



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

NRC
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NOV 29 1978

Docket Nos. 50-448
and 50-449

Potomac Electric Power Company
ATTN: J. J. Scoville, Vice President
Nuclear Engineering
and Environmental Affairs
1900 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
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Gentlemen:

As you may be aware, recent licensing proceedings (e.g., Seabrook and Pilgrim) have placed increased emphasis on the rationale and support of the site selection process utilized for location of nuclear power plants. This, in turn, has necessitated staff review of the site selection process and choice of siting alternatives for other nuclear power plant projects which are currently active.

In our review of Douglas Point, we note that one of the four principal criteria utilized in the candidate site selection process was that the site be suitable for development and construction leading to initial power generation in 1979-80. With deferral of construction this criterion would no longer be applicable. Our review further indicates that serious consideration of certain geographic regions was foregone on the basis of the now inapplicable criterion, and that some of 13 site regions which were initially examined were ultimately rejected on this basis.

The staff has determined that in view of the record and recent Appeal Board decisions, additional and more definitive information is needed to support the alternative site analysis for Douglas Point. The staff will require sufficient information to assure itself through independent evaluation as to the adequacy of the site selection process to identify alternative candidate sites that are among the best that could reasonably have been found. Therefore, it is necessary that you demonstrate that your site selection methodology remains valid in view of plant deferral.

As a matter of information, it should be pointed out that under the early site review (ESR) procedure, a choice is provided as to the number and type of site related issues to be covered. You may wish to consider the elimination of alternate sites from the ESR, and limit the application to matters such as hydrology and geology. However,

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should you decide to proceed with alternative site issues under the present ESR, it is necessary that we receive an explanation of the methodology used in the site selection process with full supportive information. This more definite explanation of methodology encompasses a satisfactory reply to comments on the site selection process made within this letter.

Please advise this office as to your intentions in proceeding with alternate site issues under the present ESR, and your anticipated schedule for providing the NRC staff with a more definitive description of the methodology used in this site selection process. Assuming a complete response, the staff anticipates its re-analysis of alternate sites to require three to four months of effort which includes the preparation of testimony on this subject.

Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Richard Watkins, the Project Manager for Douglas Point. We may be reached at (301) 492-8430.

Sincerely,

Ronald L. Ballard
Ronald L. Ballard, Chief
Environmental Projects Branch 1
Division of Site Safety
and Environmental Analysis

cc: See next page

Potomac Electric Power Company
Douglas Point Nuclear Generating Station
Docket Nos. 50-448 & 50-449

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