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NOTE TO: Harold Denton, Director, SSEA
THRU: William Gammill, Assistant Director for Site Technology, SSEA

CURRENT USGS CASE REVIEW STATUS AND PROBLEMS

Skagit

Status - SER due 11/21. Staff completed draft SER. LWA hearing 1/13 now postponed to May.

Problems - USGS submitted questions on applicant geology interpretations and on the SSE in early December after SER was due. These questions were based on the input of two USGS reviewers on December 3. These reviewers, though local experts, had not previously been consulted so far as we know.

Impact - Estimated 60 days for applicant to respond to USGS questions.

Options - Applicant response to USGS questions.

Palo Verde

Status - SER due September 5, 1975. Staff issued SER on schedule. M

Problems - USGS continues to submit questions raising concern about faulting in the plant site area and about subsidence. Questions were submitted to applicant in October. A new set of questions covering much the same ground were received from USGS during past week. Staff considers applicant's investigation to date adequate to assure safe design of site.

Impact - Probable two month delay in resolving USGS questions. Safety hearings scheduled for February will likely be delayed.

Options - Withhold USGS questions and ask for USGS final report. Ask applicant to respond to USGS questions.

Final note - USGS has not to this date asked any questions relating to seismology of the Palo Verde site.

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Pebble Springs

Status - SER due 12/15. Staff completed SER. Late questions from USGS on geology, primarily volcanism, received in December. Additional questions relating to seismicity and determination of the SSE received February 2, 1976.

Problems - USGS continues to raise concern about volcanic ash at plant site. Although staff has taken the conservative position recommended by USGS, USGS takes posture that it reviews only what is submitted by the applicant and cannot write a final evaluation for the site until the applicant has recommended a conservative design for volcanic ash. USGS now appears to be questioning the seismic design, which is now .25g. Staff has agreed with applicant that .2g is an appropriate SSE consistent with the seismicity and tectonism of the region. Staff has taken conservative (USGS) position on volcanism and feels seismic design is satisfactory.

Impact - Probable two month delay for utility to respond to GS questions and additional 60 days for the GS to review applicant's response. ACRS meeting scheduled for February 7 may be canceled because of no USGS report.

- Options - 1. Applicant respond to USGS questions.
2. Ask USGS for final report and withhold questions.

Diablo Canyon

Status - Hearings waiting completion of seismology geology review.

Problem - Differences between staff USGS reviewers concerning the position that NRC should take on Diablo Canyon seismic design have not been resolved. Meeting with applicant has not been held.

Impact - Possible delay of hearing.

Options - Resolved differences.

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Pilgrim

Status - Awaiting completion of geology seismology review.

Problems - Staff has been unable to accept applicant's determination of tectonic province for the site. Independent review was requested of USGS in June 1975. Agreed upon completion date for USGS was six months, now two months past.

Impact - Continued delay of completing Safety Evaluation Report.

Options - Complete USGS review.

Marble Hill

Status - Round 1 questions due November 13. Staff completed round 1 questions and staff and USGS made site visit on November 17.

Problems - No USGS questions on geology at this time. USGS questions on seismology received 1/30. USGS was requested to review generic report on northern extent of New Madrid zone. Request was made in April 1975. GS indicated 60 days to respond. To date, GS has not completed its review of the generic report.

Impact - Estimate five month delay in completing safety review, as USGS questions will not be available until at least mid March.

Options - 1. Withdraw USGS from review.

2. Accept delay.

Sundesert

Status - Round 1 questions due December 20. Staff completed round 1 questions on schedule. USGS round 1 questions on geology received January 30. No USGS questions on seismology as yet.

Problems - none

Impact - Late USGS questions will delay review by 30 to 60 days.

Options - We should accept delay since utility asked for GS review.

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Harold Denton

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DIST:

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CENTRAL FILES

NRR Reading

GSB Reading

JCStepp

Hulman

WGammill

North Coast

Status - Regular review scheduled suspended. No forming a review schedule for early site review.

Problems - USGS round 2 questions delayed since October. Now estimate USGS response in mid March.

Impact - Uncertain since new review schedule is being formed.

Options - Form new review schedule for Early Site Review.

San Joaquin

Status - Review is complete. Staff and USGS writing Safety Evaluation Report. Projected completion date March 15.

Problems - Excellent and timely response from USGS throughout the review on geology matters. As yet, GS has raised no seismology questions relating to this site though site conditions are somewhat similar to those of Diablo Canyon.

Impact - If USGS accepts applicant's determination of the SSE, we anticipate no impact. If GS takes position that they have taken on Diablo, at least two months delay will be encountered while resolution is sought.

Options - Wait for USGS SER.

Humboldt

Status - Staff has complete review of applicants reports.

Problems - USGS has not yet begun its review; therefore, we estimate a delay until mid March.

Impact - Delay of our projected schedule for completing our review from mid March until at least April 1.

Options - Wait for USGS to complete its review.

Original Signed by

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J. C. Stepp
J. C. Stepp, Chief
Geology and Seismology Branch, SSEA

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