

**From:** Congaree Riverkeeper <CRK@congareriverkeeper.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 19, 2020 11:43 AM  
**To:** WEC\_CFFF\_EIS Resource; PublicCommentExtensionCovid Resource; Quintero, Jessie; Diaz Toro, Diana; Diaz Maldonado, Marilyn  
**Subject:** [External\_Sender] Request for extension of EIS Scoping Comment Period (Docket ID NRC–2015– 0039)  
**Attachments:** CRK Westinghouse Scoping Extension Request (Docket ID NRC–2015– 0039).pdf

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find attached a letter from Congaree Riverkeeper requesting an extension of the EIS scoping public comment period for the Westinghouse Fuel Fabrication Facility in Hopkins, South Carolina (Docket ID NRC–2015– 0039).

Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions.

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**Bill Stangler**  
**Congaree Riverkeeper**  
**803-760-3357**



**Federal Register Notice:** 85FR46193  
**Comment Number:** 7

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(Docket ID NRC-2015- 0039)  
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August 19, 2020

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

Re: Request for Extension of Scoping Comment Period for Westinghouse EIS (Docket ID NRC–2015– 0039)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of Congaree Riverkeeper to request both a 90-day extension to the environmental impact statement (EIS) scoping comment period, and that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) host a virtual public meeting to discuss the EIS process and opportunities for public engagement and comments.

On July 31, 2020 NRC announced, in the *Federal Register*, its intent to prepare an EIS for Westinghouse Electric Company’s request to renew its operating license for its Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility in Hopkins, South Carolina. This announcement officially began the EIS scoping process, with a public comment period set to end on August 31, 2020.<sup>1</sup>

Over the last several months, more than 5 million Americans have contracted COVID-19, and more than 170,000 have died from the disease. This pandemic has led to state and local governments enacting lockdowns and travel restrictions, businesses have closed, employers have directed employees to work remotely, and daily life has changed significantly. These new burdens have shifted priorities for communities and individuals, and made it more difficult for people to meaningfully engage in the public participation process of government decisions.

The NRC itself has taken several actions to ensure the health and safety of employees and the public while maintaining its mission during the pandemic, including extending public comment deadlines and shifting public meetings to virtual formats.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-07-31/pdf/2020-16150.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/covid-19/>

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In addition to the difficulties posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the sheer bulk of information and documents associated with the Westinghouse facility makes it incredibly difficult for the public to meaningfully participate in the EIS scoping process with only a 30-day public comment period. The Final Interim Remedial Investigation Data Summary Report (the revised version of which was released July 30<sup>th</sup>) is itself 145 pages.<sup>3</sup> Other relevant reports, like the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's (DHEC) Uranium and Fluoride in Fish from the Congaree River Technical Report (No. 007-2020), released in June, is 541 pages long.<sup>4</sup> The public needs appropriate time to review these and other documents in order to submit meaningful comments on the EIS scoping process.

Based on the reasons stated above, we respectfully request that the NRC extend the public comment period for the EIS scoping process by an additional 90 days, and hold a virtual public meeting to discuss the EIS process and inform stakeholders and the community about how they can participate. The extension of the comment period and the public meeting will allow the public to develop and submit thoughtful and thorough feedback, while also helping NRC meet its mission objectives.

We appreciate the opportunity to share these concerns, and plan to submit our full scoping comments at a later date.

Sincerely,

Bill Stangler  
Congaree Riverkeeper

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<sup>3</sup>[https://www.scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Final%20Interim%20RI%20Data%20Summary%20Report%20Rev%201\\_July%202020.pdf](https://www.scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Final%20Interim%20RI%20Data%20Summary%20Report%20Rev%201_July%202020.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Westinghouse\\_FishTissueStudy.pdf](https://www.scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Westinghouse_FishTissueStudy.pdf)

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