

Mrs. Eva Draper DeFoe
507 Alderbrook Drive
Santa Rosa, California

Dear Mrs. DeFoe:

This is in response to your letter of August 16, 1961 to the Atomic Energy Commission, concerning the plans of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company to construct a nuclear power plant on Bodega Head. At the present time no application for the necessary AEC license to construct and operate a nuclear power plant on Bodega Head has been received from the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, although the Commission has been aware for some time of the Company's interest in this possibility.

In your letter, you discussed the use of Bodega Head for recreational, scientific and scenic purposes, and the ownership of property along the Head. The Atomic Energy Commission's licensing authority over nuclear reactors deals primarily with protection of the public health and safety. It does not become involved, therefore, in such matters as property rights, land acquisition and zoning considerations. These are considered by local and state officials and a prospective applicant normally resolves them prior to his submittal of an application to the Atomic Energy Commission.

When and if an application is received by the Commission from the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the Governor of the State as well as the appropriate local officials will be notified and the Commission will undertake its regulatory review. A detailed safety review of an application for a construction permit or an operating license for a nuclear power facility is made by the Commission's technical staff and by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards. The review among other things includes examination of the environmental characteristics of the site such as the geological, hydrological, meteorological and seismological features; the nature and use of the surrounding area including the fisheries aspects; and the design features incorporated in the facility for protection of the public. In order for a construction permit to be granted, the results of this review must show that a proposed reactor can be operated at the site proposed without creating an undue hazard to the health and safety of the public.

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In addition, a formal public hearing will be held before a construction permit is issued for a nuclear power facility. Any person whose interests may be affected may file a petition to intervene and be permitted to present his views at such hearing, before the Commission decides whether to issue a permit and what conditions will be prescribed.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Lowenstein, Acting Director
Division of Licensing and Regulation

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