

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-528, 50-529, 50-530, and 72-44; NRC-2021-0100]

Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1, 2, and 3, and

Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation

Consideration of Approval of Transfer of Licenses

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Application for indirect transfer of license; opportunity to comment, request a hearing, and petition for leave to intervene.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC, the Commission) received and is considering approval of an indirect license transfer application filed by El Paso Electric Company (EPE) on March 18, 2021. The application seeks NRC approval of the indirect transfer of EPE's possession-only non-operating interests in Renewed Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-41, NPF-51, and NPF-74 for Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (Palo Verde), Units 1, 2, and 3, respectively, and the general license for the Palo Verde Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI) as a result of the acquisition of an approximately 33.3 percent membership interest in IIF US Holding 2 GP, LLC (IIF US 2 GP)—the general partner of IIF US Holding 2 LP (IIF US 2)—by a private individual, Anne Cleary, subsequent to the retirement and relinquishment of an approximately 33.3 percent IIF US 2 GP membership interest held by Dennis Clarke.

DATES: Comments must be filed by June 3, 2021. Requests for a hearing or petitions for leave to intervene must be filed by May 24, 2021.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods; however, the NRC encourages electronic comment submission through the **Federal Rulemaking**

Web Site:

- **Federal Rulemaking Web Site:** Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID **NRC-2021-0100**. Address questions about Docket IDs in Regulations.gov to Stacy Schumann; telephone: 301-287-0624; e-mail: Stacy.Schumann@nrc.gov. For technical questions, contact the individual listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this document.

- **E-mail comments to:** Hearing.Docket@nrc.gov. If you do not receive an automatic email reply confirming receipt, then contact us at 301-415-1677.

- **Fax comments to:** Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission at 301-415-1101.

- **Mail comments to:** Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff.

For additional direction on obtaining information and submitting comments, see “Obtaining Information and Submitting Comments” in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Siva P. Lingam, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; telephone: 301-415-1564, e-mail: Siva.Lingam@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Obtaining Information and Submitting Comments

A. Obtaining Information

Please refer to Docket ID **NRC-2021-0100** when contacting the NRC about the availability of information for this action. You may obtain publicly available information related to this action by any of the following methods:

- **Federal Rulemaking Web Site:** Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID **NRC-2021-0100**.

- **NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS):** You may obtain publicly available documents online in the ADAMS Public Documents collection at <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. To begin the search, select "Begin Web-based ADAMS Search." For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to pdr.resource@nrc.gov. The application for indirect transfer of the licenses dated March 18, 2021, is available in ADAMS under Accession No. ML21077A256.

- **Attention:** The PDR, where you may examine and order copies of public documents, is currently closed. You may submit your request to the PDR via e-mail at pdr.resource@nrc.gov or call 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. (ET), Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

B. Submitting Comments

The NRC encourages electronic comment submission through the **Federal Rulemaking Web Site** (<https://www.regulations.gov>). Please include Docket ID **NRC-2021-0100** in your comment submission.

The NRC cautions you not to include identifying or contact information that you do not want to be publicly disclosed in your comment submission. The NRC will post all comment submissions at <https://www.regulations.gov> as well as enter the comment submissions into ADAMS. The NRC does not routinely edit comment submissions to remove identifying or contact information.

If you are requesting or aggregating comments from other persons for submission to the NRC, then you should inform those persons not to include identifying

or contact information that they do not want to be publicly disclosed in their comment submission. Your request should state that the NRC does not routinely edit comment submissions to remove such information before making the comment submissions available to the public or entering the comment submissions into ADAMS.

II. Introduction

The NRC is considering the issuance of an order under § 50.80 and § 72.50 of title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) approving the indirect transfer of EPE's possession-only non-operating interests in Renewed Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-41, NPF-51, and NPF-74 for Palo Verde, Units 1, 2, and 3, respectively, and the general license for the Palo Verde ISFSI. The proposed indirect transfer of control is necessary as a result of the acquisition of an approximately 33.3 percent membership interest in IIF US 2 GP—the general partner of IIF US 2—by a private individual, Anne Cleary, subsequent to the retirement and relinquishment of an approximately 33.3 percent IIF US 2 GP membership interest held by Dennis Clarke.

According to the application, EPE currently owns a 15.8 percent tenant-in-common interest in, and holds possession-only rights in the Palo Verde NRC licenses. The other possession-only tenant in-common owners and their respective ownership interests are: Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District (17.49 percent); Southern California Edison Company (15.8 percent); Public Service Company of New Mexico (10.2 percent); Southern California Public Power Authority (5.91 percent); and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (5.7 percent). Arizona Public Service Company (APS) owns a 29.1 percent tenant-in-common interest in, and holds both operating and possession rights in the Palo Verde NRC licenses. Pursuant to a Participation Agreement entered into in 1973 and amended multiple times since then, APS operates each of the Palo Verde units pursuant to the operating rights granted to it

under the licenses. The proposed transfer implicates only an indirect upstream change in control over EPE's possession-only rights in the Palo Verde NRC licenses. The proposed transfer does not involve or implicate any change in EPE's rights and obligations under the Participation Agreement or any of the licenses, nor does it implicate APS's or any other possession-only co-owners' rights and obligations under the Participation Agreement or any of the licenses. The proposed transfer does not require or involve any change in APS's management or staffing of its nuclear organization or procedures or affect APS's technical qualifications to operate Palo Verde pursuant to the Participation Agreement and its licenses. Further, the lines of responsibility and authority of APS's nuclear organization are unaffected by the proposed transfer.

According to the application, IIF US 2 is an open-end fund, which means that investors can subscribe to and redeem from the fund from time to time. As of January 31, 2021, the passive upstream limited partner investors in IIF US 2 were distributed in the aggregate by region as follows: U.S. (~20 percent); Canada (~12 percent); United Kingdom (U.K.) (~25 percent); Europe excluding U.K. (~17 percent); Japan (~10 percent); Middle East (~9 percent); Australia (~4 percent); Asia excluding Japan (~2 percent); and all other regions (less than 1 percent). To IIF US 2's knowledge, no single foreign passive upstream limited partner investor in IIF US 2 holds directly or indirectly through affiliates more than a 5-percent passive economic interest in the aggregate in IIF US 2. Following the transaction, EPE retained its own board of directors and principal officers all of whom are U.S. citizens. Further, all of EPE's upstream owners are U.S. entities controlled by U.S. citizens that are ultimately controlled by the IIF US 2 GP owners, all of whom are U.S. citizens. The limited partners in IIF US 2 and their passive upstream investors (foreign or domestic) are

expressly prohibited from participating or taking part in the management or control of IIF US 2's business and have no power or authority to act for or on behalf of, or to bind, IIF US 2 or its subsidiaries, including EPE.

No physical changes to the facilities or operational changes are being proposed in the application.

The NRC's regulations at 10 CFR 50.80 and 10 CFR 72.50 state that no license, or any right thereunder, shall be transferred, either voluntarily or involuntarily, directly or indirectly, through transfer of control of the license, unless the Commission gives its consent in writing. The Commission will approve an application for the indirect transfer of a license if the Commission determines that the proposed transfer will not affect the qualifications of the licensee to hold the license, and that the transfer is otherwise consistent with applicable provisions of law, regulations, and orders issued by the Commission.

This proposed indirect transfer is separate from the proposed indirect transfer of Public Service Company of New Mexico's 10.2 percent tenant-in-common interest and possession-only rights in the Palo Verde NRC licenses, which the NRC is also currently reviewing. The *Federal Register* notice of consideration of approval of that transfer was published on January 27, 2021 (86 FR 7310).

III. Opportunity to Comment

Within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice, persons may submit written comments regarding the license transfer application, as provided for in 10 CFR 2.1305. The Commission will consider and, if appropriate, respond to these comments, but such comments will not otherwise constitute part of the decisional record. Comments should be submitted as described in the **ADDRESSES** section of this

document.

IV. Opportunity to Request a Hearing and Petition for Leave to Intervene

Within 20 days after the date of publication of this notice, any persons (petitioner) whose interest may be affected by this action may file a request for a hearing and petition for leave to intervene (petition) with respect to the action. Petitions shall be filed in accordance with the Commission's "Agency Rules of Practice and Procedure" in 10 CFR part 2. Interested persons should consult a current copy of 10 CFR 2.309. The NRC's regulations are accessible electronically from the NRC Library on the NRC's Web site at <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/cfr/>. If a petition is filed, the Commission or a presiding officer will rule on the petition and, if appropriate, a notice of a hearing will be issued.

As required by 10 CFR 2.309(d) the petition should specifically explain the reasons why intervention should be permitted with particular reference to the following general requirements for standing: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the petitioner; (2) the nature of the petitioner's right to be made a party to the proceeding; (3) the nature and extent of the petitioner's property, financial, or other interest in the proceeding; and (4) the possible effect of any decision or order which may be entered in the proceeding on the petitioner's interest.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.309(f), the petition must also set forth the specific contentions that the petitioner seeks to have litigated in the proceeding. Each contention must consist of a specific statement of the issue of law or fact to be raised or controverted. In addition, the petitioner must provide a brief explanation of the bases for the contention and a concise statement of the alleged facts or expert opinion that support the contention and on which the petitioner intends to rely in proving the

contention at the hearing. The petitioner must also provide references to the specific sources and documents on which the petitioner intends to rely to support its position on the issue. The petition must include sufficient information to show that a genuine dispute exists with the applicant or licensee on a material issue of law or fact. Contentions must be limited to matters within the scope of the proceeding. The contention must be one that, if proven, would entitle the petitioner to relief. A petitioner who fails to satisfy the requirements at 10 CFR 2.309(f) with respect to at least one contention will not be permitted to participate as a party.

Those permitted to intervene become parties to the proceeding, subject to any limitations in the order granting leave to intervene. Parties have the opportunity to participate fully in the conduct of the hearing with respect to resolution of that party's admitted contentions, including the opportunity to present evidence, consistent with the NRC's regulations, policies, and procedures.

Petitions must be filed no later than 20 days from the date of publication of this notice. Petitions and motions for leave to file new or amended contentions that are filed after the deadline will not be entertained absent a determination by the presiding officer that the filing demonstrates good cause by satisfying the three factors in 10 CFR 2.309(c)(1)(i) through (iii). The petition must be filed in accordance with the filing instructions in the "Electronic Submissions (E-Filing)" section of this document.

A State, local governmental body, Federally recognized Indian Tribe, or agency thereof, may submit a petition to the Commission to participate as a party under 10 CFR 2.309(h)(1). The petition should state the nature and extent of the petitioner's interest in the proceeding. The petition should be submitted to the Commission no later than 20 days from the date of publication of this notice. The petition must be filed in accordance with the filing instructions in the "Electronic Submissions (E-Filing)" section

of this document, and should meet the requirements for petitions set forth in this section, except that under 10 CFR 2.309(h)(2) a State, local governmental body, Federally recognized Indian Tribe, or agency thereof does not need to address the standing requirements in 10 CFR 2.309(d) if the facility is located within its boundaries.

Alternatively, a State, local governmental body, Federally recognized Indian Tribe, or agency thereof may participate as a non-party under 10 CFR 2.315(c).

If a hearing is granted, any person who is not a party to the proceeding and is not affiliated with or represented by a party may, at the discretion of the presiding officer, be permitted to make a limited appearance pursuant to the provisions of 10 CFR 2.315(a). A person making a limited appearance may make an oral or written statement of his or her position on the issues but may not otherwise participate in the proceeding. A limited appearance may be made at any session of the hearing or at any prehearing conference, subject to the limits and conditions as may be imposed by the presiding officer. Details regarding the opportunity to make a limited appearance will be provided by the presiding officer if such sessions are scheduled.

V. Electronic Submissions (E-Filing)

All documents filed in NRC adjudicatory proceedings, including a request for hearing and petition for leave to intervene (petition), any motion or other document filed in the proceeding prior to the submission of a request for hearing or petition to intervene, and documents filed by interested governmental entities that request to participate under 10 CFR 2.315(c), must be filed in accordance with the NRC's E-Filing rule (72 FR 49139; August 28, 2007, as amended at 77 FR 46562, August 3, 2012). The E-Filing process requires participants to submit and serve all adjudicatory documents over the internet, or in some cases to mail copies on electronic storage media. Detailed guidance on making electronic submissions may be found in the Guidance for Electronic

Submissions to the NRC and on the NRC Web site at <https://www.nrc.gov/site-help/e-submittals.html>. Participants may not submit paper copies of their filings unless they seek an exemption in accordance with the procedures described below.

To comply with the procedural requirements of E-Filing, at least 10 days prior to the filing deadline, the participant should contact the Office of the Secretary by e-mail at hearing.docket@nrc.gov, or by telephone at 301-415-1677, to (1) request a digital identification (ID) certificate, which allows the participant (or its counsel or representative) to digitally sign submissions and access the E-Filing system for any proceeding in which it is participating; and (2) advise the Secretary that the participant will be submitting a petition or other adjudicatory document (even in instances in which the participant, or its counsel or representative, already holds an NRC-issued digital ID certificate). Based upon this information, the Secretary will establish an electronic docket for the hearing in this proceeding if the Secretary has not already established an electronic docket.

Information about applying for a digital ID certificate is available on the NRC's public Web site at <https://www.nrc.gov/site-help/e-submittals/getting-started.html>. Once a participant has obtained a digital ID certificate and a docket has been created, the participant can then submit adjudicatory documents. Submissions must be in Portable Document Format (PDF). Additional guidance on PDF submissions is available on the NRC's public Web site at <https://www.nrc.gov/site-help/electronic-sub-ref-mat.html>. A filing is considered complete at the time the documents are submitted through the NRC's E-Filing system. To be timely, an electronic filing must be submitted to the E-Filing system no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the due date. Upon receipt of a transmission, the E-Filing system timestamps the document and sends the submitter an e-mail notice confirming receipt of the document. The E-Filing system also distributes

an e-mail notice that provides access to the document to the NRC's Office of the General Counsel and any others who have advised the Office of the Secretary that they wish to participate in the proceeding, so that the filer need not serve the document on those participants separately. Therefore, applicants and other participants (or their counsel or representative) must apply for and receive a digital ID certificate before adjudicatory documents are filed so that they can obtain access to the documents via the E-Filing system.

A person filing electronically using the NRC's adjudicatory E-Filing system may seek assistance by contacting the NRC's Electronic Filing Help Desk through the "Contact Us" link located on the NRC's public Web site at <https://www.nrc.gov/site-help/e-submittals.html>, by e-mail to MSHD.Resource@nrc.gov, or by a toll-free call at 1-866-672-7640. The NRC Electronic Filing Help Desk is available between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, excluding government holidays.

Participants who believe that they have a good cause for not submitting documents electronically must file an exemption request, in accordance with 10 CFR 2.302(g), with their initial paper filing stating why there is good cause for not filing electronically and requesting authorization to continue to submit documents in paper format. Such filings must be submitted by: (1) first class mail addressed to the Office of the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff; or (2) courier, express mail, or expedited delivery service to the Office of the Secretary, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, 20852, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff. Participants filing adjudicatory documents in this manner are responsible for serving the document on all other participants. Filing is considered complete by first-class mail as of the time of deposit in the mail, or by courier, express

mail, or expedited delivery service upon depositing the document with the provider of the service. A presiding officer, having granted an exemption request from using E-Filing, may require a participant or party to use E-Filing if the presiding officer subsequently determines that the reason for granting the exemption from use of E-Filing no longer exists.

Documents submitted in adjudicatory proceedings will appear in the NRC's electronic hearing docket which is available to the public at <https://adams.nrc.gov/ehd>, unless excluded pursuant to an order of the Commission or the presiding officer. If you do not have an NRC-issued digital ID certificate as described above, click "cancel" when the link requests certificates and you will be automatically directed to the NRC's electronic hearing docket where you will be able to access any publicly available documents in a particular hearing docket. Participants are requested not to include personal privacy information, such as social security numbers, home addresses, or personal phone numbers in their filings, unless an NRC regulation or other law requires submission of such information. For example, in some instances, individuals provide home addresses in order to demonstrate proximity to a facility or site. With respect to copyrighted works, except for limited excerpts that serve the purpose of the adjudicatory filings and would constitute a Fair Use application, participants are requested not to include copyrighted materials in their submission.

The Commission will issue a notice or order granting or denying a hearing request or intervention petition, designating the issues for any hearing that will be held and designating the Presiding Officer. A notice granting a hearing will be published in the *Federal Register* and served on the parties to the hearing.

For further details with respect to this application, see the application dated March 18, 2021 (ADAMS Accession No. ML21077A256).

Dated: April 28, 2021.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

/RA/

Siva P. Lingam, Project Manager,
Plant Licensing Branch IV,
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing,
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.