avoid performance of the fourth ILRT, the licensee has proposed a one-time exemption to allow performance of the third ILRT during the eighth refueling outage. Performance of the third test during the eighth refueling outage would result in the test being performed approximately 54 months after the second test.

The Need for the Proposed Action:

The proposed exemption would extend the performance of the third ILRT several months beyond the end of the first 10-year service period in order to preclude the need to perform ILRTs during consecutive refueling outages. The need for the exemption results from the requirement to perform the ILRT during refueling outages and the schedules associated with the seventh and eighth refueling outages. ILRTs need to be performed during both the seventh and eighth refueling outages to satisfy both aspects of the Appendix J periodic

retest schedule; three tests during 10-year service intervals with the third test during 10-year plant inservice inspections.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed exemption and concludes that granting of the one-time relief does not affect the configuration of plant systems or plant operating practices. The proposed exemption is limited to the scheduling for the third ILRT during the first 10-year service interval. Previous testing has demonstrated the integrity of the containment structure. Leakage through containment penetrations and valves would continue to be identified by performance of local leak rate testing (LLRT). Therefore, no increase in the release of radioactive materials following an accident would result from the extension of the ILRT testing interval. The extension of the ILRT interval does not affect the radioactive effluent releases during normal operation. 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 only involves the scheduling of ILRT testing. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and there are no other nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed exemption.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action:

Since the Commission concluded that there are no significant environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impacts need not be

evaluated. The principal alternative would be to deny the requested exemption and require the licensee to conduct ILRT during both the seventh and eighth refueling outages. Denial would not significantly reduce the environmental impact of plant operation and would result in lost electrical generation and expense of significant licensee resources.

Alternate Use of Resources:

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Wolf Creek Generating Station dated June 1982.

Agencies and Persons Consulted:

The NRC staff reviewed the licensee's request and consulted with the Kansas State official. The State official had no comments regarding the NRC's proposed action.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The NRC staff has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed exemption.

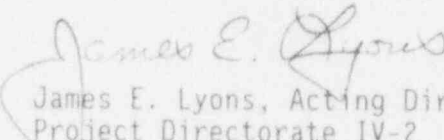
Based upon the foregoing environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

For further details with respect to this action, see the request for exemption dated October 27, 1993, which is available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 217 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20555, and at the Local Public Document Rooms, Emporia

State University, William Allen White Library, 1200 Commercial Street,
Emporia, Kansas 66801 and the Washburn University School of Law Library,
Topeka, Kansas 66621.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 19th day of May 1994.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



James E. Lyons, Acting Director
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation